

MOSAIC

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

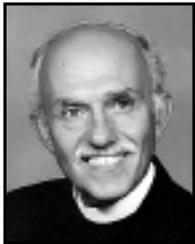
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Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, IL
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January 2015

From Father Bill

The Gift Of Time



I suppose it is a sign of age, but I am beginning to look back and remember the old days with nostalgia. I don't

know about you, but the wonderful and warm memories of being with you for fifty five years recalled at our recent celebration, *The Remembrance of Things Past*, continue to remain alive and exciting.

While we have celebrated several times over the years, on entering the Diplomat West, the site of our memorable party, the feeling was different. I experienced electricity and excitement that is fresh in my mind. What was so dramatically different was the icon of all the people that had gathered for the party. There were faces, young and old, reflecting joy and excitement; one may even say it was magical. What made it incredibly different was the spirit of the gathering. The young and old were members of our one family, the Holy Apostles Family.

Children too, radiated the love and excitement permeating in their young hearts. Though too young to understand completely, vicariously they were happy and truly grateful to belong.

In that room were gathered five decades of history. We had just finished a period of Thanksgiving to God for His blessings and His love and guidance during the development years of our church. Most guests needed to be reminded that this party was not for the priest, but for the church in which we were baptized, married and nurtured in the Orthodox Faith. Many recalled occupying the same pews as yiayia, papou, mom and dad.

My beloved, we have just experienced the Nativity Season and the joy brought to all with the birth of our Savior. I don't want to leave you only with the thoughts of the sentimental journey we've taken together, but also



Anniversary Luncheon

At left, the choir staged a flash mob at the luncheon with Zoe Tomaras and Bette Scheiber participating. Above, George Mannos and Sandy Fiascone present Fr. Bill with a gift of a painted glass portrait.

Photos by Peter Bell

A 55 minute documentary provided to all who attended the 55th anniversary luncheon, is available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Qx_ac6XHwQ

An almost 12 minute short presentation video (a 'short' of the documentary) is also available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_DqhTWNasA

The YouTube postings are a very easy way for the Holy Apostles Family to share our story with friends and family.

to remind you that one of the great marvels of Christmas is the gift of time.

The time of rejoicing has come. Now is the acceptable time. One of the things for which we will stand under judgment is time. How have we used the time God has given us? Do we consider ourselves responsible for what we do with the gift of time? Are we responsible stewards? Do we live as Christians should in the perspective of eternity or do we simply live for the moment? Do we fritter away our time, giving little back to God in worship and ser-

vice, and far more to ourselves and our own gratification?

I am sure the boredom of which so many people complain would vanish if we learned to see our time more wisely with God in view. This is the concern for today. Christmas teaches us that all time is God's time. It is a gracious gift, but it will come to an end someday. Where shall we be then?

In a sense, old time ran out at Bethlehem. There, in the manger, in a stable smelling of

...See Fr. Bill on P. 4

From Father Nicholas



Journeying on a New Road

January is a great month for skiing. Last year, our family found a wonderful place to ski in Northern Michigan. My son James and I ventured down one of the most difficult runs. After flying down the hill, out-of-control, off-balance and out-of-breath, I thought, "I am glad that run is behind us. I am not going to go down that slope again." Some of us may be feeling the same way about last year. We are thankful it is over and hope that our lives will be better. Some of us are ready for a new beginning.

Are you burned out on life? You are not alone. St. Elijah was tired of life. He is one of the great prophets of the Old Testament. Elijah was afraid, burned out, and running for his life. "It is enough! now, Lord, take my life" (1 Kings 19:4) he said. Elijah continues, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." (1 Kings 19:10) Woe is me, I am tired and burned out. Sound familiar?

Elijah is told to go and stand before the Lord. After he encounters God personally, Elijah is able to continue. If you are ready for a new start, God is waiting for you. The Prodigal Son story is a beautiful account of the Lord's great love for us and His desire for us to return to Him.

St. Peter knew about new beginnings. Peter had to start over multiple times because of his lack of faith and understanding. Jesus rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan. For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." (Mark 8:33) When Jesus was washing the Disciples' feet,

Peter did not understand what was happening and said, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." (John 13:8) Peter's most known failure is his denial of Christ three times. Although Peter knew the Lord Jesus personally and spent time with Him while He was on earth, He still denied Him three times.

Peter ultimately became the first Bishop in Rome, wrote two Epistles and gave his life for the Lord. If the Lord gave Peter many second chances, He can certainly give us a second chance. Regardless of the area of life in which we have failed, God is waiting and willing to give us a new start.

David needed a new beginning. He com-



Gavel to Gavel



Highlights of the October/November Parish Council Meetings

BY PAUL KALLIS, SECRETARY

Financial/Treasurer's Report:

- ✦ The comparative financial report dated October, 2014 was reviewed by Peter Bell. The church for nine months ended in October, was unfavorable \$35,080. Mary Maragos moved to approve the financial statements dated October 2014 subject to year-end review. The motion passed unanimously.

Stewardship Report:

- ✦ The church received 776 pledges, 6 less pledges for the same period last year, totaling \$24,426 paid in October, and favorable \$898 for the same period last year, for an average pledge of \$ 874. Total amount paid through October was \$619,281.38.
- ✦ Mary Maragos suggested that a final thank you letter signed by Fr. Bill be sent out when stewards complete their pledge.

Correspondence:

- ✦ A thank you note was received from the IOCC for our \$500 donation.
- ✦ Metropolitan Nikitas sent a Christmas card. Peter Poteres made a motion to donate \$500.00 to the San Francisco Metropolitan. The motion passed.
- ✦ Thank you notes were received from Philoptochos and from Nick Paloumpis, our choir director.
- ✦ Invitations were received from St. Demetrios of Elmhurst honoring Fr. Panagiotis Malamis' retirement, St. Athanasios' 50th anniversary celebration on January 18, and St. Luke's celebration of their 30th anniversary.
- ✦ The Westchester Community Church has asked for our prayers for their celebration of 65 years in our community.

Meditation:

- ✦ Fr. Bill spoke of the upcoming weeks and how we should be thankful for the past 55 years for the Holy Apostles community, and that we should keep the parish in our prayers during the Thanksgiving prayers.
- ✦ Fr. Bill talked about our commitment to stewardship and that we should increase not only the amount we pledge but also increase the number of stewards, thus being able to make our parish stronger.

mitted adultery with his top commander's wife, Bathsheba. To cover up his sin, David had Uriah, his top commander, killed. He committed both adultery and murder. Although he was a man after God's heart, David fell into sin. He was trapped in the

Building & Grounds:

- ✦ We are waiting a revised estimate for ADA compliance for our bathrooms.
- ✦ We are having difficulty finding someone to clean the brick in the narthex.
- ✦ Jim is evaluating a solution regarding the sealants on the windows. We will review this for the 2015 budget and capital improvements.
- ✦ A new sound system was installed for the church.
- ✦ Trees were cut around the church.

Old Business:

- ✦ There are more than 600 reservations so far. The Ad Book has generated almost \$50,000. A very hardy thank you to Peter Poteres for chairing the Ad Book and dedicating his efforts to organize this. George Mannos also wanted to give special thanks to Sandy Fiascone for chairing the event, Joan Berg, Nick Kumis, Kiki Liston, Dean Futris (flowers) and Eleni Poteres (pastries). George also thanked Stella Athanas for all of her work and dedication to the project.
- ✦ Peter Poteres thanked George Mannos for securing the top three donors for the Ad Book.
- ✦ There are 20 nominees running for the Council this year.
- ✦ Steve Savas made a motion to have Ioanna Burtzos, Greg Vanderakis, and either Al Coulolias or Tom Kafkes, based on their availability, be the election judges. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- ✦ Nick Kirkeles suggested that we secure a certificate of insurance from Mariano's for their use of our parking lot.
- ✦ Holy Apostles congratulates Chris Avromopoulos on his ordination to the Holy Diaconate on Saturday, November 22. AXIOS!
- ✦ There are numerous cassettes that need to be converted. The Tech Committee will look into this.
- ✦ Can the parish utilize the Retreat Center more this year?

cycle of sin. After he fell, David picked himself up and came back to God. David wrote many of the beautiful psalms of the Bible.

As a new year begins, we may be short on hope. Maybe we need a new beginning

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 4

Philoptochos Update for the Holidays

2014 Annual Holy Apostles

Philoptochos Luncheon & Fashion Show

Some very exciting news...we were able to donate a record amount of \$26,000 to our two beneficiaries of the Luncheon and Fashion Show held in October. Almost Home Kids and hellenicare each received \$13,000 to support their healthcare-related work. Almost Home Care is a local organization based in Naperville. hellenicare is an international agency based in Chicago, but working in the countries of Georgia, Armenia and Albania. Thank you to our generous sponsors, patrons, and guests who made it all possible! Thank you to the Fashion Show Committee that harmoniously worked together to make it a successful event!

Philoptochos Happenings

Blankets of Love – Service Project

Do you like to knit or crochet? Would you consider making a blanket or two for a sick infant or child? We will be collecting these Blankets of Love in February and then donate them to local children’s hospitals/clinics. Even if you cannot knit or crochet, you can participate by donating yarn for others to make the blankets. For complete details, contact Faye Adams 630.517.8097.

Sunday, January 11

The Annual Metropolis Vasilopita Celebration begins 6 pm at St. Demetrios in Elmhurst. This is an annual fundraiser for St. Basil’s Academy. Tickets available. Call Terry Parafink 630.243.8022 if interested in going.

Sunday, January 18

Family Bowling Night & Pizza Party, 3:45 pm check-in at Fox Bowl, Wheaton.

Cost: \$20 adults, \$15 children under 12. Call Liz Vlahos 312.286.5080 to make your reservations.

Sunday, February 8

Godparents’ Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy.

This is a wonderful opportunity for godparents, godchildren, friends and family to share a meal in the multi-purpose room as one Holy Apostles community. Call Diane Hank 708.246.3391 to make your reservations.



Nicole and Renee Govostis get cookies from their mother, Jennifer, at the Philoptochos Bake Sale.

Tuesday, February 10

Koukla’s Kafenio will be open for lunch at 12 pm. Call Cathy Magas 630.941.8448 to make your reservations.

Tuesday, February 17

General Meeting, begins at 7 pm. Refreshments will be served.

There will be a special guest presentation by Pam Paziotopoulos on the issue of Domestic Abuse. It is open to all interested parishioners, not just Philoptochos members.

Philoptochos Membership

If you have not paid your membership for 2014-2015, it is not too late. Your membership fair-share dues help fund our many obligations and projects. Membership envelopes are available in the church office. If you would like more information, call Faye Adams 630.517.8097.

The HARC Corner

Returning to the Triune God

Reflections on the Spiritual Life

By Father Demetrios N. Treantafeles

The present global spiritual condition, with selfish desires, anti-Christian slogans, and political hypocrisy, demands that all of us undertake a long and difficult struggle for a genuine return to a Triune God.

The forty-nine selected reflections of this English publication are offered to a more general public, where in the words of Fr. Demetrios, “people may be in pain and suffering and thirsting for the living water.” This little book will speak to your heart and prove helpful in our difficult but sacred struggle to return to the loving embrace of our Triune God.

\$20.00

Encouraged by the Scriptures

Essays on Scripture, Interpretation, and Life

By Theodore G. Stylianopoulos

Fr. Stylianopoulos is one of the leading biblical theologians of the Orthodox world. Throughout these nine essays, the reader will find profound critiques of the works of theological and biblical scholars.

The author presents the life, mission, and salvation in Jesus Christ as the first and core reality of the life of the Church without minimizing all other aspects of the faith. He gives a comprehensive understanding and analysis of the issues. Salvation is true participation in the divine grace and life – theosis or divinization. Scripture should be understood in the light of the mind of the Church which produced it and formed its cannon.

The volume concludes with a surprising and fascinating response to the ongoing “faith and works” debate in Christian theology by examining the issue from the book of the Apocalypse. The book is well-written and pleasant to read.

\$23.00

Baptisms

*Adelyn, daughter of
Alicia & Jeffrey Sage
Sponsor: Matthew Anton*

*Samuel, son of
Hannah & James Athas
Sponsors: Tina and Gus Sparagis*

Weddings

*Laura Highland & Anthony McPherson
Sponsor: Gia Russo*

*Nicole Poulos & Michael Hartigan
Sponsor: Marc Poulos*

*Alexandra Plesh & Nicholas Anos
Sponsor: Greg Gregory*

My Baptism

An Illustrated Guide for the Whole Family with Orthodox Activities!

Why do we get baptized and chrismated? What happens at an Orthodox Baptism? This is a beautiful book about the most important event in the life of an Orthodox Christian.

\$22.00

Fr. Bill from P. 1...

We must treat the gift of time with care

straw and animals, God came into this world, old and worn-out as it was, and gave it a new start. He inaugurated the age of the New Testament, the New Covenant, in which fresh starts are possible, and where the limitations of time and the freedom of eternity blend.

Let us accept the time we enjoyed at our party and the completion of 55 years of ministry, as a time to remember: our failures and our success; our test of faith; and most of all, the love and the communion of the Holy Spirit. 2014 was the year we were asked to remember. The verse on the lintel above my office reads: "Where there is no vision the people perish." In 1959 our church was merely an idea, a thought, but it all changed when we rolled up our sleeves and began doing God's work. Now that a new year has dawned, we are blessed with opportunities to move onward and upward. The Blackhawk hockey players remind us that "they have one goal." The Bible says "Christ came to give us life, that we would have eternal life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Our goal is salvation.

How often do we take time to remember the blessings? It has been said the hardest arithmetic we'll ever learn is how to count our blessings. The words recited by the priest at the beginning of the liturgy are: "It is time (Kairos) to bless, Master.

Let us become aware of the great gift of time. Treat it with care, attentiveness and thought. St. John Chrysostom, in order to make his catechumens at Antioch realize the importance of their action when they were baptized, explained it to them in simple language reminiscent of St. Paul: "We have all signed a treaty with Christ, not with ink but with the spirit, nor with the pen but with our word...We have confessed the sovereignty of God and repudiated the tyranny of the devil.

There you have the signature, the agreement, the contract. Then he had each catechumen turn first to the West and say: "I detach myself from you, Satan, from your pomp, your worship and your angels." He then turned toward the East and added: "And I attach myself to you, O Christ."

The key for all is to remember is that we belong to God and through the sacraments to each other. Remember too, that we can live about 40 days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air...but only about a second without hope. Nothing is more essential to life than hope; without it we may be breathing but we're dead.



Little Stars Stephanie Yang, Audrey Parrott, Madeline Kubesh, and Jane Tselepis, get ready to shine at this year's Christmas Pageant.



An enthusiastic group of Greek School students sing the Kalanda.

Youthful performers make Christmas events special



In the Christmas Pageant, Gabriel (Anna Pashos) announces to Mary (Stephanie Polihronidis) that she will deliver the Savior.

Photos
by
Peter Bell

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2...

God is the Lord of new starts

because of some failure this past year. We may have struggled financially. Perhaps we did not measure up as spouses or failed as parents. Maybe we feel distant from God. We realize how fast time passes. St. Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians: "See then that you walk, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time." (Ephesians 5:16) Redeeming time is our challenge this new year. Be a master and not a slave to time. We can redeem time as the Saints did. Utilize every second of every day, every day of every week, every week of

every month, and every month of every year to remember God. Remembering God with every breath will help us experience a new beginning. God is the Lord of new starts. David wrote the beautiful Psalm 51, which can help us. The psalm brings hope and keeps us from falling into despair. Psalm 51 reminds us of our Lord's great mercy and His tenderheartedness for us: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit."

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Facing the New Year</h2> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>It does not matter what the year presents to us. What matters is how we choose to handle each day we are given.</i></p>																													
<p>VASILOPITA 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour 3:30pm Vasilopita</p>	<p>EVE OF EPIPHANY 6:00pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy & Blessing Of The Holy Water</p>	<p>HOLY EPIPHANY 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy & Blessing Of The Holy Water 4:30pm Greek School 5:00pm Greek School PTO Mtg.</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. BASIL 9:00am Orthros 10:00am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>	<p>3</p>																							
<p>8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour</p>	<p>5:15pm The Way</p>	<p>10:00am TOIS 4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm Philoptochos Board Mtg.</p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 7:30pm Catechism</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting</p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>	<p>10</p>																							
<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. ATHANASIOS 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour 4:00pm Philoptochos Family Bowling Night</p>	<p>5:15pm The Way</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School 5:00pm Greek School PTO Meeting</p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 7:30pm Catechism</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>	<p>17</p>																							
<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. GREGORY 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour</p>	<p>5:15pm The Way</p>	<p>10:00am TOIS 4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 7:30pm Catechism</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF THE THREE HIERARCHS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>	<p>31</p>																							
		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Memorials

*Jane Adams
Peter Stavros
Panagiotis Ladas
Georgia Ladas
Nicoletta Katziotis
Peggy Angelos
Helen Alex
Paul Chechopoulos
Anastasia Georgiou*

Funeral

*Andrew Kanton
Elaine Kalivas*

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for the February Mosaic is Tuesday, January 6.

Weekday Services

See the calendar on page 5.



Election judges from left, Greg Vanderakis, Al Coulolias, and Ioanna Burtzos prepare to conduct the Parish Council election.

Support your church and new Parish Council

The parish council members are the lay leaders of the parish. They need your help to make the programs of the parish a success. Participating in the activities and ministries is important of course. However, one of the most important ways you can help is

by fulfilling your stewardship pledge as soon as possible. If you can pay it all at once, that is great. If you need to make installment payments, please don't put off this responsibility till late the year. Thanks.

Postmaster: Please deliver by the 3rd of January

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