From Father Bill…

A Daily Pursuit

Ernest Hemingway once said, “Time is the least thing we have of.” Boy, is that ever right. I don’t know about you, but I feel at times as if I’m riding on the end of a hurricane being tossed to and fro.

As we are navigating through the Great and Holy Lent, the Church suddenly thrusts on us all the extra Holy Services to attend, and before you realize, the 40 days are gone, Easter arrives and we aren’t ready. Why? It is because we spend so much time doing things that steals our minutes and siphon off the significance from our hours.

We are focused on doing the important things every day at the expense of overlooking the essentials. You know what I mean! Things like getting gas or a haircut, standing in the eternal line at the Department of Motor Vehicles, ironing, paying bills, washing stacks of dishes after endless meals, tending to repairs in the house, and a dozen other time-consuming tasks that must be done but keep us from doing the things that make life so invigorating and fulfilling. Charles Swindoll has written, “We have a wonderful gift of 16 to 18 hours every day. Yet, when all is said and done and someone finally closes the coffin, the average person will have spent: six months waiting at stoplights; eight months opening junk mail and e-mail; five years standing in line; a year and a half looking for car keys.”

During the Great and Holy Lent, stop thinking of the wasteful hours of your life and be proactive. The Apostle James writes: “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourself.” We pursue many things without pursing the one thing that matters most, time with God.

More than fifty years ago, Flip Wilson kept America in stitches with his television characters “Reverend Leroy,” the friendly pompous pastor of the “Church of What’s Happening Now,” and “Geraldine Jones,” the sassy woman in a miniskirt. Whenever Geraldine would impulsively buy a dress or do anything she shouldn’t, she excused her urge by uttering the line she made famous, “The Devil made me do it!”

Today many people seek an alibi for their lack of active participation in our church services believing the Devil is responsible. In Orthodoxy, we have weapons to defeat the temptations besetting us. Worship imparts strength to make our defense against any demonic spirit and thus not necessitating an excuse like the “Devil made me do it.”

We must make a choice to attend the numerous Lenten Services and then participate. One of the deadliest blows to worship is to worship as a spectator. The biblical ethic regards worship as work, (in Greek, leitourgia means common work). This is sacred work in which the people cooperate with the divine. Working together brings joy to the Godhead, and enormous satisfaction to the human workers.

It has been said many of today’s church attendees play church rather than really worship. If the truth were known, many believers don’t have a clue what worship is.

Does worship mean I have to hold my hands up when I sing and pray? Does worship mean I need to close my eyes and envision something heavenly, lest I become distracted by something earthly? Does worship mean I have feelings that are a little bit ecstatic? Does worship mean I have attended the Liturgy and that’s all I need?

I read a quote by A. W. Tozer who said that worship “is the missing jewel in modern evangelism.” May we apply that to our own Orthodox Church?

There is such a rich meaning to our worship, and I am saddened when I recognize a sea of bewildered faces that are not in touch with what is transpiring during the Liturgy.

...see Fr. Bill on P. 3
God's Perfect Timing

The Chicago football fans' overflowing joy and pride turned to sorrow as our beloved Bears fell to the Indianapolis Colts in the Super Bowl last month. Commentators spent the entire week leading up to the Super Bowl discussing many different strategies that Chicago could employ to slow down the Indianapolis offense. One expert claimed that all the Chicago defense had to do is "interfere with the good timing between Peyton Manning and his receivers." Chicago was not successful.

The Indianapolis Colts’ quarterback, Peyton Manning, was the Super Bowl MVP. He completed 25 of 38 passes for 247 yards and a touchdown pass. Much to the chagrin of the Chicago Bears, Manning had almost perfect timing with his receivers and the Bears were defeated.

In March, we will celebrate and remember a saint who experienced perfect timing. He did not experience a quarterback's perfect timing but God's perfect timing. His name? Lazarus. Every year, on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, the Church remembers and celebrates the raising of Lazarus.

The account of Lazarus being brought back to life is found in the Gospel of John. We read: "Jesus commands: 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him (Lazarus) who was dead, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God.'" Lazarus, Jesus’ dear friend was dead. Although Lazarus’ sisters, Mary and Martha, had quickly notified him, Jesus did not seem to be in a hurry.

The news of Lazarus’ sickness did not surprise Jesus. He continued teaching and working for two more days and then finally headed to Lazarus’ home in Bethany.

Lazarus’ name translated means “helped by God”. No matter what we do or where we live we can only function by the grace, love and help from God. We have no power to do anything without God's assistance.

Lazarus lived in Bethany which means “the house of affliction”. Many of us can identify with needing God's assistance. Sickness, pain, death, depression, discouragement and constant challenges are all around us. Also, Job was very familiar with challenges. In the book of Job we read “a mortal, born of woman is few of days and full of trouble.”

Many of us are living in a place of affliction and pain. Have you lived days in your life without trouble? Do you find yourself singing out to God because of those afflictions? Have certain circumstances in your life caused a stink to arise and made things so hopeless that it seems like there is no way out? Throughout our lives, many of us have our “Bethany”. No one is immune to the troubles and trials of life.

The way that Jesus responds to the news of Lazarus’ illness is a lesson for us. He knew that His dear friend was dying, but it did not seem to affect Him. He kept ministering to the people for two more days. Jesus was not upset. He knew there were no impossible situations. Jesus knew that His power was not limited by any circumstances. Our seemingly hard or difficult circumstances are easy for God. His power transcends our trouble. The Lord's power is not constrained by our limited faith or hopelessness. He can bring victory.
**The HARC Corner**

Come into HARC and buy your Easter gifts. Cloisonné eggs, icons, Easter cards, and a variety of books are available. In addition to children’s Easter books, consider, among others, one of the following:

**Daily Lenten Meditations**

By Presbytera Emily Harakas

The Orthodox Church has four Lenten seasons during the year. Of these, Great Lent, a seven-week period before Easter, is the most important.

Lent is a time when more works of charity and mercy are done for those less fortunate. Lent is also a time of joy! It is an opportunity for a new beginning, a cleansing of body and soul in anticipation of Pascha, the glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The purpose of Daily Lenten Meditations, therefore, is to be of assistance as a personal guide for family devotion for the faithful. Of most importance is to make and take the time for daily spiritual edification, especially during this most holy season.

Softcover, $5.00

**The Bible For Young People**

By Zoe Kanavas

Illustrated by Christos Gousides

This is an outstanding Orthodox resource for parents, pastors, and teachers who are interested in introducing the young to the sacred stories of the Bible. With the original Greek text of this work, the author creates a vivid imagery that conveys the message of our Bible in a way to make it come alive. The richness of the Holy Scripture is reflected in the color and warmth of the illustrated iconography.

Hardbound, $17.50

**Baby's First Bible**

Little Stories for Little Heads

By Melody Carlson

Hold your little one close. Begin to hide God's word in your baby's heart. Enjoy the treasured times as you share these Bible stories with your child again and again.

Hardbound, $7.00

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**Fr. Bill from P.1**

**Road to Pascha is a journey to be taken daily during Lent**

There is much value in saying that you are present in church because you desire it rather than “I have to be there.”

During the Liturgy, when the celebrant comes before the congregation in the Small Entrance, he invites everyone with these words. “O Come, Let Us Worship...” At this point in the Liturgy, everyone is invited to participate and sing “Come let us worship and bow down to Christ, O Son of God, Who rose from the dead, O Son of God, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia.”

**Altar boy is college bound**

Steven Psyhogios has been an altar boy for eight years. He enjoys helping Father Bill and Father Nicholas, and finds it such an honor to observe them celebrate the services. Steven is a junior at Hinsdale Central High School. He is an excellent student. He is planning to attending UIC, where his brother Dean is presently a student. They are looking forward to rooming together. Steven plans to pursue a career in meteorology, engineering or architecture.

Steven is an avid White Sox fan. He attends many games at U.S. Cellular Field, and has traveled around the country to other ballparks. He also enjoys hockey, football and golf. He loves music, his iPod, his Apple computer, and spending time with his family and friends.

Steven is a great asset. He helps in many ways and is very attentive. He stays after Liturgy to clear the altar with his brother. Steven is a good altar boy and truly loves serving God.

by Michael Cotsilis

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**March Registry**

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Chicago Choir Federation sings in Tarpon Springs for Epiphany

Twenty-five members of the Chicago Choir Federation traveled to sunny Florida to sing for the Epiphany service January 6 celebrated at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Tarpon Springs. Leading the Chicago delegation was Nick Paloumpis, who received a special invitation from His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta to conduct the 74-voice choir. This special invitation was extended to Chicago to commemorate the Federation’s 50th anniversary serving the Chicago metropolis in music ministries.

Also from Holy Apostles was Federation Treasurer, Joanne Volakakis and a surprise visitor, Jim Chicouris, who was in Florida visiting his brother, George, during the holidays. Thirteen Chicago churches were represented as well as members from other local Greek Orthodox choirs.

The service was celebrated by Archbishop Demetrios of America. Other hierarchs in attendance included: Metropolitan Alexios, Metropolitan Ephiphanios of Spain and Portugal and Auxiliary Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos. Reverend Father Michael Eaccarino, Proistamenos of the Cathedral, said that 2007 was the 101st year of the retrieval of the sacred Cross. This year’s successful diver, Nicholas Xipolitas, was one of 52 teenager divers who participated. Local news services estimated that over 15,000 people were in attendance.

By Nick Paloumpis

Family Synaxis one day retreat in Chicago

The Church in the Home will be the topic for the Family Synaxis Lenten Retreat, which will be held at St. Demetrios Church in Chicago on March 10. The retreat will assist families in preparing to fully experience Great Lent. Participants will join with other Orthodox Christian families in learning the proper methods and meanings behind our Church traditions and how to incorporate them in our daily lives. The $50 registration fee per family covers the cost of the entire retreat, which run last from 9am-4pm. Please call Anthony or Maria Kroll at (847) 639-2262 or email FamilySynaxis@sbcglobal.net for more information and registration materials. Materials are also available in our multi-purpose room.

Philoptochos Update

The Godparents’ Luncheon took on a Chicago Bears theme this year. About 200 guests enjoyed a delicious lunch and were treated to enlightening speeches from Alexandra Trivelas, George Theophilos and Faith Koszewski about the meaning of godparents. Many thanks to the cooks and kitchen crew that included Mike Cotsilis, Peter Poteres, Nick Kirkeles, Phil Chiganos and Steve Savas. JoAnn Stubbings, Eleni Koumelis, Cynthia Stathopoulos and their committee did a fantastic job organizing this annual event.

Mark your calendars for the following events:

Sunday, March 4, Celebration of Books: Philoptochos will host an evening reception after the presentation.

Wednesday, March 21: Philoptochos will host a Lenten Dinner following the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy. The dinner buffet will be served in the multi-purpose room.

Sunday, March 25: Easter candles for children will go on sale after church. Philoptochos needs volunteers to help decorate candles. If you are interested, please contact Alyssa Petropoulos at 630-222-9500.
Menaia is the theme of this year’s Oratorical Festival

Since 1983, the Archdiocese has provided an opportunity to teenagers (grades 7-12) to learn, write, and speak about specific topics concerning the Orthodox Church, their faith and their heritage. This opportunity arises each Spring during the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical and Arts Festival. Holy Apostles Church will be hosting our parish festival on Sunday, March 11, during regularly scheduled Sunday School classes. Students in the 4th grade and older are encouraged to participate in our parish festival.

Information packets containing the speech topics for both the Senior and the Junior Divisions, a reference bibliography, and an article on tips for speakers based upon each speech topic for this year’s Festival have been mailed to all families in the 4th – 12th grade classes. The students in the 7th grade and older division who are chosen to represent our parish in the Metropolis Festival will join other

Junior and Senior Division families on Saturday, April 14, at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church, in Palos Heights, Illinois.

Those teens chosen to represent our Metropolis will advance to the Archdiocesan Festival to be held in June. All national finalists receive a college scholarship or a US Savings Bond as follows: the top three speakers in each division receive a college scholarship in the amount of $2000, $1500, and $1000 respectively, and the remaining finalists receive a $500 US Savings Bond. These awards are made possible by many generous donations to the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Scholarship Foundation.

This year’s festival theme is the Menaia. Our worship services in the Orthodox Church, generally follow three cycles: the weekly cycle, the annual cycle of movable feasts, and the annual cycle of fixed feasts. The third cycle, that of fixed feasts, are those feasts found in the service books known as the Menaia.

The Menaia contain services for the feasts, fixed in the calendar, associated with the saints and with specific events in the life of Jesus and the Theotokos. The Menaia cover the entire year from September 1 through August 31 and are arranged in 12 books, one for each month of the year. This year’s Oratorical Festival is devoted to the lives of the saints.

All of the Festival topics can be researched quickly and easily on-line at the Archdiocesan website, www.goarch.org. By clicking on the “Our Faith” tab located at the top of the web page, you will notice that there is a tremendous amount of information available at your fingertips.

It is not too late to participate in the Festival. A student can participate by writing a speech or an essay, composing poetry or trying his/her hand at iconography. All interested students should contact Joan Berg as soon as possible at 630-662-0167.

Jr. and Sr. Oratorical Festival Topics

JUNIOR DIVISION (7th to 9th grades)
1. “Commander of the Heavenly Host, we the unworthy beseech you… Deliver us from all danger…” (Apolytikon of Synaxis of the Archangels). What role do Angels play in our way to salvation?
2. Who was St. Anthony and why does the Church refer to him as the Father of Monasticism?
3. Who were Saints Constantine and Helen and why does the Church refer to them as “Equal to the Apostles”?
4. St. Katherine is remembered by the Church as being a defender of the Faith and Martyr. Her Apolytikon reads, “For, she brilliantly silenced the eloquence of the impious by the sword of the spirit, crowned as a martyr, she asks great mercy for all.” How does the life of Saint Katherine inspire you?
5. In the Kontakion of Saints Cosmas and Damianos we hear the words “Having received the grace of healing, you reach out to those in need.” How can we follow the example of these Wonder Working Physicians?
6. Talk about the life of Saint Andrew, the first called of the Apostles and his connection to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

SENIOR DIVISION (10th to 12th grade)
1. “Shining forth with the works of Orthodoxy, you quenched every false belief…” (Kontakion of Saint Athanasios) Talk about how Saint Athanasios defended the Orthodox faith.
2. The life of the Prophet Elijah as recorded in the Old Testament (3rd Kings Chapter 17 – 4th Kings Chapter 2) reveals not only the Holiness of this great prophet but also how God listened to his humble prayers. Talk about Elijah’s obedience, power of prayer and faithfulness to God, and how we today might strive to imitate his example.
3. Saint Romanos the Melodist wrote hymns for most of the major feast days of the Church and is regarded by the Church as one of her most gifted hymnographers. Talk about how he teaches us theology through his hymns.
4. “Divinely wise Cyril and Methodios, pray to the Lord of all to strengthen all nations in Orthodoxy” (Apolytikon of Saints Cyril and Methodios). How did these saints follow the Commission of Jesus to “Go forth and make Disciples of All Nations” (Matthew 28: 19) and how can we do likewise?
5. “Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:19). How did the lives of the Three Hierarchs emulate this passage and how can we follow their example?
6. “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light” (John 1: 6-8). Talk about how, through his life and through his actions, St. John the Baptist bore witness to the Light, Jesus Christ.

The heavy stones of doubt can be rolled away

even after we have given up hope. In the Book of Isaiah we read, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

When Jesus finally arrived in Bethany, Lazarus’ family had given up hope. Lazarus was dead four days and buried in a sealed grave. The greatest lie for us to believe is that it’s over and there is nothing that God can or will do about it. He told the people to roll away the stone.

We, too, can roll away our heavy stones of unbelief, doubt and fear that seal us in our tombs of trouble. Jesus then commanded, “Lazarus, come forth” and Lazarus miraculously walked out from the grave. This story helps us to trust in God and look to Him to resurrect our own lives.

Even though Jesus was four days late, he was right on time. Don’t give up hope. Even when life seems hopeless, God is in control. He has the power to resurrect our lives and circumstances.

God may not answer right away, but He will answer. He answers in His time. Hang in there. The Lord is our gracious, merciful, loving God of perfect timing.
On to next year for Holy Apostles basketball team

After a long grueling season, Holy Apostles ended its first season in about ten years with a playoff loss to Ss Peter and Paul on Saturday, February 10, with an overall record of 3 wins and 12 losses.

We had a surprisingly large turnout of sixteen boys. We practiced every Friday night in a rented gym in Burr Ridge. Since we were very inexperienced, we got off to a slow start. As the season went on, we grew more confident and much better, and our games became closer. The team developed close friendships as a result of this activity.

Special thanks should go out to our coaches: Jim Pappas, George Chechopoulos, and Miles Petrus. They did a wonderful job of coaching and really improved the team. They are great coaches and we were honored to play for them. Thank you also to Coach Pappas for buying our wonderful jerseys.

Although we didn’t win many games, we were in every one of them, and the boys gave it everything they had. We did very well for our first season. Thank you to the Parish Council for supporting us. We will begin practices in early August for next season, when we hope to also have a high school boy’s team.

By Peter Kallis

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

Time to plan for 2nd annual 5K

Save the date! Runners, joggers, fast and even slow walkers of all ages, mark your calendars and join us at the Holy Apostles 5K Family Run and Walk. The event will take place on Saturday, May 12 at 8:30 AM.

Our course will begin and end at the church. All proceeds will go to the Philoxenia House in Rochester, MN. This house provides free accommodations and meals for people who are traveling to the Mayo Clinic for medical treatment.

We need volunteers. To volunteer or for more information, please call Lou Kafkes at (708) 246-7336.

HOLY APOSTLES Celebration of BOOKS
March 4th – March 11th, 2007

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:
March 4th: Rev. Fr. Frank Marangos
“Heroes of Holy Week”
Vespers: 6:30 PM - Presentation: 8:00 PM

March 6th: Dr. John Klentos
“Ancient Worship in a Modern World”
Great Compline: 6:30 PM - Presentation: 8:00 PM

March 8th: Dr. Kyriacos Markides
“The Forgotten Path of Christian Spirituality:
A Personal Journey of Exploration”
Great Compline: 6:30 PM - Presentation: 8:00 PM

Thousands of Orthodox books will be on display for all to browse and purchase for their library.

Daily Hours are 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Sponsored By The Metropolis of Chicago Religious Education Department

Holy Apostles Church
2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester (708) 562-2744

Need more information?
Visit www.holyapostleschurch.com

Kay Bobis, foreground, manages a smile as she heads to the finish in last year’s 5K.
**Do you fast?**

"Give me proof of it by your works. If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him. Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eyes, and the feet, and the hands and all the members of your bodies. For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?"

St. John Chrysostom

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**Celebration of Books**

- **Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church**
- **March 2007**
- **2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois**

**St. Demetrios, Chicago**

**Family Synaxis Retreat**

**Independence Day Program**

**Philoptochos Lenten Supper Following Liturgy**
Weekday Services

**Sixth Hour**
Every Tuesday and Thursday in March at 12:00pm

**Great Compline**
Every Monday in March
Tuesday March 6
Thursday March 8 at 6:30pm

**Heretismi**
Every Friday in March (except March 30)
7:00pm

**Presanctified Liturgy**
Every Wednesday in March
6:00pm

**Saturday of Lazarus**
Saturday March 31
8:00am Orthros
9:00 am Divine Liturgy

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Godparents Sunday
George Theophilos lets everyone know what his godparents mean to him during the Godparents Luncheon in the multi-purpose room.

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**Adult Fellowship**
The Adult Christian & Fellowship & Bible Study ministry will meet at 1p.m. on Wed., March 28, in the church multi-purpose room to fold the palms into crosses. Anyone who would like to learn and can help, please join us. Refreshments will be served.

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**Mosaic Deadline**
The deadline for the April Mosaic is Tuesday, March 6.

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Memorials
Christine Deliberto
Angelo Bilder
Lelica Bilder
George Rousis
Georgia Spiropoulos
Vasiliki Spiropoulos
Gregory Stoumbelis
Marianthy Stoumbelis
Mary Moore
Jane Ranson
Danielle Poulos
Constantinos Kokkokios
Nancy Counelis

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Funerals
none

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Fanari Camp
Our diocesan youth camp will be held at the Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake, WI from June 17 to June 23. This year’s theme is Christian love. Registration forms can be obtained online at www.gochicagoyouth.goarch.org

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Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church
2501 S. Wolf Rd.
Westchester, IL 60154
(708) 562-2744

Address Service Requested Postmaster: Please deliver by 4th of March.