

MOSAIC

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

Vol. 14, No. 8

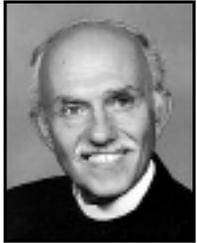
Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, IL

December 2009

(708) 562-2744

www.holyapostleschurch.com

From Father Bill



The Enchanted Forest

There is the story of the old forester who was said to be the only person who knew the way to the Enchanted Forest. In the forest, according to legend, beauty was in every rock and tree and stream. The deer approached humans without fear. The combinations of sun and shadow, earth and sky, sounds and stillness of the forest give a visitor the sense of exaltation and clear vision. Every year people visited the old man to ask the way to the forest, but he answered them in what seemed to be irrelevancies. To some he said, "I'll teach you the ways of the birds and the wild animals," but that didn't satisfy them. Or he would say, "I'll teach you how to live off the land, to find water where no one else can find it, to find shelter from the cold, to find food," but that didn't interest them either. Sometimes he said, "I'll teach you the ways of the nature person: patience, endurance, seeing, listening, being a part of nature." His offers satisfied no one.

When the old man died, his daughter married a young man who knew the whole area well, and one day he said to her, "Isn't it true that there is no Enchanted Forest?"

"Not as a place on the map," she said.

"Why didn't your father tell his visitors that?"

"He was stubborn. If they had let him teach them the ways of God, they would have discovered the only enchanted forest there is. It has many locations but few discoverers."

God has been in search of man since the defection of Adam and Eve. His attempt to reveal his love for man has been ignored. Great Prophets proclaimed God's love but there was no response.



Jr. GOYA bake sale is group's first fundraiser

Demi Kallis, left, and Maria Pierce get baked goods ready for the sale on Sunday, November 8.

Isaiah 9:1-7 lends itself to meditation on God's gift to us. Deliverance and deliverer as given Light, plenty, and peace are the tangible gifts. They are given in a non-threatening way: a child, a boy. God gives power to use, but he does not overpower or smother us with his gifts. Moses, David, the Promised Messiah in Isaiah, and the babe lying in the manger all indicate a remarkable gentleness on God's part in the way he reveals himself. Discovering the enchanted forest is a task for all to complete.

Someone has said that there are three classes of people: those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and the overwhelming majority who have no idea of what is happening.

At Christmas time most of us, it seems, are in all three groups. Each year we make Christmas happen; that is, we plan and prepare for Christmas with our pre-holiday activities. We also watch Christmas happen in the sense that we plan and prepare for Christmas with our pre-holiday activities. We also watch Christmas happen in the sense that we listen

to the Bible story and sermons and songs surrounding it. And then, even though we make Christmas happen and watch it happen, in the last analysis, we do not really understand what is happening. Of course, neither did the principals involved in the first Christmas. Mary, the mother of our Lord, appears overwhelmed in Luke's gospel, as does her cousin Elizabeth: "And why is this granted to me...?" The event and its significance were as far beyond their mental grasp as it is ours.

Luke seemed to have understood how overwhelming this was, and that is what he tried to convey in his chapter. The message we could learn and pass on to others is that Christmas is to be enjoyed not explained. We should try to revel in it, not reveal it.

About the great mysteries of life the ancient philosopher Platinus said, "We can but point the way, indicate the path." With Christmas, the explanation is that it is not to be told, not to be spoken. If any deserved an explanation it was Elizabeth and Mary, but they didn't press for one: they were obedient

See Fr. Bill on P. 6

From Father Nicholas



God becoming incarnate for us

Last January, New York City experienced something amazing. Flight 1594 took off, climbed to 3000 feet, lost power and then had to make an emergency landing in the Hudson River. Sully, the pilot, steered the plane with no power, navigated over a huge bridge and landed on the narrow Hudson River. The plane narrowly missed the trees and dense buildings of New York. Miraculously, all 155 people on board survived! The governor called this the "Miracle on the Hudson". Some passengers said that they resigned themselves to death. Many thought that the plane would break and explode on impact. Others thought they would drown in the frigid waters. They thought death was inevitable. These people believed that death was unavoidable. But, God had different plans. The Lord's hand intervened! He guided this plane, through the pilot's hands, to safety! God saved them. He spared these passengers!

Before Christ came to earth, we were destined to die. That would be the end of our existence. Why did God Himself come to visit us? Couldn't He have sent someone else? Why did the Lord of the Universe come? In Exodus, we read: "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry. I know their sorrows, sufferings and trials. I have come down to deliver them." In the Gospel of St. 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." He entered our darkness. Christ conquered death. Our finite lives became infinite. Since Christ died and rose from the dead, we, who are united to Christ, will not die but live again eternally with God. St. Paul asks, "Death where is your sting?" Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection brings Christians eternal life!

Paul Harvey shared a great modern-day story that will help us understand the importance of Christ's coming to earth a little better. The story begins with a well-meaning farmer from a nice family. George worked hard and tried to care for his family. He was a good person. This man only had one problem. He did not understand Christ's birth or Incarnation.

George did not understand why this was such a big deal. Every Christmas he watched his wife and children go to Christmas Eve services. Since he did not want to be a hypocrite,



Gavel to Gavel



BY STEVE SAVAS

Parish Council Meetings of October 15 and November 12

Stewardship

✦ Steve Melonides reviewed the Stewardship Report for October 31. The church received 788 pledges, down 30 pledges for the same period last year, totaling \$657,698.67 (down \$16,012.26) for an average pledge of \$834.64. The amount paid for October 31 was \$33,455.00

Meditation

✦ Father Bill reviewed information about the Metropolis Clergy Laity conference that was recently held in Milwaukee. Fr. Bill remarked how well the event was and how informative it was. Fr. Bill passed out some literature such as historical facts of the diocese. The Chicago Diocese leads all the others in Greek Orthodox marriages and second in the country for Inter-Christian marriages. Fr. Bill said that the climax of the conference was the trip to the Retreat Center. Everybody was able to tour the grounds and see the new chapel. Fr. Bill said that the future of the church, according to the trends and studies is very promising.

50th Anniversary Update

✦ A special thank you goes to George Alex, Sandy Fiascone, Jim Fotopoulos, Joan Berg and George Mannos Jr. for the awesome efforts on the Ad book. Almost \$109,000 was raised; thank you to all of our supporters.

Building & Grounds

✦ The sidewalk on the north side of the church has been replaced and enlarged. A handicap curb was cut out in the front of the church.

he would stay home and read by the fireplace. One Christmas Eve, as George settled into his reading, he heard an irregular thumping sound against the storm door. He went to the window and watched as tiny, shivering sparrows, attracted to the warmth inside, beat against the glass trying to get inside. The farmer was very moved. He bundled up and trudged through fresh snow. George opened the barn for these struggling birds. He turned on the lights, tossed some hay in a corner and sprinkled a trail of saltine crackers to direct them to the barn. However, the sparrows scattered when the man approached the barn. They hid in the darkness.

The small birds were afraid of him. George tried various tactics to attract the birds. He circled behind them to drive them toward the barn. George tossed cracker

- ✦ New lighting and adjustments were made to the exterior of the building.
- ✦ The annual roofing inspection was done and all looks good for the winter.
- ✦ Mr. D's heater in his office is being repaired.
- ✦ A fire started under the candle stand recently. The special extinguishers that were unstalled under the stand activated and suppressed the fire before any damage was done. The extinguisher has been replaced.

Technical Committee

- ✦ Paul Kallis stated that the sound system should be finished by November 20. Nick Kirkeles made a motion to approve the purchase of a new projector and new microphone for the altar, not to exceed \$4,000. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

- ✦ Nick Kirkeles reported that Comcast has agreed to pay for the sewer line repair including the landscaping, in excess of \$10,000.
- ✦ Jim Kapolas reported that the new employee insurance policy has added benefits. The cost remains the same, until the renewal period in the spring.

New Business

- ✦ Steve Savas made a motion to approve the purchase of new basketball uniforms, and pay for the gym rental, and pay for the GOAL fee not to exceed \$4,000.
- ✦ George Mannos made moved to purchase approximately 30 new childrens' chairs not to exceed \$600. The motion passed.

crumbs toward the barn to get them to enter it on their own. He even tried to catch them to force them in the barn. Nothing worked. This farmer, in the birds' eyes, was a huge alien creature and terrified them.

The birds did not understand that he actually wanted to help! The frustrated man withdrew to his house and watched the doomed sparrows through the window. As he stared at them, he thought of a solution: "If only I could become a bird, one of them, just for a moment, then I would not frighten them. Then, I could show them the way to warmth and safety. I could be with them in their trouble and distress."

The man finally understood Emmanuel, the Incarnation. God came to earth always to be with us. He came to help and save us!

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 6



Rosalie Christofidis and Theodora Demetralis visit with Helen Getz, above and right, at the Greek American Nursing Home



Philoptochos Happenings

Pillars and Rocks

Representatives from the Philoptochos Pillars and Rocks program were honored to celebrate OXI Day with the residents of the Greek American Nursing Home. In attendance were Faye Adams, Maria Kallis, Theodora Demetralis, and Rosalie Christofidis.

Communion Breakfast

Philoptochos will host a Communion Breakfast on Saturday, December 12. Liturgy is at 9 am followed at 10:30 by a pancake and sausage breakfast prepared by Joan and Dean Demetri and a special visit by Santa. Please bring an unwrapped toy to benefit needy children. For more information or reservations,

please contact Anthonla Pomrening at 708-588-0258 or Tina Dillon at 630-832-5652.

Christmas Bake Sale

Prepare to purchase your holiday baked goods at the Christmas Bake Sale on Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and 13.

Philoptochos will sell Christmas sweet bread, tiropites, spanakopites, and other treats. We will take pre-orders for coin-in vasilopita.

Christmas Party

Celebrate the holiday season at the Philoptochos Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 8 in the fellowship hall. A social hour will be at 6:30 pm followed by an Italian style dinner at 7:00pm. Madrigal singers from

Lyons Township High School will sing. Please bring toiletries for donation to Family Shelter Service, a charity that works with women and children, to rebuild hope after being victims of domestic violence.

Fashion Show Charity Report

Due to the generosity of all who attended and supported the Fashion Show, Philoptochos was able to donate \$10,000 to the Father William Chiganos Scholarship Fund and \$10,000 to Childs Voice.

Correction: In the November issue of the Mosaic, the name of Kathy Stratton as a fashion show sponsor was inadvertently omitted.
by JoAnn Stubbings

Registry

Baptisms
None

Wedding

*Margo Tomaras & Neil Prendergast
Sponsor: Lynn Cunningham*

Shop in HARC

Remember to stop in HARC after Liturgy and during the week to purchase the many wonderful Christmas gift ideas: books, music, icons, ornaments, candles, angels, as well as Christmas cards.

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for the January, 2010 Mosaic is Tuesday, December 8.

Choir releases greatest hits CD

The Holy Apostles Choir has produced a CD highlighting selected Christmas and Easter performances from live concerts over the past 50 years. Nearly four hours of music and 70 tracks taken from the choir's archives have been selected and re-mastered for your enjoyment.

This 3 CD set will make a great gift for out-of-town family members, friends, shut-ins and for your own music library.

Make your \$30 check payable to Holy Apostles Church. CD sets can be mailed at for an additional \$2.50, shipping & handling. Contact Nick Paloumpis with your questions at holyapostleschoir2009@yahoo.com

Fashion show chairpersons Irene Boutzarelos, left, and Tina Dillon, right, present a \$100,00 check to Fr. Bill for the William S. Chiganos scholarship fund.



Altar boys share memories at reunion

On Sunday, October 25, the altar boys who served Holy Apostles parish over the past 50 years were honored. 142 young men have served beginning at the small altar in Broadview. Approximately 67 of them attended, many of whom were father and son.

It was like riding a bike. You never forget what you were taught by Father Bill in those early days. He taught us to pray, what each item in the altar represented, how to enter church, how to conduct ourselves outside of the altar, and to love God. To be an altar boy, you had to learn the creed in Greek and then take his test. You came on time, ready to serve each Sunday or holiday, with black shoes, black pants, combed hair, no gum, on time. For not listening, you would pay the price by taking out the bread or standing at the altar table for the entire service.

Fifty years later that has remained the same. Those who attended knew what to do and when to do it. It was very exciting to serve with the men who came into the altar 50 years ago. They were our mentors, our teachers, our brothers in Christ. These men have gone on to become lawyers, doctors, dentists, engineers, professors, teachers, chefs, managers, sales reps, along with many other professions. One of the young men became a priest, Father Jim Gordon.

To Father Bill and all the other priests, thank you for teaching us our faith. To Father Nicholas, thank you for teaching the younger boys how to grow in our faith and to love God. To Father Bill, you have baptized us, married us, baptized our children, visited us in time of need, prayed with us, and buried our parents and loved ones. We thank you for all your support and love over these 50 years. It has been an honor to have served with each



Fr. Bill greets George Mannos as John Andrews waits to have his sash blessed, above.

Taking part in a procession, are l-r, Bill Gramas, Greg Angelopoulos, Jimmy Angelos, and Angelo Angelakos.

and every altar servant all these years. It is an extended family with memories that will last a lifetime.

As we all left with tears in our eyes, we cannot wait for the next time we will serve together. May God continue to bless us, our families and the Holy Apostles family.

by Michael Cotsilis



Above, Tom Mannos, left, and Bill Plattos, right, bring out the bread. At left, Fr. Bill comments on the dedication of all the altar boys over the years.



As Time Goes By, Celebrating Fifty Years



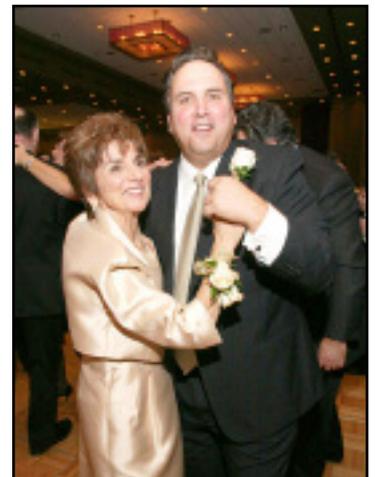
Emcees for the evening were John Kass and Kiki Liston.



Having a good time, l-r, are Gregory and Cooke Dimas, and Mona and Tom Skalkos, above.



Fr. Bill leads Nick Kirkeles, Sandy Fiascone, George Chechopoulos, Karen and George Mannos.



Presvytera Effie dances with her son Phil.

To say that the evening was anything less than spectacular would be an understatement. The Holy Apostles 50th Anniversary Gala celebration brought together over 1000 people to commemorate the humble beginnings of our church, as well as to reflect on its rich history.

The event was eighteen months in the making, and every detail was perfectly orchestrated by Co-Chairs Sandy Fiascone, Nick Kirkeles and Peter Poteres, with the help of many talented committee members.

Stepping into the ballroom you could immediately see the love and devotion that went into this event. Each table was adorned with incredible keepsake books that were designed by our very own Stella Athanas. Although the flowers were magnificent, there was no better accent to the room than being surrounded by old and new friends.

There were countless touching moments throughout the evening that made it unforgettable. The audience was captivated as they watched the history of Holy Apostles



L-r, Presvytera Toulia and Fr. Ted Poteres, Presvytera Maria Drossos, Kathy Kalyvas, and Liberty Poteres remember good times.

Photos by Peter Bell and Margo Kuchuris

unfold in a video produced by Billy and Phil Chiganos, and Ted Gregory. Most importantly, each and every person in the room was moved by Father Bill's poignant and inspirational speech.

For those who were baptized, married and

raised at Holy Apostles, the evening was a wonderful walk down memory lane. For all the newer parishioners, the evening was a solid reminder that Holy Apostles is a place you can truly call your second home.

by Antella Thiakos

The **HARC** CORNER

Beyond the Shattered Image Insights into an Orthodox Christian Ecological Worldview

By John Chryssavgis

Dr. Chryssavgis states in his book, "the world is an icon." It reveals the image of Christ, even if we have shattered this image. Profoundly spirited, this book offers a lyrical portrayal of creation as reflected in the Christian classics of the East. Through the things that are seen, the text tells us to be led towards things that are not seen. To do this there is no need to travel far. Only faith is required because only through faith can we behold him.

The author tells us how theology provides a foundation for environmental action, and it is certainly true that God is working even now on the world like a painter on his picture. The world, in spite of its shattered image, remains a completion of the heavenly kingdom.

The chapters on the desert contain some of the most beautiful and powerful theological writing.

Softcover, \$18.00

Thank you God for Rain I can read

By Mona Hodgson

Illustrated by Milena Jahier

A Lesson in Teamwork. Flash!

Kaboom...A summer storm is on its way and all the desert creatures scurry to collect cool rainwater. What do you think they'll do with it? Guide your child's spiritual development by reading stories with biblical values. Your child reads with you and he/she reads alone.

Softcover, \$4.00

A Song for my Shepherd Coloring book for children

Adapted by Edward Henry

Illustrated by Dean Vavak

It is one thing for children to listen to a story about the 23d Psalm. It's quite another to color in your own book. This coloring book is active learning that means hands-on fun for children. Little learners will be drawn right into the celebration of God who makes all things possible!

Softcover, \$4.00

Fr. Bill from P. 1

Icon of nativity tells of Joseph's temptation

and faithful, consequently they were blessed and fulfilled. We can be, too, if we let the mystery remain and simply give ourselves to the event and its power

In the icon of the Nativity, our eye is drawn to the lower left corner where we see Joseph. He is not part of the central group of the Child and His Mother; he is not the father and is emphatically separated from this group. Before him, under the guise of an old and bent shepherd, stands the devil in the role of the tempter. Here the icon transmits the meaning of certain liturgical texts, which speak of the doubts of Joseph and the troubled state of his soul. The Apocrypha relates how the devil tempted Joseph, telling him that a virgin birth is not possible as it is opposed to the laws of nature. We can appreciate how Joseph lost his sense of wonder. We have all the scripts, the stories, and yet for many the story of Christmas is fantasy.

The Enchanted Forest is before us and never as real as at Christmas.

So this Christmas tell those who have difficulty with the Virgin Birth to get lost in the wonder, love and praise of God's love.

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2

The greatest gift at Christmas: Christ is born!

The passengers from the "Miracle on the Hudson" flight were so excited and thankful that God spared their earthly lives. That experience forever changed their attitude and outlook on life. Do we have that same excitement when we consider the Lord's gift of opening the doors to eternal life and eternally saving us? Maybe we are challenged financially, physically or emotionally. Regardless of our earthly condition, the good news of Christ coming to earth: His becoming man to save, renew and be with us cannot be taken away! Sometimes it is easy to focus on this life and forget about the next one.

Christmas time reminds us to thank God for His earthly blessings and even more to thank Him for His Heavenly blessings. Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Life Is a Gift

Today before you think of saying an unkind word - Think of someone who can't speak.

Before you complain about the taste of your food - Think of someone who has nothing to eat.

Before you complain about your husband or wife - Think of someone who's crying out to God for a companion.

Today before you complain about life - Think of someone who went too early to heaven.

Before you complain about your children - Think of someone who desires children but they're barren.

Before you argue about your dirty house, someone didn't clean or sweep - Think of the people who are living in the streets.

Before whining about the distance you drive - Think of someone who walks the same distance with their feet.

And when you are tired and complain about your job - Think of the unemployed, the disabled and those who wished they had your job.

But before you think of pointing the finger or condemning another - Remember that not one of us are without sin and we all answer to one maker.

And when depressing thoughts seem to get you down - Put a smile on your face and thank God you're alive and still around.

Life is a gift. Live it, enjoy it, celebrate it, and fulfill it.

RELISH THE MOMENT, IT MAY NOT COME AROUND AGAIN.

Join the Holy Apostles Dance/Cheer Squad

We are looking for sixth through eighth grade girls to participate in the fun experience of cheering on our Holy Apostles basketball team. Contact Pamela Ziogas at 630.739.7302 or Debbie Chiganos at 630.434.4204.

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church **December 2009** 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		9:00am Pareo Trip 10:00am TOTIS 4:30pm Greek School	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4:30pm Greek School	4:30pm Adventure Theater	
FEAST DAY OF ST. NICHOLAS 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Greek School Kalamita Adventure Theater Luncheon & Play	5:15pm The Way	4:30pm Greek School 7:00pm Philoptochos Christmas Party	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 7:00pm Jr. GOVA Meeting 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4:30pm Greek School		5 FEAST DAY OF ST. SPYRIDON 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:30am Communion Breakfast Philoptochos Bake Sale 3:00pm Family Synaxis Christmas Caroling 5:00pm Vespers
6	7		8	9	10	11
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Christmas Pageant Fellowship Hour Philoptochos Bake Sale 5:00pm Metropolis Open House		10:00am TOTIS 4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm GOVA Christmas Party	12:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship Christmas Party 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4:30pm Greek School Pizza Party 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting		12
13	14		15	16	17	18
8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Jr. Choir Christmas Concert Fellowship Hour	5:15pm The Way Christmas Party	No Greek School		CHRISTMAS EVE 9:00am Royal Hours 6:30pm Choir Concert 7:00pm Vespers Liturgy	CHRISTMAS 9:00am Orthros 10:00am Divine Liturgy	19 10:00am Adventure Theater Outing 4:00pm Altar Boy Meeting 5:00pm Vespers 6:00pm Altar Boy Christmas Dinner
20	21		22	23	24	25
FEAST DAY OF ST. STEPHEN 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour No Sunday School		No Greek School				26
27	28		29	30	31	
						Ben Franklin says... Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better person.

Memorials

*Sophia Loukas
Gus Loukas
Pauline Athas
James Athas
George Athas
Xanthippe Tavrides
Demetri Vandarakis
Eftihia Deimer
Perry Deimer
Diamanto Vandarakis
Evangelos Vandarakis
Paraskevi Apostolakos
George Chiampas
Helen Zakos
Anthony Kouimelis
Bertha Kouimelis
Harry Kouimelis
Antonia Kouimelis
Demetra Kolins
Gus Kolins
Betty Tomaras
Carl Kleronomos
Paul Horemotes
Perry Kokinis
Betty Riedel*

Weekday Services

Vespers

Saturday, December 12 & 19
5:00pm

Feast Day of St. Spyridon

Saturday, September 12
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Christmas Eve

Thursday, December 24
9:00am Royal Hours
7:00pm Vesperal Liturgy

Christmas Day

Friday, December 25
9:00am Orthros, 10:00am Divine Liturgy

Funeral

Christine Siambanes

Weekday Services in January

Feast Day of St. Basil

Friday, January 1
9:00am Orthros, 10:00am Divine Liturgy

Eve of Epiphany

Tuesday, January 5
6:00pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy

Epiphany

Wednesday, January 6
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy
and Blessing of the Water

Feast Day of St. John

Thursday, January 7
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Stewardship Reminder

November 22 was Stewardship
Sunday. If you have not already done
so, please send in your pledge for 2010.

Postmaster: Please deliver by the 4th of December

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