



MOSAIC



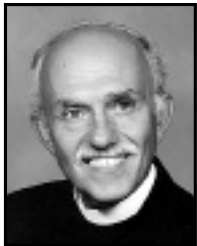
Coming together, we form an icon of God's Kingdom

Vol. 19, No. 8

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

December 2014

From Father Bill



Come, we must go to Bethlehem to see...

Each year, in late November, the clocks fall back. The leaves have been raked and our streets and walks cleansed. It is as if we are preparing for the first snow fall. While these tasks are repeated every year, some other changes are seen. The homes on the block begin to show the first sign that Christmas is coming.

In an atmosphere full of confusion and opposing views, with a great deal of optimism for the technological advances of our age as well as anguish and tension, and before the reality of war and poverty that lash the people of the earth and threaten the very existence of life, the message of Christ's birth comes as the heavenly message of Divine love, peace and joy, "and on earth peace, good will towards men." It is a divine promise that God is with us, which is what the name of the Savior, "Emmanuel," means.

This message of divine love towards humanity is God's eternal invitation to man to enjoy inner peace in Christ. However, how we respond to this divine call, whether we chose to accept God's gift or not, is up to each one of us.

In these days of Advent, are we to meet Christ in faith and total dedication, or are we to remain indifferent, restricting ourselves to a mere exchange of gifts, or simple acceptance, or rejection of the heavenly message? If the latter happens, then we have no taste of the grace of God; we lose ourselves in the big noises of the secular festivities connected with this great day and we remain without the Christ of faith, who alone can save man and unite him with God.

"Christ from heaven comes to us. Let us meet Him" sings the Church. Man lives

Fall Festival Fun



Evanthia and Arianna Panopoulos, upper left, show off their face paintings. Above right, Nicholas Ladas digs into a caramel apple. At left, Luke Ernst decorates a pumpkin.

Photos by Peter Bell

through his personal contact with God. This contact and fellowship we achieve only through Christ. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation." (2 Cor. 5:19). Our relationship with God is not something secondary in our lives but primary, and must permeate every aspect of our personality. God moved and came to us. We must move likewise and come to Him with all our heart and mind and soul. This is the meaning of the various exhortations of Christ "come to me, all ye the heavily burdened and I will grant you rest."

The wise men and the shepherds of Bethlehem should serve as our teachers. As soon as they heard the joyous message, they decided: "Come, we must go straight to Bethlehem and see this thing that has hap-

pened, which the Lord has made known to us. And they came with all haste and found the baby and...returned glorifying God for what they have heard and seen" Luke 2:10-20). They left their flocks, their business, and went to see, personally, the new born Christ. They saw, they believed, they adored Him, they glorified God, and thus they were filled with a great joy.

For two thousand years, our Church lived with and survived through this faith in the mystery of Christ. This same faith in Christ created our beautiful present day civilization, in spite of the diversity of peoples through which Christianity was transmitted.

History has shown people look to Christ as the only unshakable foundation for the survival of our civilization and a better tomorrow for all men. Our lives are filled with anxious

...See Fr. Bill on P. 4

From Father Nicholas



For God is with us

Recently a friend of ours asked an interesting question: "The Gospel reading on the Sunday before Christmas seems so long and boring. Why does the Church read all of these names?" Patriarchs, prophets, fathers and holy women's names are mentioned. These righteous people who lived before Christ are brought into the joy of His Nativity. They are invited, just like us, to prepare for the birth of Christ.

Each of these names has a certain meaning and signifies something. Not all of the ancestors of Christ were holy people. The names include people who struggled and sinned against God. David was a murderer and adulterer. Women, who had no legal rights and were viewed as property and second class citizens, are mentioned. Rahab was a harlot from Jericho. Ruth belonged to alien, despised people. Tamar was an adulteress. Bathsheba was seduced by David. These women, David, and others all have their own, imperfect story. Jesus is linked humanly to all of these people! He is linked to us! God entered their lives just as He enters our lives. Jesus comes despite our sins and shortcomings. He takes our own personal, fallen history and overcomes it! When studying these names, we can probably find something in common with these people who also struggled with living holy lives. Christ still came to earth to save us, despite our sins! Will we receive Him this Christmas?

God knows and calls us by name. Adam, when he first sinned, was filled with remorse and fear. He hid from God in the most remote section of the Garden of Eden. Then, he heard God's voice: "Adam, where are you?" (Genesis 3:9) This was a personal call from God! The prophet Isaiah said, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine." (Isaiah 43:1) God said to Moses: "I know you by name." (Exodus 33:12) Mary Magdalene went to Christ's tomb in the morning looking for Him. Jesus was standing there but she did not recognize Him. She thought Jesus was the gardener. Jesus then called to her personally and said, "Mary"! He knows us by name. We matter to Him. He loves and cares for us!

The Lord's great love for us brought Him to earth. The name Jesus means God saves. He came to save us! Before Christ, we were destined to die and that would be the end of our existence. Why did God Himself come? Couldn't He have sent someone else? Why did the Lord of the Universe come? God



Gavel to Gavel



Highlights of the September Parish Council Meeting

By PAUL KALLIS, SECRETARY

Present: Fr. Bill Chiganos, Fr. Nicholas Georgiou, George Alex, Peter Bell, George Chechopoulos, Terry Chiganos, Cindy Clark, James Fotopoulos, Tom Gregory, Paul Kallis, Louis Katziaris, Nick Kirkeles, George Mannos Jr., Mary Maragos, Peter Poteres and Steven Savas

Financial/Treasurer's Report:

+ Peter Bell reviewed the financial report for the month ending August 2014. Jim Fotopoulos moved to approve the report pending the yearend audit. The motion was passed unanimously.

Stewardship Report:

+ Louis Katziaris reviewed the Stewardship Report for August 2014. Pledges to date for 2014 are 744 which are 2 less than this period last year. Total amount pledged to date for 2014 is \$664,576.13 which is \$14,706.88 more than the same period last year. The average pledge of \$893.25 is \$22.11 more than this period last year. Percent paid to date is 86% vs. 86% for the same period last year.

Meditation:

+ Father Bill's meditation focused on the fact that we are entering a new ecclesiastic year. We are focused on Nov. 30 when we will celebrate an important milestone for

our parish, our 55th Anniversary. Father also mentioned that it is important for us to focus on stewardship and that we need to teach the new parishioners about stewardship.

Building & Grounds:

+ George Alex and Jim Fotopoulos provided an update on maintenance activities.
+ Nick Kirkeles provided an update on the bathroom renovations.

Ways & Means:

+ George Chechopoulos mentioned that the golf outing will be on July 13, 2015 and the picnic on July 26, 2015.

Old Business:

+ George Mannos provided an update on the 55th Anniversary Luncheon. George suggested that we may want to form a committee to continue to chronicle the history of the church.
+ Nick Kirkeles provided an update on the Greek School. We currently have around 90 students.

New Business:

+ Jim Fotopoulos made a motion to contract with Sound Planning to upgrade the sound system in the church. The motion passed unanimously.

Candidates for the Parish Council announced

On Sunday, December 14, elections will be held in the multi-purpose room after Liturgy for the 2015-2016 Parish Council.

The nominees as of November 17 are:

George Alex
Peter Bell
Terry Chiganos
George Chechopoulos, outgoing President
Cindy Clark
Ted Dres
Spyro Demakis
James Fotopoulos
Tom Gregory

Eleni Hatzihristodoulou
Paul Kallis
Louis Katziaris
Nick Kirkeles
Nick Kouchis
Brianna Kush
Alicia Magas
Mary Maragos
Dino Mirmingos
John Pilafas
Norman Pomrening
Steven Savas

says: "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry for I know their sorrows. I have come down to deliver them." (Exodus 3:7-8) In the Gospel of John, we read: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) He entered our darkness. Christ conquered death. He opens the doors of paradise for those who choose to follow Him! Our finite lives became

infinite. Because Christ died and rose from the dead, we that are united to Christ will not die. We will live again eternally with God. St. Paul asks, "Death where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55) Christ's incarnation, life, death and resurrection from the dead brings Christians eternal life!

Our Lord's incarnation renewed the grace and image of God in each person's soul. In Christ, we can be renewed, transformed and

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 4



Parishioners who are veterans from several wars were honored during Koukla's Kafenio.

Holy Apostles' veterans honored at Koukla's Kafenio

The Pillars & Rocks Committee organized another great luncheon last month on Veterans' Day. It was attended by our customarily joyous crowd.

It was a fun get together with wonderful live music and a special tribute to our veterans. Thank you to all our Koukles that worked so hard on this event and to our generous donors that help make it all possible. It took on

a new twist with a heartfelt tribute to our veterans. Close to twenty veterans were honored with prayers, poems, songs and rose boutonnieres in a very festive room decorated in red, white and blue.

As usual, a beautiful luncheon was served followed by lively Greek dancing to the music of Rhythmos. It was truly a memorable afternoon.

Philoptochos Update for the Holidays

Holiday Philanthropy

Our philanthropic work of Philoptochos goes on throughout the year, but it takes on more urgency in this holiday season. We rely on our parishioners for support. Now, we seek monetary donations for our Holiday Philanthropy Fund. The money is used to purchase and distribute food gift cards, gift baskets, toys, essential warm clothing, and shoes/boots for the needy. If possible, please give generously. Send donations to the church office, marked as 'Philoptochos/Holiday Philanthropy'.

Hollywood Glam

We thank our many, many supporters and volunteers that helped to make our annual charity fundraising event a success once again. Our Luncheon and Fashion Show is a wonderful showcase of how much we can do when we work together with love and with common purpose.

Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, December 13

following Divine Liturgy
Christmas Communion Breakfast

December 13 & 14

following Divine Liturgy
Christmas Bake Sale

Tuesday, December 16

at 7 -9 pm
General Meeting and Christmas Party

Sunday, January 4

following Divine Liturgy
Annual Parish Vasilopita Celebration

Sunday, January 11

at St. Demetrios, Elmhurst in evening
Annual Metropolis Vasilopita Celebration

Sunday, January 18

at Fox Bowl, Wheaton late afternoon
Family Bowling Night & Pizza Party

Find that special Christmas gift in HARC

Join us in HARC this season for great Christmas gift ideas. There are books, icons, CDs, ornaments, advent calendars, assorted Christmas cards, a variety of prayer bracelets and much more.

Our wonderful staff will be happy to help you Monday - Friday and Sundays after Liturgy.

The HARC Corner

The Ascetic Lives of Mothers

A Prayer Book for Orthodox Moms
By Annalisa Boyd

In this prayer book, Annalisa Boyd, who knows motherhood and its challenges, joys, and potential for spiritual growth, offers a wide selection of prayers mothers can use to intercede for their families as well as to grow in virtue themselves.

\$13.00

The Silent Way

A Series about Passions and Stillness
By Jeanette Aydlette & Marilyn Rouvelas

Peter Clashes with Anger: Peter is mad at Mikey and at his mom, who is mad at him for getting mad! Peter turns to Papou with his problem. **Eleni Looks at Jealousy:** Eleni is hurt and jealous when her softball coach picks another girl to be the cleanup hitter. On top of that her little brother, Peter, says he learned something special from their Papou and Peter won't share

Both Peter and Eleni turn to Papou for help and Papou explains about passions and stillness. What do these words mean and what do they have to do with Eleni and Peter's problems?

\$8.00 each

Baptisms

None

Weddings

None

Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better person.

– Benjamin Franklin



Photographer Peter Bell captured a nice moment on the Feast Day of St. Demetrios as Demetra Clamp and her daughter Giulina light their candles before the Liturgy.

Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study Christmas Party Dec. 11

Luncheon at 1:00pm

Instead of bringing a gift to exchange, please bring new pajamas for a child, size 2 to 14.

Don't wrap them.

RSVP to Kay

at 630.512.0856

57th Annual choir conference in St. Louis

By Nick Paloumpis

The Choir Federation of the Chicago Metropolis celebrated its 57th annual choir conference October 10-12 in St. Louis. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated by His Grace Bishop Demetrios of Mokossos, Rev. Fr. Doug Papulis and Rev. Fr. Michael Arbanas of St. Nicholas, the host parish.

Five members of the Holy Apostles choir attended. Joanne Volakakis was re-elected to the Executive Committee as the Federation treasurer. Other choir members included Joan Berg, Elaine Fotopoulos, Nick Kumis and Nick Paloumpis.

This year's conference featured a new music arrangement of the Divine Liturgy composed by Christopher Kypros, the "Liturgy of Hope." This was the world premiere of this music. Mr. Kypros directed the 85 voice choir, which included singers from the Chicago Metropolis as well as singers from Tampa, Oklahoma City, Raleigh, Washington D.C. and Long Beach, CA.

At Saturday's awards luncheon, five members of our choir were recognized for their years of service: Cathy Anderson and Anne Theophilos for 35 years; Angie Vrettos and Georgia Fountalakis for 25 years and Nick Trivelas for 10 years. Congratulations.

Nick Kumis recorded the Liturgy, and CD's will be available in December. Contact Nick Paloumpis if you would like to purchase a recording.

Fr. Bill from P. 1...

Let us glorify God who meets us at Christmas

moments dealing with daily crisis. We are invited to keep the meeting with Christ. The beauty and wonder of the Holiday will remain. Put everything in perspective in your lives. Only our true and sincere meeting with Christ, fills with beauty all of our expressions in the holiday season and in our lives.

Let us take advantage of this great Hholiday; let us arm ourselves with faith and piety; let us free ourselves from the problems

and cares of everyday life and thus go to Bethlehem, to the holy church of God "and see the event." Let nothing impede us from the experience of Christ's birth.

Let us glorify God, worship the One who was born and personally participate and share in the great mystery. Then we will know mystically, Christ and what God did for us in Him. We will know that God really loves us. May the peace of Christ fill all of our hearts.

With Christ, we are never alone

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2...

deified! Christ renewed our human nature. St. Gregory of Nyssa writes: "Our nature was sick and needed a doctor. We have fallen and need someone to raise us up. They who ceased to participate in good needed someone to bring them back to it. He who was shut in darkness needed the presence of life. The prisoner was looking for someone to ransom him. He was under the yoke of slavery and looking for someone to set him free." The Lord came for the salvation and deification of all regardless of our past. Christ came for all of us!

Jesus Christ came to assure us that He is always with us. We are never alone. We are not orphans abandoned in a foreign land. The name Emmanuel means God with us! God with every person! Hope for the hopeless, pardon for the guilty, forgiveness, peace for those who know no peace, and good news for those who have experienced only bad news. When God came to earth, He did not stay distant from us. He was not born a pow-

erful King in a mighty palace and separated from His people. He was born in a simple family, raised in a poor village and lived among His people. Jesus lived with the poor, simple, humble and suffering. He tasted the common life of people. Jesus experienced and participated in human life. He understands our lives because He experienced human life Himself! Christ tells us: "I have come to live among you, to live with you, to live in you." Will we accept Him?

The Good News of great joy celebrated this Christmas season is a new way of living. One of the Christmas hymns proclaims: "Make ready, O Bethlehem: let the manger be prepared, let the cave show its welcome. The truth has come, the shadow has passed, born of a Virgin, God has appeared to men, formed as we are and making godlike the garment He has put on. Behold the Virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which is translated, "God with us". Merry Christmas!

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church **December 2014** 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	5:15pm The Way	10:00am TOTS 4:30pm Greek School 5:00pm Greek School PTO Meeting 6:00pm GOYA Meeting	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4:30pm Greek School	4:30pm Adventure Theater	FEAST DAY OF ST. NICHOLAS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 2:00pm Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal 6:00pm Adv. Theater Performance For Visiting Churches 6
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Adventure Theater Luncheon & Play 11:30am Greek School Kalanda 7	1	4:30pm Greek School	7:30pm Choir Rehearsal 3	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study Christmas Party 4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting 4	FEAST DAY OF ST. SPYRIDON 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm GOYA Christmas Party 5	COMMUNION BREAKFAST 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 11:00am Philoptochos Bake Sale 4:15pm Basketball Game at St. Andrew 13
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy 11:30am Parish Council Elections 11:30am Philoptochos Bake Sale 5:00pm Metropolis Open House 14	5:15pm The Way Christmas Party 15	10:00am TOTS Christmas Party 4:30pm Greek School 7:00pm GOYA Meeting 7:00pm Philoptochos Christmas Party 16	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 17	4:30pm Greek School Christmas Party 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal 18	19	20
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy 4:15pm Basketball Game At St. Andrew 21	7:30pm Choir Rehearsal 22	4:30pm NO Greek School 23	CHRISTMAS EVE 9:00am Royal Hours Followed By Vespers 6:00pm Vespers Followed By Choir Christmas Concert 24	CHRISTMAS DAY 9:00am Orthros 10:00am Divine Liturgy 25	Church Office Closed 26	FEAST DAY OF ST. STEPHEN 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 27
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour 28	4:30pm NO Greek School 29	4:30pm NO Greek School 30	7:00pm Hierarchical Vespers At St. Basil's In Chicago 31	NEW YEARS DAY FEAST DAY OF ST. BASIL 9:00am Orthros 10:00am Divine Liturgy 1		

Memorials

Alexandra Ziogas
Loretta Nakos
Vasiliki Papadopoulos
Nikolaos Papadopoulos
Leonidas Papadopoulos
Eftihia Deimer
Perry Deimer
Demetri Vandarakis
Diamanto Vandarakis
Evangelo Vandarakis
Gus Vandarakis
Lillian Vandarakis
Dr. Peter Pappas
Peter Stavros
Georgia Sarantopoulos
Louis Sarantopoulos
Penelope Vlahos
Dionysios Vlahos
Amelia Vlahos
George Stavros
Panayiotitsa Stavros
Demetra Stavros
Angeliki Stavros
Angeliki Poulos

Funeral

Paul Chechopoulos

Weekday Services

Saturday, December 6
FEAST DAY OF ST. NICHOLAS
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Friday, December 12
FEAST DAY OF ST. SPYRIDON
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Saturday, December 13
COMMUNION BREAKFAST
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, December 24
CHRISTMAS EVE
9:00am Royal Hours Followed By
Vespers Divine Liturgy Of St. Basil
6:00pm Vespers Followed By Choir Christmas Concert

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for
the January Mosaic
is Tuesday, December 9.

Weekday Services

Thursday, December 25
CHRISTMAS DAY
9:00am Orthros
10:00am Divine Liturgy

Saturday, December 27
FEAST DAY OF ST. STEPHEN
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Parish Elections

After the Liturgy on December 14,
remember to vote for your favorite
candidates in the Parish Council elections.

Scholarships Available

The Pan-Hellenic Scholarship foundation is offering \$250,000 in scholarship awards, available to all undergraduate students of Hellenic descent.

Application are available at
www.panhellenicscholarships.org
The deadline is January 31, 2015..

Postmaster: Please deliver by the 3rd of December

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