

MOSAIC

Coming together, we form an icon of God's Kingdom

Vol. 13, No. 5

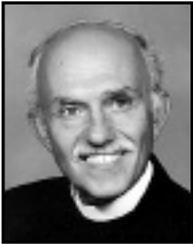
Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, IL

September 2008

(708) 562-2744

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From Father Bill



Be willing to be yourself

Can you believe it's soon going to be autumn again? That means it's back to school again. And football season again. And another fall schedule again. And cooler weather again, and if you aren't careful, it will be business as usual again.

I've discovered that it doesn't take long for the new to get old, or even for something as fresh as fall to grow stale unless our perspective is renewed on a constant basis. Another discovery I've made is that autumn, which in the Orthodox Church is the beginning of the new liturgical year, is an opportunity to resolve that it is not all that bad to be willing to be yourself. I have also discovered it is helpful for you and for me to look at life as it is, and not as we imagine it to be.

In order to help me discover these truths, I delved deep into the scriptures to read about the lives of saints. That guided me to the letters of St. Paul who lived in danger throughout his life. In his letter to the Philippians, I observed again that St. Paul was genuinely joyful. In fact, it became obvious to me that joy is the underlying theme of his letter. Was it because St. Paul had it made? Hardly. Was it because he was finally free of suffering, disappointment, and difficulties? Not at all. Surprising though it may seem, he wrote the letter while he was under house arrest, beset with unfair legal trials, most of them in hostile settings. To top things off, his journey to Rome had included a life-threatening shipwreck off the coast of Malta.

Amazing! On the heels of hardships, false charges, mistreatment, isolation, shipwreck, and an unfair arrest, St. Paul still rejoiced...and urged his friends to do the



Holy Apostles' annual summer picnic begins as always, with an outdoor Liturgy at Katherine Legge Park in Hinsdale. More picnic photos are on page 4.

same. How did he achieve this attitude? Reading through commentaries, including explanations offered by St. John Chrysostom, guided me to the conclusion that St. Paul wasn't living under the circumstances, but above them. Hence his focus on Christ was strong and sure. St. Paul was neither grim in his countenance nor frightened about his future.

If you are still with me, I hope you are not thinking, Father, all that is in the Bible. My life is so different. I face financial pressure. My family is in disarray and I am facing a terminal disease. I can't bring myself to believe as St. Paul.

Our earthly situation may leave much to be desired, but must that dictate a life of perpetual pessimism? Not if St. Paul's counsel is correct. He said, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." To push that principle to its ultimate conclusion, I can even learn to laugh again in the midst of whatever I

may be experiencing. The key, I believe, is to be willing to be yourself.

Robert Louis Stevenson put it this way, "To be what we are, and not to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life." I think the major cause of frustration, failure, and unhappiness is our unwillingness to accept ourselves and be ourselves.

Some of us are rigid and unwilling to change. In doing this, we deny ourselves access to the power God has promised to each of us. Recently, I was looking in a folder I have maintained throughout the years in which I place various articles of interest. I read the following thoughts penned by C.S. Lewis, which provides the key for all of us to consider into the new ecclesiastical year: "No one in his senses, if he has any powers of ordering his own day, would reserve his chief prayers for bedtime, obviously the worst possible hour for any action which needs concen-

...See Fr. Bill on P. 6

From Father Nicholas



Worshipping God in The New Ecclestial Year

Summer has flown by so quickly. It seems that the children just finished school. Now, it is time for them to return. At the beginning of September, Naperville celebrates 'The Last Fling', the official end of summer. The fall season brings school schedules, extracurricular activities, sports and our crazy, busy life returns! If we are not careful, our lives can be reduced to attending the Sunday Liturgy as another event among the myriad of obligations that we have.

We race into the church and hope that it finishes early so that we can get to our next event. As parents, we can become taxi services shuttling our children from one obligation to the next. Life can flash right by us! Our lives can become a sequence of unrelated events. As the fall craziness begins, the Church celebrates the ecclestial new year on the first of September. This marks the beginning, a new start for all of us. Regardless of what happened in the summer or last year, we are offered a new start.

At the heart of our new liturgical year is worship. The church offers us worship to order our lives. Worship provides structure in our hectic schedules. St. Theophan the Recluse defined worship as standing before God. As we worship, we pray and stand before God. We wait upon God in silence. While we are in church worshipping with words, through actions, or in silence, we stand before God. Our worship is an encounter with God. As we encounter God, we build a direct and personal relationship with Him.

Times of worship give us the opportunity to shut off the outside world. St. Theophan the Recluse challenges us to "stand before God with the minds in the heart." Our challenge is to worship not only with our reasoning brains but our entire mind, body, emotions and soul.

Worship should be all embracing. Bishop Kallistos Ware writes, "beyond and beneath their literal sense, particular syllables and phrases are rich in associations and undertones, and possess a hidden power and poetry of their own." In worship, we utilize words beautifully and poetically.

Worship is offered in other ways that employ our senses. We worship through singing and hearing music, seeing the splendor of colored vestments, venerating the holy

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 3

The 39th Biennial Clergy Laity Congress...

Was held in Washington D.C. on July 13- 18. Father William Chiganos, President Nicholas Kirkeles, and Vice President Peter Poteres represented the parish. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios formally opened the congress with a speech instructing the parishes to set up a committee to bring back the church's people. The committee should focus on interfaith marriages, our lost youth in the 16-35 age group, and the 60 million un-churched people of today.

The following reports were presented:

Holy Cross/Hellenic College: The archdiocese has completed all owed payments to the school as of June 2008. Philoptochos is still the largest supporter of the school. The Archdiocese needs more priests and needs to go from the 19-2008 graduates to an average of 40 graduates per year.

Youth: The Ionian Village will have more than 250 kids participating this year. The camp is in need of refurbishing with an estimated cost of \$6M euros. The archdiocese is in negotiations with the Greek government to help with the costs. A new website is presently under development. There is interest in creating an internet and radio ministry.

Greek Education: New textbooks will hopefully be available for the upcoming year.

Science & Technology: The ethics of global climate change were discussed. Topics for continuing study include: human cloning, stem cell research, ethical issues concerning human reproduction, and the meaning of life relating to brain-dead people.

Religious Education: The following recommendations were made: institute a regular education program for adults; organize a speaker's series; plan to attend a Metropolis Religious Education Seminar; each parish should budget to send someone for continuing religious education; continue the magazine program; initiate the Distance Learning program this fall; collaborate with other ministries; provide 45 to 60 minutes religious education for everyone; each metropolis should add a paid Director of Religious Education.

Institutions: The committee recommended that each parish place a separate line item in their budget for St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine and the Saint Basil Academy as a further commitment to Orthodoxy.

Archon Presentation: The Patriarchate in Turkey held 8,000 properties in 1936, 2,000 in 1999, and in 2008 holds fewer than 500 properties. The Turkish government claims the property from the Patriarchate by not allowing refurbishments via permits, causing the property to be condemned and become property of the Turkish government by law. The Archons presented the issue to the Turkish

Supreme Court but received an unfavorable ruling. The Archons then presented the case to the European Court of Human Rights and won their case with a 7-0 vote including the vote of the Turkish Justice on 7/08/08. They are now pursuing the return of all properties including the re-opening of the School of Theology.

Outreach & Evangelism: Parishes must do more than just welcome people at the door. Parishes need to add handicapped persons to all outreach programs.

Faith Endowment: The goal in 2004 was to create an Endowment for Hellenism Education with the goal of \$80 - 100M. The program has provided grants of \$1.5M from 2005 - 2007.

Administration: A new Parish Council Training Program will be initiated late 2008/early 2009 and will include a one-day training program. There are 522 parishes in the archdiocese (510 active, 12 mission churches). There are 775 clergy (591 active, 184 retired). In attendance at the Congress were 710 parish delegates, 277 clergy, and 433 laity. 327 of the parishes were represented with an additional 394 Philoptochos delegates. The Orthodox Church has the 2nd most educated and wealthy sub-group in the country with 45% of all families making in excess of \$100K annually, but is near the bottom of the list in giving money to the church.

IOCC: A very emotional video of the fires in Greece 2007 was shown. The IOCC provided emergency assistance to 3,000 farmers with 20 tons of seed at a cost of over \$2M.

Communication: A national e-mail list for urgent news and a weekly newsletter is being developed. An updated list from all parishes is being requested. The committee has developed and distributed a parish calendar. It was recommended that each metropolis appoint a communication liaison.

Finance: The Chicago (12th straight year), Detroit, and San Francisco Metropolis' met their financial obligations in 2007. The Archdiocese income in 2007 was over \$24M (first time over \$20M). The next two years will be the Biennium of the Steward. The goal is to bring the annual Archdiocese income to \$80M by 2020.

Missions: The formation of a missions ministry or committee in each metropolis and parish was recommended. Parishes should budget a line item for the OCMC.

National Philoptochos: During the present National Philoptochos President's terms, approximately \$8.7M has been raised/donated. The Holy Apostles Philoptochos was represented by President Kathy Magas and Treasurer Terry Parafink.

...by Peter Poteres

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2

We should present ourselves completely to God in worship

icons, observing the design of the church building, making symbolic gestures, offering incense or even lighting candles.

Bishop Kallistos writes symbolic actions “express something which cannot be expressed in any other way. It expresses something that cannot be said through the spoken word, it reaches the part of our being which cannot be touched by rational arguments.”

Worship penetrates our reasoning brain and reaches the depths of our being and personality. True worship employs the mind and the heart. Worship expresses the Kingdom of Heaven and transforms and transfigures us.

This beautiful worship cannot merely be explained and discussed. It must be lived. In worship we personally experience God himself.

True worship occurs when we offer ourselves completely to God. St. Paul’s letter to the Romans commands “present yourselves to God.” We surrender to God. The church celebrates the Elevation and Veneration of the Life-Giving Cross on September 14. The Gospel reading on the Sunday following this great feast day tells us “whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.” Again, we are challenged to surrender our lives to God.

C.S. Lewis observed, “the more we let God take us over, the more truly ourselves we become – because He made us. He invented all the different people that you and I were intended to be. It is when I turn to Christ, when I give up myself to His personality, that I first begin to have a real personality of my own.” We surrender through obedience to God in all areas of our lives. It is hard work and requires intense warfare against our self-centered nature.

We are strengthened by worship at church and prayer. All of us eventually surrender to someone or something. If it is not God, it may be the opinions or expectations of others, money, resentment, fear, pride, lusts or ego. We were designed to worship God. If we do not worship Him, we will create other idols to worship.

As we begin this new liturgical year, filled with new beginnings and opportunities to worship and serve God, we should ask ourselves: “What area of my life am I holding back from God?”



Chowing down at the Adventure Theater BBQ are l-r: Peter Savas, Zoe Kafkes, and Will Dimas. Mr. D. hosts the annual event at his home.

Youth programs to resume in September

As the new church and school year approaches, we are getting ready for another exciting year. We offer many opportunities for our children and young adults to learn and grow in their Orthodox Christian life and to make and nurture friendships. Following are the youth ministries that will be offered.

TOTS (ages 2 through 5) resumes Tuesday, September 9, at 10am. We will be introducing our youngest children to two topics: Mary is Born, and St. Helen finds the Holy Cross. The group uses fun, interactive, and hands-on activities for our children to learn about their Christian faith. The group meets bi-monthly on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 to 11:15am. Please bring your children and join us for a fun-filled learning experience.

The Way (Kindergarten through 8th grade) resumes Monday, September 8 at 5:15 pm. We share a meal together and then break into smaller discussion groups (Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade, 3rd and 4th grade, 5th and 6th grade, 7th and 8th grade). Each group discusses and learns about many different areas of our Orthodox Christian life. This is a great way to make friends and to grow together in Christ. The group meets bi-monthly on Monday evenings from 5:15 to 7:00 pm. Please join us.

GOYA (9th through 12th grade) resumes Tuesday, September 9 at 6pm with a kickoff barbecue on the church grounds. We discuss

relevant topics that affect the daily Christian lives of our teenagers. The group is a great place to meet other teenagers and to build relationships with them. Our group meets bi-monthly on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. Please bring your appetites and join us at the kickoff barbecue.

YAL (single people and married couples from 18 years old and up) typically meets the first Friday of the month. We have discussions that address current events and topics relevant to our daily Christian lives. The group also enjoys social events throughout the year. YAL is a wonderful place to make and build relationships while learning and growing in your Orthodox Christian faith. We meet monthly on Friday evenings at 7:15 pm. Please join us.

Family Synaxis (married couples and families) usually meets the third Saturday evening of the month. We have the vespers service followed by dinner and discussion. Our themes focus on building relationships with our spouses and children as well as living our Christian faith in the home. Throughout the year, we also offer fun, social activities for the entire family. We look forward to your family joining us.

Registration and information for these ministries will be available on Sunday, September 7 following the Divine Liturgy. Please register so that we can plan the year accordingly.

Philoptochos news and upcoming events

Clergy Laity

Holy Apostles Philoptochos was recognized with three awards at the recent Clergy Laity Congress in Washington D.C. We received first place for the largest increase in membership (56 new members), first place for best practice in membership and participation, and a certificate for meeting our national commitments. We thank our enthusiastic and active members for their participation that led to these awards.

Membership Night

Philoptochos will kick off its new year with

an exciting membership night at Drury Lane on September 23 at 7 p.m. This event was very well attended last year, which contributed to the 40% increase in membership! Speakers will talk about the many Philoptochos charities, including the fashion show beneficiaries. Please join us for fellowship and refreshments at Drury Lane!

Fashion Show

Hats Off to Philoptochos is the theme for this fall’s fashion show which will be Saturday, October 18 at The Carlisle.

...Submitted by JoAnn Stubbings



George Alex, right, assisted by his grandson George, left, organized and conducted the races.

A summer tradition



L-r: Marissa O'Connor, Christopher Petropoulos, and Anna Kinnsas run for the prizes.

Kosta Kinnas, left, and Fr. Bill perhaps discuss the merits of basketball vs. soccer, above. At right, Arvie Athas, left, with her daughter Kristi Landorf, with Regina, Zoe, and John Kulidas, and Kristi's husband Eric and their son A.J. all enjoy the picnic.



It's time to relax for Spero Kinnas, above.

A missionary to Albania visits Holy Apostles



Theodore (Todi) and Georgia Bendo answer Mimi Natsis' questions about their missionary activities in Albania.

Mimi Natsis and Maximos Forero prepare their creation on a 'onesies' t-shirt.



Georgia and Theodore (Todi) Bendo.



Theodore and Georgia Bendo's wedding was officiated by Archbishop Anastasios in Albania.

By Spero Kinnas

Georgia Gilman Bendo is an OCMC (Orthodox Christian Mission Center) missionary to Albania. Under the supervision of Archbishop Anastasios, she directs the Protagonist Elementary School in Tirana, Albania. This school has a daytime secular curriculum, but Georgia offers many after-hour elective catechetical activities in order to provide Orthodox teachings to her interested students. Georgia is also one of the team leaders for the youth summer camps Archbishop Anastasios holds every year. Earlier this year, she married Archbishop Anastasios' secretary, Theodore (Todi) Bendo, an attorney who has dedicated his time to assisting the Archbishop in Albania.

Georgia, now in the fourth month of her first pregnancy, visited Holy Apostles where she received a warm welcome after Sunday Liturgy on July 20. Although surrounded by parishioners and visitors asking her about her life, she still found the chance to acquire several books from HARC. Georgia found excellent children's Orthodox books that she plans to incorporate in her work in Albania.

A large group of Holy Apostles

parishioners had an impromptu baby shower for her on Saturday night. This was an opportunity to share the joyous event with her friends but also allowed her to provide an update on the progress of her missionary projects in Albania. Many children participated in the baby shower. Adults and children created colorful drawings on 'onesies' (baby t-shirts) for Georgia's baby. Georgia is planning to deliver her baby in Greece later this year.

With a busy schedule ahead of them, the Bendos left that Sunday afternoon in order to complete the mission's awareness engagements in the United States before returning to Albania.

Georgia requested our prayers for her and her family's health and for the continued success of OCMC. If you have any



A representative 'onesie'

questions about their activities you can contact Theodore and Georgia via the OCMC website: www.OCMC.org or call for information at 1-877 GOFORTH. For any tax deductible contributions please send your correspondence to:

Orthodox Christian Mission Center
 Attn: Gilman-Bendo/Albania
 P.O. Box 4319
 St. Augustine, FL 32085-4319

The
HARC
CORNER

**Drita,
An Albanian girl discovers
her ancestors' faith**

By Renee Ritsi
Illustrated by Cameron Thorp

As this beautifully illustrated story opens, we meet Drita, a young Albanian girl, whose family has lived for years under repressive Communist rule. In a joyful conclusion, Drita is finally able to discover the faith of her ancestors and is baptized. Softbound, \$11.00

**Snuggles, The bunny who
helped me find God**

By Myra T. Johnson
Illustrated by Myra T. Johnson

Snuggles is an adopted bunny whose human 'mommy' is searching for God in all sorts of different places. When Snuggles becomes seriously ill, his distraught mommy reaches out to God in prayer. The story of how God answers this prayer will touch the hearts of young and old alike. Snuggles is the story of a real bunny who shared the author's home and heart for many years. Softbound, \$10.00

Saint Demetrios of Thessaloniki
By James C. Skedros

The late antique city of Thessaloniki claimed particular devotion to a local Christian hero and martyr of the early fourth century named Demetrios. Although the miracles worked by the saint were numerous and remarkable—healing the sick, saving the city from famine, rescuing prisoners and providing means for rebuilding his church—his role as the vigilant protector of Thessaloniki and its citizens was his most characteristic attribute. A popular local veneration of the saint quickly developed, and by the middle of the seventh century St. Demetrios was venerated as a divine patron and protector of the city. Softbound, \$15.00

Fr. Bill from P. 1

Best not to fall asleep on God in prayer

tration. The trouble is that thousands of unfortunate people can hardly find any other...

"My own plan, when hard pressed, is to seize any time, and place, however unsuitable, in preference to the last waking moment. On a day of traveling with, perhaps, some ghastly meeting at the end of it, I'd rather pray sitting in a crowded train than put it off till midnight when one reaches a hotel bedroom with an aching head and dry throat and one's mind partly in a stupor and in a whirl.

"On other and less crowded days, a bench in a park or a back street where one can pace up and down will do."

Every person is really two selves: the self he is, and the self he has the possibility of becoming. The highest success will come to you when you begin to picture in your mind, your best possible self.

Someone asked Thomas Edison how he accounted for his amazing inventive genius.

He replied, "It is because I never think in words. I think in pictures." He pictured in his mind some object he desired to invent. This picture then took possession of him. It sank into his subconscious mind and while he was thinking of something else, his subconscious mind worked on it. Because the subconscious mind has marvelous creative power, Edison got flashes of insight. "Creative hunches" he called them, and that accounted for his greatness.

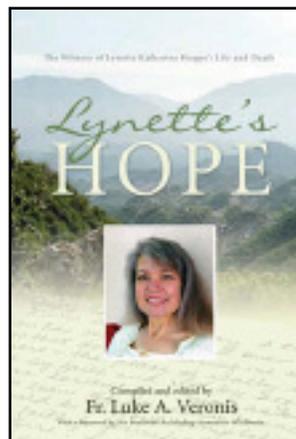
I have always taught that the act of prayer is very important for all ages. In order to make a suitable change in lifestyle, why not try C.S. Lewis' suggestion. If we are in the habit of making the sign of the cross and collapsing into bed after a long day, be willing to change your habit and pray at a time of day that suits you best. Be willing to be yourself and improve your life in the new Church year.

Lynette's Hope

Compiled and edited by
Fr. Luke Veronis

Lynette Hoppe was an Orthodox missionary in Albania who was stricken with breast cancer. She describes how her illness was a blessing. After 20 months of painful suffering, she succumbed to this disease while continuing her missionary and family responsibilities without complaint. She had time to prepare her family and young children, as well as prepare herself spiritually for her departure. She became an example for Albanians on how to share family end of life challenges, despite cultural tendencies to shield the afflicted from knowledge of his or her disease.

This book is Lynette's witness on how to conquer death by being with Christ. It is available in HARC.



...reviewed by Spero Kinnas

Registry

Baptisms

Katherine Elaine, daughter of Michelle & Anthony Koliopoulos
Sponsor: Mia Koliopoulos

Margaret Linda, daughter of Michelle & Anthony Koliopoulos
Sponsor: William Koliopoulos

Peter, son of Vasilika & Armand Rakli
Sponsor: Marianna Shubalis

Nicholas, son of Andrea & Michael Tangedahl
Sponsor: Nicole Ostendorf

Madeline, daughter of Nicole & Johnn Kubesh
Sponsor: Maria & Scott Gordon

Athena, daughter of Arianna & Anthony Zamfoti
Sponsor: Chantelle Johnson

Weddings

Leah Logan & Bryan Brinkmeyer
Sponsor: Helen Rubenstein

Maria Rammos & Donald Stephens
Sponsor: Bobby Rammos

Stephanie Katses & Andrew Theodorou

Memorials

*George Anos
Lynette Hoppe
John Economakos
Marie Economakos
James Konos
Lazaros Dali
Gus Ardamis*

Funerals

*Eleni Karandreas
Peter Angelopoulos
Tula Hall*

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for the October Mosaic is Tuesday, September 9.

If you are so kind as to shoot photos for the Mosaic, PLEASE be sure to set your camera to maximum resolution first! Thank you.

Don't be left out!

Due to the large number of members who want to be included in the 50th anniversary directory, there are now additional portrait sitting dates. All photography will take place in the multi-purpose room on the following dates and times:

Friday, Nov. 21 2:30-8:50pm
Saturday, Nov. 22 10:00am - 4:50pm
Sunday, Nov. 23 12:00pm - 6:50p

Participation is free and you will receive one 8x10 portrait and a directory at no charge. Please make your appointment by visiting our web site at www.holyapostleschurch.com and clicking the Photo Directory Sign Up link on the homepage. If you do not have internet access, you can make your appointment in the multi-purpose room after Liturgy or by calling the church office.

Weekday Services

Nativity of the Theotokos

Monday, September 8
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast Day of Ss. Sophia, Faith, Hope, & Agape

Wednesday, September 17
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy



A view of the multi-purpose room during fellowship hour when nobody signs up to provide refreshments.

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