

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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April 2017

From Father Nicholas



Behold the Merciful Bridegroom Who Can Deliver Us

This year's Super Bowl was deemed the most exciting in football history! The New England Patriots were down 28-9 at the end of the third quarter. Many fair weather fans turned off the television thinking the game was over. No team has ever come back from such a huge deficit. The Patriots, however, tied the game in regulation and won in overtime! The game is not over until the final buzzer or whistle blows! This also applies to our spiritual lives. It is never too late to turn to God. Our gracious, loving Lord provides this Lenten period to prepare us for His glorious Resurrection. If you have squandered Lent away or not taken advantage of this special time, we still have another chance!

The movie, "Passion of the Christ" details the last twelve hours of our Lord's earthly life. Holy Week helps Orthodox Christians remember, relive and participate in our Lord Jesus Christ's last week on earth. Each year we are invited to enter Holy Week. We don't enter like passive spectators watching a football game but as active participants in the commemoration and enactment of our Lord's divine acts that radically changed the world. Sorrowfulness and somberness dominate the week. We gather to remember events that affect all of us. The Son of God suffered and died for all of us. Actor Mel Gibson commented: "We all crucified Him." We mourn our sinfulness and shortcomings as we stand silently remembering all the Lord has done for us. Throughout Holy Week, we come face-to-face with our rebellion and God's great humility and love for us. Mourners experience true repentance. Changed hearts desire to grasp, accept, and renew commitments to follow the Lord.

Preceding Christ's crucifixion (Holy



Nola Vandarakis talks books, left, prior to Dr. Alexis Torrance's lecture, above.

Scholars bring their insights to Celebration of Books

Each of the speakers gave inspiring tips for the audience members to use when reading and applying Scripture



Dr. Bruce Beck, above, gets a hearty round of applause as he is introduced and begins his lecture.



Thursday night), there are incidents and parables that condemn the hypocrisy and motives of the religious leaders. Services of the Bridegroom (Akolouthia tou Nimfiou) are celebrated on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday night of Holy Week. Our Lord is the Divine Bridegroom derived from the well-known Ten Virgins parable. (Matthew 25:1-13) Five virgins were prepared for the Bridegroom's

return and five were not. Bridegroom demonstrates the Lord's great love for us. The Kingdom of God is compared to a bridal feast and chamber. "Behold, the Bridegroom is coming in the middle of the night; and blessed is the servant He shall find awake and watching" is sung as the priest processes with the beautiful Bridegroom icon. These words

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 3

From Deacon
Panayiotis



The strength hidden in our weakness

The spiritual life requires us to be patient not only with others, but also with ourselves. At times, we may feel overwhelmed by our own weaknesses. There are days when we are making mistakes one after the other, and we are on the brink of becoming totally discouraged. We might even be tempted to think that it would be better for us to stop trying than to continue forward with the chance of making mistakes.

The feelings described above are very common, and the Fathers warn us specifically not to give in to them. St. Isaac the Syrian compares the experience to a ship traveling at sea (Ascetic Homily IX). He says that even if your ship is destroyed daily and your cargo lost, you must acquire new possessions, find another ship, and keep pressing onward. The saint uses the image of losing something so valuable because he knows how strong the feelings of discouragement can be.

Perhaps in our times we would imagine someone whose hard drive crashes day after day, requiring him to keep restarting his work from scratch. The idea is the same; we must not give up but rather continue moving forward toward our goal.

The Apostle Paul tells us that he was given a "thorn in the flesh," and that he asked the Lord multiple times to take it away from him (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7-8). But the Lord responded with the following words: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9)

What does it mean that Christ's strength is "perfected in weakness"? It means that the power of God often shines forth in the midst of the struggles in our life. There are times when God may choose to take a tribulation away from us, but there are many other times when God instead accompanies us through the tribulation until the end, even if it lasts our entire life.

In the smallest trials, such as our daily mistakes, and the most serious ones, such as severe illnesses and loss, we will be comforted if we realize that the Lord and His saints are beside us in the midst of our struggle. To be reminded of this, we can gaze upon the icon of the Resurrection, in which our Lord has descended into Hades itself to rescue His first-created humans, Adam and Eve. The icon typically depicts Christ taking Adam by the wrist. In the limpness of Adam's hand, we can per-



Above, fifth and sixth graders perform a Hasapikos dance as their dance instructor, Susan Downs, guides them along. Below, the preschoolers perform the song 'To Feggaraki'.

Greek School celebrates Greek Independence Day

The Holy Apostles Greek School commemorated both the Annunciation of the Theotokos as well as the Greek Independence Day of 25th of March 1821, in its program held on March 2.

The 5th and 6th graders sang the national anthems of both the United States and Greece, along with their teacher, Anna Georgopoulou.



Make your reservations now for Adventure Theater's Easter Performance

On Sunday, April 30, the Adventure Theater will present an original and long-to-be-remembered stage play Valley of the BC Christians in the multi-purpose room. The performance will be preceded by a delicious luncheon. The donation is \$12.00. Those four-years-old and under will be admitted free of charge. You can make your reservations following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March 26, April 2, 9, and 23. You can also make them by calling Mr. D. at 708.528.2782 or via his e-mail at: fanari@me.com.

Preview: Due to the tragic death of his parents and two siblings in a ship explosion, Fr. Menas Alexandrakis has serious doubts about his Christian faith and is at the point of leaving the priesthood. Therefore, his bishop has granted him a month's leave of absence to

pray and think things over before making a final decision.

On a stormy, spring night, Fr. Menas and his wife, Kelly, drive through the mountains of West Virginia. A mysterious light guides them to a town called Christodoros nestled in a small, out-of-the-way valley and to the safety of a restaurant/motel, and the kindness of Petros Woodcutter and his daughter. Fr. Menas and his wife are astonished to learn that most of the residents of this remote little valley claim to be descendants of Christian refugees who arrived in America hundreds of years before Columbus.

Come see what amazing mysteries await them in Valley of the BC Christians. It will help to keep the boundless joy of our Lord's Resurrection alive in your hearts.

ceive our human weakness. But at the same time, we see the strength that is hidden therein: that even at our lowest moment, we are still able to be lifted up by the power of Christ.

May we all be patient with our weaknesses

during these final days of Great Lent and Holy Week, as we await the Lord's right hand to raise us up in strength (cf. Ex. 15:6) on the day of His holy Resurrection.

Fr. Nicholas from P. 1

Behold the Merciful Bridegroom...

reveal the Lover (the Lord) and the beloved (us). Spiritual vigilance, watchfulness and preparation are the themes for these evenings.

Holy Tuesday evening focuses on the sinful harlot woman who repents. (Matthew 26:6-16) She came weeping to the Lord, poured precious myrrh and hot tears on His head and feet and then, wiped them off with her hair. She is compared to Judas, the chosen Apostle, who falls and betrays the Lord. The woman acknowledges Jesus as Lord while Judas severed himself from Him. She was set free while Judas became a slave. One inherited the Kingdom while the other was condemned. Judas perished, according to the Triodion, not simply because he betrayed Christ but because he refused to believe that the Lord could forgive him. Themes of repentance and freedom dominate this evening.

The evening concludes with the beautiful hymn of St. Kassiani, the nun and hymnographer. The Church commemorates her on September 7. She lived an interesting life in the 9th century. Kassiani had strong convictions, was outspoken and even wrote: "I hate silence, when it is time to speak." Kassiani actively opposed the policies that prevented the veneration of icons and was punished. She refused to marry the Emperor Theophilus, who was astonished by her beauty and said, "through a woman sin came to the world." She replied, "and by a woman, salvation came into the world."

Kassiani founded a convent at Xerolophos, west of Constantinople and near the Constantinian Walls. She wrote many beautiful hymns. The Hymn of Kassiani is considered a masterpiece in Byzantine hymnography. The troparion's structure and style were heavily influenced by seven penitential Psalms (6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129 and 142), three of which are read Holy Tuesday evening. This powerful hymn introduces the harlot woman, recognizing God as Lord, who expresses her extreme humility and repentance. It moves us in a very quiet and mystical way.

We witness our own soul's journey down a path of slavery and darkness that is dramatically delivered to eternal light and salvation. Our loving Lord is constantly called upon. This hymn emphasizes our own sinfulness, repentance, contrition and exodus from the night to our Lord's boundless mercy and salvation. The hymn concludes with a powerful prayer for all of us: "Who can fathom the magnitude of my transgressions or the depths of Your judgements, my soul's Savior. In your boundless mercy, do not reject me your servant."

Philoptochos Spring Happenings

Philoptochos Membership

Did you forget to renew your membership for 2016-2017? It is not too late. You have until April 20 to sign up. 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, contact Alyssa Petropoulos at 630.790.9701.

Saturday of Lazarus Breakfast

Saturday, April 8—Our annual Saturday of Lazarus Community Lenten Breakfast will be served following the Liturgy. We hope you will attend with your families. To make reservations or if you are interested in assisting with this event, contact Stacy Kinnas at 630.325.4979.

Easter Bake Sale & Easter Candle Sale

Saturday April 8, Sunday April 9, and Wednesday, and April 12,— Our annual Easter Bake Sale featuring tsourekia, koulouria, Easter egg dye and other sweets will be available. Godparents, it is not too late to buy your special Pascha candles for your godchildren!

Spring Poised for Success Collection

April 23 to May 3. New and gently-used spring and summer women's career clothing will be collected. We would greatly appreciate if you could take a peek in your closets and bring any donations to the multi-purpose room. Poised for Success is a non-profit orga-

A note from the Mosaic editors

We, the editors of the Mosaic, hope you are enjoying Holy Apostles' official newsletter each month. With this issue, we begin our 22nd continuous year of serving the Holy Apostles community.

In addition to receiving the Mosaic each month in the mail, each issue is posted on the church's website in full color!

If you are interested in taking a trip to the past, back issues are posted under the heading of Mosaic Archives. We are currently working to update those archives with earlier issues.

We welcome submissions from any and all parishioners who have items of interest to our church community.

For those wishing to submit material for publication, contact any of the following editors. A more detailed set of guidelines will be sent to you by email or 'snail' mail.

Marilyn Athas – Editor in Chief
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edimas229@gmail.com

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Scott Sanders – Layout/Photo Editor
sfsanders0806@gmail.com

nization that provides career clothing to women who cannot afford appropriate clothes for a job interview. Please contact Anthoula Pomrening at 708.341.0258 for more info.

Koukla's Kafenio

Thursday, April 27— The Kafenio will be open at 12:00 for an afternoon of food, fun and parea with friends. We are excited to announce that Father Nick Greanias will be back by popular demand to entertain us all. Please RSVP with Bess Shizas at 630.834.2186.

Feed My Starving Children

Saturday, April 29— We have a group going to the Aurora location to hand-pack specially formulated meals. Contact Emily Rehn at 708.369.9365 or platovalentine@hotmail.com.

Annual Feed the Hungry

Service Commitment

Tuesday, May 11 - Each year Holy Apostles Philoptochos takes a turn at preparing and serving a meal for the homeless. Every chapter in the Chicago Metropolis is expected to participate in the year-round program. All meals are transported and served at the Annunciation Cathedral on LaSalle Street. If you would like to assist with this philanthropic cause or would like to make a monetary donation for supplies, contact Anne Theophilos at 630.230.0579.

Baptisms

*Alexandra, daughter of
Rosalie & Patrick Senorski
Sponsors: Anastasia & Carl Verdone*

*Alfred, son of
Heidi & Nicholas Wendland
Sponsors: Kathleen & Stanley Wendland*

*Penelope, daughter of
Erica & Danny Tzoumas
Sponsor: Tina Tzoumas*

*Leah, daughter of
Alicia & Jeffrey Sage
Sponsors: Allison Anton & Robert Aultman*

*Lance, son of
Pamela & Brian Kolar
Sponsors: Jeanette Korovilas
& Zaharoula Korovilas*

*Hunter, son of Joanna & Ryan Terpstra
Sponsor: Patricia Papaioannou*

Weddings

None

Young parishioners learn iconography

By **Diakonissa Dr. Pat Hamalis**

Over the past few months, I have been overjoyed to offer a workshop at Holy Apostles for junior high and high school students, who are interested in learning the ancient art of Byzantine iconography. Although I studied iconography previously, our year in Korea presented me with the opportunity to practice intensively and to learn the egg tempera and mosaic methods under the tutelage of master iconographers, Tatiana So (Korea) and Sozon Yiannoudis (Greece). I have incorporated these traditional techniques into the workshop classes, which have taken place over a series of six Saturdays. For all but one of the students, this is their first time writing an icon, and I have been humbled witnessing their talent, patience, and enthusiasm.



Sarah Govostis uses a stick called a bastouni to steady her hand above the icon.

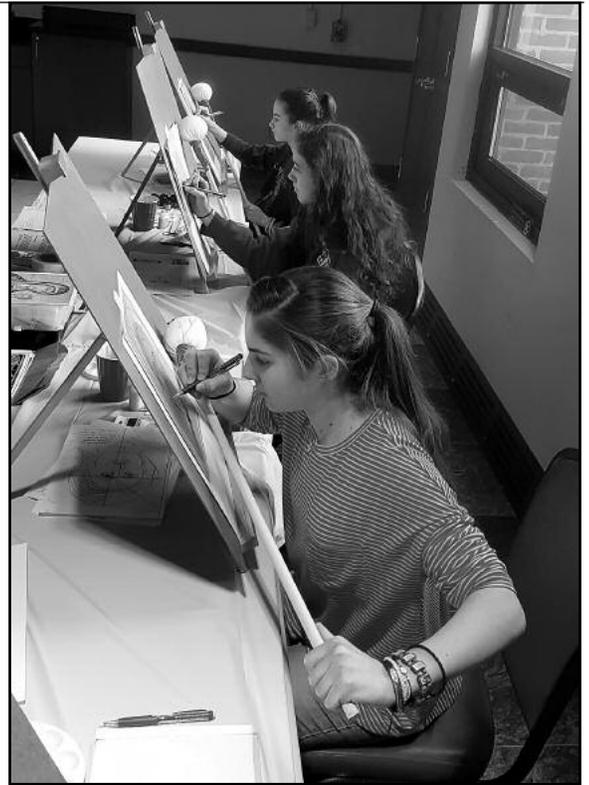
We began by discussing the history and meaning of the icon they are writing; we then created an accurate drawing; and now, we are following the step-by-step process that transforms a drawing into a finished icon.

Even more valuable than learning the techniques of iconography, our young iconographers are experiencing what a spiritually transformative process this can be. By creating an icon of Christ, a beloved saint, or a biblical event, we reflect continuously on the image before us, gaining a deeper understanding and connection with the prototype. It's another example of how God's grace works to help us grow in our faith.

In each class, the students thoughtfully mix dry color pigments with a freshly-made egg solution and, layer by painted layer, they witness the image emerge. The pigments we are using are naturally occurring minerals found in rocks and soils from around the world. The egg yolk acts as an emulsion for the pigment which when dry, allows the brilliance of the color to shine through.

For this workshop, the students are writing the icon of the Mandylion or "The Holy Napkin," also sometimes called "Made without hands." As recounted by Eusebius, the story for this icon starts with Abgar, the King of Edessa, who was ill and begged Christ via a letter to come cure him. Christ was unable to go so He asked that water and a cloth be brought to Him. He washed His Face, drying it with the cloth whereby His Divine Countenance was imprinted upon it. The cloth was delivered to Abgar, along with a letter from Christ stating He would send Thaddeus soon to heal his disease. Agbar, upon pressing the cloth upon his own face, received almost full healing. Therefore, the Mandylion is the first icon not only to have been an authentic likeness of Christ, but one which He himself willingly produced. It has often been cited as both proof of the Incarnation, because it had been in contact with the body of Christ, and justification for icons, since Christ Himself endorsed the making of His image.

The current iconography students are planning to display their icons at the



From front to back: Jenna Magas, Gia Hamalis, and Sarah Govostis learn the art of iconography.



Jenna Magas and Sarah Govostis show off their hard work on the historic "Made without hands" icon.

Oratorical Festival at Holy Apostles on March 26. I'm so grateful to have had this opportunity. I hope to continue teaching to interested youth and adults in our Holy Apostles family. For information, I can be reached at: 630.885.9793.

**Photos by
Diakonissa Dr. Pat Hamalis**

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church **April 2017** 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
GOYA Trip 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour	5:15pm The Way 6:30pm Great Compine Service	10:00am Tois 12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Greek School 6:30pm Jr. GOYA/GOYA Palm Cross Making & Dinner	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Bible Study 5:30pm Ninth Hour 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	12:00pm Sixth Hour 4:30pm Greek School 6:30pm Jr. Dance Troupe Rehearsal	4:30pm Adventure Theater	GOYA Trip To Philoxenia House 1 SATURDAY OF LAZARUS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:30am Lenten Breakfast & Philoptochos Bake Sale
PALM SUNDAY 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour 11:30am Philoptochos Bake Sale 7:00pm Nymphios Service	HOLY MONDAY 7:00pm Nymphios Service	HOLY TUESDAY 4:30pm Greek School 7:00pm Nymphios Service And Hymn Of Kassiani	HOLY WEDSDAY 10:00am Holy Unction 3:30pm Holy Unction 7:00pm Orthros Of Holy Thursday & Anointing Of Holy Unction	HOLY THURSDAY 6:30am Divine Liturgy NO Greek School 7:00pm 12 Holy Gospels	HOLY FRIDAY 11:00am Holy Friday Retreat 9:00am Royal Hours 3:00pm Apokathelosis 7:00pm Lamentations	HOLY SATURDAY 8:00am First Anastasi Liturgy 10:30pm Choir Concert 11:00pm Pre-Pascha Service & Resurrection Liturgy
PASCHA 10:00am Agape Service	10:00am Tois 4:30pm Greek School 5:00pm PTO Meeting 6:30pm GOYA Bright Week dinner	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study	4:30pm Greek School 6:30pm Jr. Dance/Troupe Rehearsal 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting	4:30pm Adventure Theater	4:30pm Adventure Theater	6:30pm Jr. Dance Troupe Rehearsal
FEAST DAY OF ST. GEORGE Sunday of St. Thomas Kindergarten In The Liturgy 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour	4:30pm Greek School	12:00pm Koukita's Kafenio 4:30pm Greek School	9:00am Jr. Dance Troupe Rehearsal 9:00am Philoptochos Feed My Starving Children Event 11:00am Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal	9:00am Jr. Dance Troupe Rehearsal 9:00am Philoptochos Feed My Starving Children Event 11:00am Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal	9:00am Jr. Dance Troupe Rehearsal 9:00am Philoptochos Feed My Starving Children Event 11:00am Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal	9:00am Jr. Dance Troupe Rehearsal 9:00am Philoptochos Feed My Starving Children Event 11:00am Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal
2nd And 4th Grades In The Liturgy 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy 11:30am Adventure Theater Play & Luncheon 2:00pm Greek Parade	24	25	26	27	28	29
5K Run And Walk Joggers, runners, walkers, and friends, and friends, mark your calendars for the Holy Apostles Annual 5K Run and Walk on Saturday, May 13. The event begins at 8:30 am. Complimentary snacks, gift bags, and t-shirts will be provided for all participants. All are invited. Registration is \$20 per person or \$50 per family. All proceeds benefit the Philoxenia House in Rochester, MN, which provides temporary housing to individuals and families visiting the Mayo Clinic.						
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Memorials

- Sophia Cambron*
- Demetra Papadakis*
- Toula Subley*
- Nicholas Subley*
- George Varven*
- Tom Mouroukas*
- Arthur Andrews*
- Helen Kostopoulos*
- Demetra Psimos*
- Gail Patinos*
- Nicholas Patinos*
- Spiro Vartelas*
- Stefania Vartelas*
- Ellen Vartelas*
- Athanasia Goumakis*

Funerals

- Athanasia Goumakis*
- Ruth Ann Murlas*
- Diane Kallos*
- George Metros*

Deadline

The deadline for the May Mosaic is Wednesday, April 5.

Youth News

Youth Basketball

All three basketball teams had another great season. Many thanks to our fans who came out to cheer us on throughout the season and many thanks to our dedicated coaches Nick Kirkeles and Nick Chiganos (Bidly and Grade School teams), John Kyanka, Chris Fotopoulos and Phil Chiganos (High School Team).

The grade school team won the silver play-off bracket, bringing home a championship.

The high school team came in second place in their playoff bracket. We're looking for younger players to fill our Bidly team next season.

If you're a girl or a boy entering 4th through 6th grade, please contact Aleka Ernst at alekaernst@aol.com or 630.561.1660.

We welcome all ages for our older teams too. For those 18 and over, there is a men's league too. So if you are looking for a great way to jump start your work week, games are on Sunday evenings. Please let Aleka Ernst know.

Jr. Olympics

Calling all youth ages 8-18 to join Holy Apostles Junior Olympics Team this year on Memorial Day weekend. Registration will take place in the multipurpose room after church in the near future. Please contact Aleka Ernst at alekaernst@aol.com with any questions. We're also looking for coaches.

Volunteer hosts are desperately needed!

If you enjoy the Fellowship Hour after the Divine Liturgy each Sunday, don't just rely on the hospitality of others. Step up to the table and host one of these popular events. If you unable to host one by yourself, join up with another volunteer!

The Church is asking all of us to participate in the tradition of hosting Fellowship Hour once a year. Available Sundays are: May 7 and 14, June 4, 18, and 25, as well as the months of July and August. To volunteer, call the church office for details.

Postmaster: Please deliver by the 3rd of April

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Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

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