

MOSAIC

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

Vol. 14, No. 10

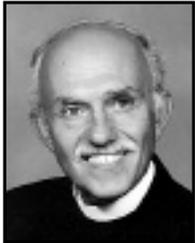
Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, IL

February 2010

(708) 562-2744

www.holyapostleschurch.com

From Father Bill



Sorry To See

"When a man leaves on a journey, he must know where he is going." The gifted and prolific theologian Alexander Schmemmann, of blessed memory, thus begins his highly respected work, *The Great Lent*. Lent for Orthodox begins in the middle of February this year, which is extremely early. Although some of us are still returning Christmas gifts, and removing Christmas decorations, it is time for us to get ready for our journey to Pascha.

Are we prepared to make this year's journey special in our life? Each year we begin with renewed hope. Lent is a spiritual journey and its destination is Easter, "the Feast of Feasts." We must make a checklist of things to do and make preparations for our first step into this experience. May I suggest we take a look back before we take our first step forward? Looking back at the whole drama of Lent and Easter will allow us to focus on the task at hand and help us to avoid the same mistakes.

There was once a farmer who had a large shade tree towering over his house. It was a majestic-looking tree, and apparently perfect in every part—tall, straight, and of immense size. One morning, while sitting on the porch, he saw a squirrel run up the tree into a hole. He proceeded to examine the tree carefully and much to his surprise, he found that the stately tree that he had valued for its beauty and grandeur and was the pride and protection of his little farm, was hollow from top to bottom. Only a rim of sound wood remained, barely sufficient to support its weight. What was he to do? If he cut it down, it would do much damage with its great length and



Fr. Bill blesses Grace Govostis with myrrh and holy water at Epiphany while her mother Jennifer waits her turn.

spreading branches. If he let it remain, his family was in constant danger. In a storm it might fall, or the wind might blow it down, and his house and children would be crushed by it. What should he do? As he turned away, he said sadly: "I wish I had never seen that squirrel."

The opening pages of the Bible (OT) which we will read during the first days of Lent, tell of a tree in the Garden of Eden, "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," and in its branches was not a squirrel, but a serpent. Adam and Eve came to wish they had never seen that snake. For that snake and tree symbolized their downfall, an end to a life of paradise and full fellowship with God the Creator.

Adam and Eve are representative of every man and every woman since human life began. The Hebrew words for Adam and Eve mean life. As we read the first chapters of Genesis, with their deep insights and profound understanding of human nature, let us remember this is our story. Adam and Eve are you and me.

One of those insights and profound understandings of human nature is that temptation is a large part of life. We take note of it on the first Sunday of Lent. Temptation enters through the eye more than anywhere else. What we see and how long we stare at what we see has significant effect upon our soul. Many years have passed since I heard the little voices of a Sunday school class sing in church school: "Be careful little eyes what you see." You can be sorry for what you see as was the farmer who saw the squirrel, and Adam and Eve who saw the serpent.

In a fitting manner to begin the Holy Lenten Season, the Orthodox Church designates on Cheese Fare Sunday, February 14, the observance of Forgiveness Sunday, and commemorates the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from the paradise of bliss. This name in the words of Schmemmann "summarizes the entire preparation for Lent. By now we know that man was created for paradise, for knowledge of God and communion with Him.

See Fr. Bill on P. 4

From Father Nicholas



Forgiving others seventy times seven

A story is told about a man who owned a lot in an exclusive residential area. This land was unique. It was two yards wide and 100 feet long. The owner's only option was to sell it to one of his neighbors on either side. The man went to one neighbor and asked if he would be interested in buying the lot. The neighbor offered a ridiculously low price. The man exploded! He stormed out and went next door. The other neighbor offered even less! This landowner was consumed with rage. He then built a very strange house. It was only five feet wide! His house was a row of tiny rooms. Each room could barely hold one piece of furniture. When it was finished, the man moved into the uncomfortable house. He stayed there until his death. His dwelling became known as the "Spite House". It still stands today as a monument to one man's holding on to hate not forgiveness.

Forgiveness is difficult. Understanding the reasons that we should forgive make it easier. The Gospel of Matthew details a parable about a servant who owed 10,000 talents. This was an impossible sum of money to repay. It was more than a laborer would earn in an entire lifetime! The king ordered that this servant, his wife and children be sold. He wanted to frighten the servant and bring about transformation. He was hoping the servant would ask for mercy. Notice that he did not quickly dismiss the debt. The king called for an accounting. This was to show the servant how much debt would be forgiven. The servant asked for more time. This gracious king then forgave all of the debt. Just like this king, God, our Lord and Savior, forgave us first. We are reminded in Paul's letter to the Romans: "There is none righteous, no, not one." It is only by God's great grace and love for us, that we are forgiven. We don't deserve it! If we understand the depth of our own sin, we will appreciate and be thankful for His great forgiveness. This will help us forgive others – even if they don't deserve it!

Second, forgiving someone will bring us peace. Forgiving helps us! If we don't forgive, we are stuck in prison. This prevents us from seeing and experiencing the freedom of the glory of God. St. Silouan said that where there is forgiveness, there is freedom. The alternative is a constant, unending process of hurt, bitterness, anger, resentment and self-

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 5



Gavel to Gavel



BY GEORGE CHECHOPOULOS

Parish Council Meeting of December 17

Financial Report

- + The comparative financial report dated November 30, 2009 & 2008 was reviewed. Jim Fotopoulos moved to approve the statements, subject to year-end review. The motion passed unanimously.
- + The Finance Committee met off-site to discuss employee recognized holidays and equitable vacation time. The report will be presented at the January meeting.

Stewardship

- + Steve Melonides said that the church received 791 pledges, down 32 pledges for the same period last year, totaling \$658,723.67 (down ~\$17,162.26) for an average pledge of \$832.77. Amount paid for November 30, 2009 was \$20,060. A Gap Analysis will be done to help determine why we are down 32 stewards.

Correspondence

- + George Chechopoulos said that Fr. Bill sent a letter to the Council conveying his and Presvytera Effie's appreciation for the gift presented to him at our Church's 50th Anniversary; Fr. Nicholas sent a card to the Council expressing his and Presvytera Michelle's appreciation for the gift presented to him at our Church's 50th Anniversary.
- + Jimmy and Chrisy Banakis sent a card thanking the Holy Apostles Family for the floral arrangement sent honoring his mother's memory in her falling asleep in the Lord.

Meditation

- + Fr. Bill's meditation focused on the subject of The Nativity of Our Lord, and how our Lord's birth altered our paths and lives. The birth narratives of Matthew and Luke have some elements in common. They both relate that Jesus of Nazareth was the child of the Virgin Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph. The narratives also present the announcement from the Archangel Gabriel that Mary would conceive in her womb and bring forth a Son, who shall call his name Jesus. We ask the Theotokos who is strong in faith and love to intercede with her Son on our behalf.

50th Anniversary Update

- + Margo Kuchuris, the 50th Anniversary Celebration photographer, has set up a web site for viewing and purchasing the photos. The link to the web site is www.pictage.com/755081. Margo is also planning on putting together a

Commemorative Album consisting of 60 photographs.

Building & Grounds

- + Jim Fotopoulos and George Alex said that Mr. D's office is having some heating problems. A new heater with new electrical equipment will be installed in the next few days.
- + A bid was received for a battery operated, self-propelled floor cleaning machine of \$4,300. Peter Tomaras moved that the cost for a new machine not exceed \$5,000. The motion passed.
- + The Building and Grounds Committee made a recommendation to purchase two new additional votive candle stands at a cost of \$630 per stand. The motion passed.
- + With the construction of the new sidewalks, no winter salt products can be used on the new cement. However, there is a liquid that can be used on the cement during the winter that will not harm the cement.
- + Fr. Nicholas mentioned a problem with the lapel microphones and requested we purchase some new ones. Any new purchases will go through Paul Kallis and the Technical Committee to make sure the microphones are integrated with our current sound system.

Technical Committee

- + Peter Poteres discussed the completion of the sound system. Once the central remote comes in and is installed, training can begin. A new video camera will replace the old one over the cry room. The new camera will show a much clearer picture in high definition.

Old Business

- + Nick Kirkeles was able to recover 100% of the money from Comcast for the sewer damages we incurred. The Council thanked Nick for his time and assistance in the matter.

New Business

- + The Annual Golf Outing is scheduled for July 12. More details will follow.
- + The permit has been secured for the church picnic to be held on Sunday, July 18, from 9 am-4 pm at Katherine Legge Memorial Park. The committee will also look into other facilities that may be able to accommodate our picnic.

The **HARC** CORNER

The First Day of the New Creation The Resurrection and the Christian Faith

By Veselin Kesich

Christ is Risen! With this message, the Church announces the good news of salvation and hope for mankind throughout the ages.

Many Christians are confronted with enormous difficulties over how to understand the New Testament teaching of the Resurrection. What does it mean when we say, "Christ is Risen"? What is the meaning of bodily resurrection and how was it understood in the early Church of New Testament times as well as in the Church of the early fathers?

In this book, Veselin Kesich, professor of New Testament at St. Vladimir's Seminary, examines the resurrection faith of the early Church. He particularly stresses that the testimony to Christ's Resurrection comes from the discovery of the empty tomb, his appearance to his disciples, and the coming of the Spirit upon them.

The author weaves together a detailed investigation of the biblical evidence and provides an illuminating study of the topic of resurrection and a joyful celebration of the fact that Christ truly "has risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep."

Softbound, \$8.00

Sweet Dreams And Bedtime Blessings

By Tyndale Kids

Jump in bed! It's time to sleep. Goodnight me! Goodnight you! Woof, Meow, Grow, or Moo! Goodnight everyone, everywhere. A lift-the-flap bedtime book filled with fun and the comforting truth. God stays close while you sleep. He will look after you.

Hardbound, \$9.00

Jonah's Journey to the Deep Old Testament Stories for Children

By Mother Melania

Illustrations by Bonnie Gillis

Using simple verse and colorful, semi-iconographic illustrations that are both sweet and reverent, the series aims to introduce children and their parents to the profound truths revealed in the pages of the Old Testament.

Softbound, \$9.00

Registry

Baptisms

*Maria, daughter of
Diane & David Perez*

Sponsors: Maria & Michael Tzanetis

*Nina, daughter of
Angela & Gregory Spyrou*

Sponsor: Stephen Spyrou

*Konstantin, son of
Amy & Bill Pantazopoulos*

Sponsor: Barbara Pantazopoulos

*Kallista, daughter of
Margo & Rex Wiseman*

Sponsors: Andria Pihos & John Vatianou

Weddings

None

Celebration of Books 2010

Surprised by Christ
is the theme for this year's
Celebration of Books.

The dates and topics are as follows.

Sunday, February 28

Deacon George Bithos
Author of *St. Methodios
Of Constantinople: a Study
of His Life and Works*

Tuesday, March 2

Reverend James Bernstein
"My Journey from Judaism
to Orthodox Christianity"

Thursday, March 4

Dr. Aristotle Papanikolaou
"Honest to God:
Confession and Desire"

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for the March Mosaic is
Tuesday, Feb. 2.

dancing with the spouses

GREEK NIGHT!

All married
and engaged couples
are invited
to an evening of
Greek dancing lessons
and refreshments

Friday February 5
7:00 pm

Lessons by Alex Kapotas, one
of the creators of the Now You
Can Dance Greek DVD
www.nowyoucandance.com

RSVP to Toni 630.341.2013
HolyApostlesSynaxis@gmail.com

Christmas at Holy Apostles



Annual choir concert highlights Christmas Eve service.



Youthful musicians serenade parishioners as they depart Christmas Eve.



James Rupp watches his daughter Leah receive antidoron from Fr. Nicholas as her grandfather John Vlagos watches.



Beautiful pointsettias adorn the narthex and nave in the Christmas season.

Photos by Peter Bell

Lenten journey begins with vespers on Forgiveness Sunday

Fr. Bill from P. 1

Man's sin has deprived him of the blessed life and his existence on earth is exile."

A seduction by sight was attempted in the third temptation to Jesus. "...the devil took him (Jesus) to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.'"

But Jesus never had to say, "I wish I had never seen that!" Instead, he said, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord God and him only shall you serve.' Then the devil left him..." (Mt. 4:7-10).

One thing is for certain, we should make ready to meet Satan's assaults upon us. During this period, we shall engage in battle with temptation. Let us be vigilant, and enter the arena for battle. Use all the tools made available to you through the Church. Gaze upon the holy faces of the saints and be inspired by their exemplary living. Let us begin the journey together on the Sunday of Forgiveness that we may be cleansed of our sinful disposition.

On Forgiveness Sunday, we are at the gates of repentance. At the most solemn moment of the Forgiveness Service, we sing for the first time the troparia that will accompany us throughout the entire Lent:

Open to me the gates of repentance,

O Giver of Life.

For my spirit rises early to pray towards Thy holy temple,

Bearing the temple of my body all defiled; But in Thy compassion, purify me by the loving kindness of Thy mercy.

Lead me on the paths of salvation,

O Mother of God;

For I have profaned my soul with shameful sins,

And have wasted my life in laziness,

But by your intercessions, deliver me from all impurity.



Fr. Bill bestows the kiss of peace before the creed on Michael Hamalis.

Photos by Peter Bell



Fr. Bill recalls his youth as an altar boy during the 54th anniversary of his ordination, Dec. 27.

Highlights from the Holiday Season



Fr. Bill blesses the faithful with holy water and myrrh on Epiphany.

There is freedom through forgiveness in lent.

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2

destruction. We forgive for our own peace.

Third, good physical health comes through forgiveness. Health professionals tell us that the body manufactures "high voltage" chemicals like adrenaline and cortisone when we don't forgive. Too many of these chemicals can result in tension-related headaches and abdominal pains. If these are left unchecked, they can result in more serious problems such as ulcers or gastritis. Scientifically-validated benefits of forgiving include: reduction of chronic pain, cardiovascular problems and violent behavior; decreased levels of depression and anxiety; and increased hope. People who don't forgive typically have higher heart rates and blood pressure. Unforgiving responses of blame, anger and hostility have been linked to coronary heart disease and even premature death. Most people who have forgiven others talk about the joy and freedom experienced as the emotional burden they had been carrying was released.

Resentment only hurts the one that is holding onto it. We place ourselves outside of God's love. If not careful, we can exclude ourselves from the grace, peace and love that only God can give. Do you remember what happened next in the parable? The servant that was forgiven this huge sum refused to forgive a

small sum. He was delivered to the king's torturers until he could pay all that was due. We read "but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:15) If we cannot forgive others, we are not able to accept forgiveness. We close our hearts to others and to God. When we reject our brothers and sisters, we reject God Himself. But, if we forgive others, "your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Matthew 6:14)

The Church reads these Gospel verses on Forgiveness Sunday. Forgiving can be challenging. Our Church knows this and focuses on forgiving others the Sunday immediately preceding Lent. Forgiveness Vespers is the night before Lent starts. At the conclusion of the service, people ask each other for forgiveness. This is a special time given to forgive and start Lent with a clean slate. If we are harboring resentment, bitterness or malice toward anyone, we should ask God for His grace to help us to forgive and heal. This will free us to move from our self-imposed prison to love God and grow closer to Him during this holy Lenten season!



GOYANS Maxx Lozano, left, and Alex Adams volunteered at Loaves and Fishes food pantry in Naperville.

Give your family a spiritual retreat for lent.

Lenten Retreat

March 6 2010

at Ss Peter and Paul in Glenview

Activities and lessons for children of all ages. Workshops for adults.

For more information and to register, go online:

www.gocfamilysynaxis.org

or call Vanessa at 630.988.9533

Hosted by the Metropolis of Chicago Family Synaxis



Fr. Bill gives Dolly Panton, a representative for The Way, a slice of Vasilopita bread.



Fr. Bill cuts the first piece of the sweet bread for Christ.

Parishioners' generosity makes season bright

The heartfelt donations of the Holy Apostles parishioners during the holiday season truly embodied the meaning of Christmas. Because of your love for others, we were able to donate more than \$4,500 in toys to Family Shelter Service, an agency serving women and children who have suffered domestic abuse. Throughout this Christmas and Thanksgiving season, we also provided approximately \$8,000 in grocery store gift certificates to families and individual seniors in

need. Many of the certificates were given to those in need who are assisted by the Hellenic Foundation and other certificates were provided to Holy Apostles families facing difficult times. Festive gift bags filled with holiday treats were also provided to help brighten the holidays and hot meals were delivered. Thank you again for your kindness, generosity and compassion. You undoubtedly touched the lives of many during this blessed season.

by Patty McKay

Jr. GOYA Christmas Party was a moving event

On December 22, the Jr. GOYA had a Progressive dinner Christmas Party. The evening started at the Kinnas residence where we enjoyed some delicious appetizers. We then traveled to the Dussias residence for a variety of salads. Our next stop was the Liston residence for the main course which consisted of scrumptious

pasta and an assortment of sauces and cheeses. Our final destination was the Pierce residence where we enjoyed a wide selection of sweet desserts. About 25 Jr. Goyans attended this event and brought a white elephant gift. We were all surprised by a visit from Santa who passed out a number and gift to each person. Then starting with number one, we unwrapped our presents and chose to keep them or steal someone else's. Everyone had a great time and we hope this becomes an annual Jr. Goya tradition.



By Demi Kallis

What is The Triodion ?

The Triodion is a liturgical book of the Lenten season. Texts from it are added to the usual hymns and prayers of the weekly Divine Liturgy.

The Triodion Period includes: four Sundays preceding Lent, Great Lent, and Holy Week.

The four Sundays preceding Lent, beginning this year on January 24, prepare us gradually for the spiritual discipline of Holy Lent.

First, The Publican and the Pharisee teaches us about humility.

The second Sunday is the Prodigal Son and the lesson is repentance.

The third Sunday is the Last Judgement, and the lesson is to be prepared.

The fourth Sunday is Forgiveness Sunday. The lesson is, no reconciliation with God without being reconciled with each other.

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church **February 2010** 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	5:15pm The Way	PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am TOTS 4:30pm Greek School 5:30pm GOYA Outing 7:00pm Philoptochos General Meeting	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 7:00pm Catechism 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4:30pm Greek School	4:30pm Adventure Theater 7:00pm Family Synaxis Greek Dancing Lessons	SATURDAY OF THE SOULS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am Adventure Theater Retreat & Outing
	1	2	3	4	5	6
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour		4:30pm Greek School	FEAST DAY OF ST. HARALAMBOS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 7:00pm Catechism 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4:30pm Greek School	4:30pm Adventure Theater	SATURDAY OF THE SOULS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Macaronatha Luncheon 6:30pm Forgiveness Service	LENT BEGINS 12:00pm Sixth Hour 5:30pm The Way 6:00pm Holy Unction	10:00am TOTS 12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Greek School 7:00pm GOYA Movie Night	12:00pm Sixth Hour 1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 6:00pm Presanctified Liturgy 7:00pm Catechism	12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting	12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Adventure Theater 7:00pm 1st Herefismi 8:15pm Choir Rehearsal	SATURDAY OF THE SOULS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour	6:30pm Great Compline	12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Greek School	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 6:00pm Presanctified Liturgy 7:00pm Catechism	12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Greek School	4:30pm Adventure Theater 7:00pm 2nd Herefismi 8:15pm Choir Rehearsal	SATURDAY OF THE SOULS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
CELEBRATION OF BOOKS 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour 6:30pm Vespers 8:00pm Presentation						
Fellowship Hour						
Start off the year by joining the many volunteers who host our weekly fellowship hours following the Liturgy. You will find a clipboard with registration forms and guidelines posted in the multi-purpose room. This year you can choose from a "coffee and just cookies" reception; a			"coffee and just coffee cakes" reception; or the "traditional" coffee reception. The fellowship hour provides a wonderful time to meet members of our church family and share a cup of coffee. Please join us.			
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Memorials

*Paraskevi Apostolakos
Carl Kleronomas
Betty Tomaras
Paul Horemiotis
Perry Kokenis
Betty Riedel
Nicholas Papanicholas
Christine Anastasopoulos
John Crider
George Adams
Lambrine Adams
Louis Adams
Antigone Kafkes
Gregory Kafkes
Thomas Kafkes
Alexander Stratigos
Pauline Stratigos
James Learakos
Jim T. Poulos
Dr. Louis G. Poulos
Peter Cotsilis*

Funerals

*John Crider
Peter Cotsilis*

Weekday Services

Presentation of Our Lord

Tuesday, February 2
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Saturday of the Souls

Saturdays, February 6, 13, 20
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast Day of St. Haralambos

Wednesday, February 10
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Sixth Hour

Monday, February 15
Tuesday, February 16
Wednesday, February 17
Thursday, February 18
Friday, February 19
Tuesday, February 23
Thursday, February 25
12:00pm

Weekday Services

Holy Unction

Monday, February 15
6:00pm

Presanctified Liturgy

Wednesday, February 17
Wednesday, February 24
6:00pm

Heretismi

Friday, February 19
Friday, February 26
6:00pm

Great Compline

Monday, February 22
6:30pm

Stewardship

Pledges for 2010 Stewardship are now due. Please fill out the form and send it to the church as soon as possible.

Postmaster: Please deliver by the 4th of February

Address Service Requested

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church
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(708) 562-2744

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