

# MOSAIC

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

Vol. 14, No. 9

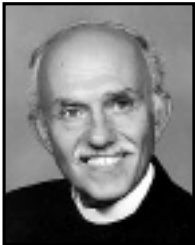
Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, IL

January 2010

(708) 562-2744

www.holyapostleschurch.com

## From Father Bill



## Holidays not over for Orthodox

For many Western Christians, Christmas is over on Christmas Day. Presents are removed from beneath the tree, lights and decorations returned to their place and what remains are memories of Christmas past. Christmas was the highlight of the holiday season for many; a tradition-rich time of family unity, gift giving and religious celebrations. What follows are the Twelve Days of Christmas, when hymns and prayers continue to speak of the Miracle of Christ's Birth.

As we turn the pages of the new calendar, we arrive at January 6 and are called upon to celebrate Theophania, one of the greatest holidays in the Christian year, which is in a class with Christmas and Easter.

In some parts of the world it is observed with greater solemnity than Christmas itself, though not among the Orthodox in the Americas.

In English, we are accustomed to hearing the feast called Epiphany. This word means manifestation. On this particular day, our Church celebrates the remembrance of the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan at the hands of St. John the Baptist.

Because of the importance of the feast, a strict fast should be observed by all Orthodox on January 4.

At the time of His Baptism, Christ's status as the Son of God, His Divinity, was made manifest. Hence, the name of the feast is Theophania. The meaning of the feast is set forth in the hymn that we chant a great many times:

"When you were baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was manifested in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the

## Seniors luncheon provided food, fun, & fellowship

At right, Fr. Nicholas and Fr. Bill visit with attendees at the luncheon.



At left, Rosalie Christofides and Kay Bobis display pajamas collected for needy children. Above, Peter Calivas, Michael Hamalis, and Peter Sigalos.

Trinity we manifested, for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee and called Thee his beloved Son, and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truthfulness of the proclamation O Christ Our God, who hast revealed thyself and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee."

It is customary to hold the Service of the Blessing of the Waters on this day. In ancient times, there were two blessings: one, the blessing of the water intended for the baptism of those who were about to be received into the Church and the other bodies of water for the faithful.

Today, the blessing of the waters takes place at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. At this service, the celebrant sprinkles the holy icons, holy altar, and the entire congregation. Holy water is distributed to everyone to partake of in their homes or to retain it to be drunk in the morning before eating anything

else or sprinkle their homes with it.

Actually, the Service of the Blessing of the Waters takes place twice: on January 5, the day before the feast, and on the Day of the feast. The purpose for the second service celebrated on January 5 was to accommodate the large crowds of worshippers. Though this may not apply to our church today, everyone is encouraged to attend both the evening and the morning services. The practice of one person in the family attending the service and bringing holy water for everyone is a habit we wish to change. Listening in person to the profound prayers enlightens us further.

Contrary to what some believe, there is absolutely no difference between the Holy Water of the Feast Day and the water blessed the day before the feast. The same prayers are read at both services and on both days. The only difference is the prayers of Saint

See Fr. Bill on P. 3

From Father Nicholas



God's  
blessings  
through  
water

Look out the window today and you may see lots of water. Beautiful snow is frozen water falling from the heavens. Water on the ground can freeze and become ice. It is powerful. A few drops of water can lift a plant's drooping leaves. Water can refresh our bodies. We can wash and even swim in it. Water is essential to our life. It carries blood through 60,000 miles of arteries, capillaries and veins in our bodies. Physical life comes from water. Spiritual life also comes from water. This month, we remember that we are born again, given new spiritual life in baptism of water and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Scriptures close with the invitation: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17)

Water is offered because we need the Lord's power and strength in our daily lives. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ left the earth when He ascended to heaven. He remains visible in His body, the Church. Here, He reaches out to us with the sacraments, expressing His love and grace. Each sacrament puts us in touch with Christ and conveys the power of the Cross and Resurrection. St. Leo the Great said: "He who was visible as our Redeemer has now passed into the Sacraments." The sacraments or mysteries of Christ bring us into personal contact with Him. Sacraments are not magical or machines of salvation. Rather, they are visible acts that convey invisible realities. God's grace bestowed through the sacraments is the power that can transform our lives. Our participation in the sacraments assists us in our journey to the Kingdom of God.

Baptism is the beginning of this eternal journey. Through baptism, the Kingdom of God becomes accessible. Our old, sinful self drowns as the baptized person is immersed in the water. The original sins are washed away. St. Paul describes this in a passage read during each baptism: "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3-4) We become new creations in Christ. Baptism brings us newness of life! This is sometimes easy to forget as we get bogged down in our daily, earthly cares.

The Fathers of the Church describe a sec-

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 6

## Minutes from the General Assembly Meeting

November 22

by George Chechopoulos, Parish Council Secretary

**Financial Report** Steve Savas said that for the month ended October 31, we are favorable \$31,000. Our CD totals are worth approximately \$390,000, and our checking account is at \$375,000.

**Stewardship Report** Paul Kallis reported for Steve Melonides that 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. Amount paid through October 31 was \$33,455.

**Spiritual Growth** Father Bill thanked everyone in the parish who has helped with the various ministries and the year-long activities celebrating our 50th anniversary. He also thanked Peter Poteres, Sandy Fiascone, Nick Kirkeles, Joan Berg, Jim Fotopoulos, George Alex and all of the many volunteers who gave of their time, talent, and contributed to the success of the 50th Anniversary Dinner Dance.

**Youth Programs** Father Nicholas reported on the youth programs and thanked everyone involved for their help. He said that the annual 5K Run & Walk will be held around Mother's Day. The event has raised funds which go to the Philoxenia House in Minnesota.

**Building & Grounds** A 3-page report was presented by George Alex and Jim Fotopoulos listing projects completed in 2009 and those planned for 2010. Facilitating accessibility was discussed as part of this report.

**Ways & Means** was presented by Jim Kapolas. The Macaronatha luncheon was successful netting approximately \$4,000. The Golf Outing location changed last summer to Indian Lakes Resort. It netted approximately \$9,000.

**Outreach** was presented by President Peter Poteres for Chrisy Banakis. Parish members are encouraged to join the many volunteers who regularly host our weekly fellowship hour following the Divine Liturgy. A volunteer sign-up clipboard and guidelines are posted in the multi-purpose room. He said that throughout the 50-year history of Holy Apostles Church, we have strived to reach every segment of our church family to encourage participation. The Outreach Committee will be planning a retreat for the Parish Council to discuss how we may encourage participation in Orthodox spiritual life through practicing our faith. One area of focus will be embracing young people so they may realize the richness of Orthodoxy through regular attendance at Liturgy and programs designed for them. We will also examine ways to reach those who may have

drifted away.

**Education Committee** Peter Poteres gave the report for the Greek School for Mara Georges. Our Greek School has 107 students. Feedback from parents and students is that the program is an exceptional program.

Joan Berg presented the Sunday School report. Enrollment is 348 students, ranging in age from 3 years through high school down by 9 students from last year. Our enrollment fee remains at \$20. The average weekly Sunday School attendance this Fall is 160 students. Attendance remains strong. She highlighted curriculum focus and various projects that are ongoing.

**Facilities Committee** was presented by Peter Poteres for Sandy Fiascone. A budget was set up for working with the florist for Easter and Christmas saving \$8-10,000.

In 2010 there will be a training session for the Council on the use of the automated external defibrillator. A beautification project for the church ceiling and columns will be investigated.

**Technical Committee** was presented by Paul Kallis. The Technical Committee was a new committee formed in 2009. The first task was to correct the audio visual system in the multi-purpose room. President Peter Poteres thanked Paul Kallis for getting the audiovisual system straightened out. Once completed there will be training for the groups who need access to the system. The committee's 2010 project will be a community-wide email system.

**Long Range Outlook** was presented by Terry Chiganos. Some of the past projects completed were: the demographic study, remodeling of the Sunday School, technical sound system, and expansion of the sound system. All suggestions are always welcome.

**Old Business** 2009 was a challenging year for the Parish Council during these hard economic times but was very rewarding with our 50th Anniversary. Our ad book resulted in over \$109,000 versus the previous ad book which resulted in \$61,000.

**New Business** Parishioner Jane Fotopoulos made a suggestion to revitalize our Welcome Committee as it has seemed to go by the wayside. She indicated visitors at our parish enjoyed our service and coffee hour, and made mention to her that no one greeted them on that particular Sunday. Presvytera Michelle Georgiou also reminded us that we used to have a particular section set up in the multi-purpose Room for visitors and newcomers to get information.



Young parishioners gather to visit with Santa at the Communion Breakfast.

# Philoptochos sponsors January events

## Vasilopita

Philoptochos will host the annual Vasilopita celebration on January 10 following the Divine Liturgy. The entire parish is invited to share in a coffee hour and vasilopita. Donations will be taken to support St. Basil's Academy which houses and educates underprivileged children. The Metropolis Philoptochos Vasilopita Celebration will take place on January 10 at 6 p.m. at St. Andrew's Church in Chicago.

## Godparents' Luncheon

Godparents and godchildren of all ages are invited to take Holy Communion and enjoy a meal following the Divine Liturgy on January 31 in the multi-purpose room. A delicious



Above, Eleni Poteres and Chrissie Alex, and George Fotos are ready for the bake sale following the Communion Breakfast. At left, Elaine Paloumpis, Eleni Poteres, and Mary Toullos prepare for the Philoptochos bake Sale.

luncheon is being planned by Michael Cotsilis and his crew of volunteers. Proceeds will be donated to the Philoptochos project Pillars and Rocks. Please come to enjoy quality time with your godchildren and support the work of Philoptochos. Reservations will be accepted

in the multi-purpose room on Sundays leading up to the event, or by calling Cynthia Stathopoulos at 630.986.0630. Payment is required prior to the event to secure the reservation. Seats are limited, so book your reservation today!

### Fr. Bill from P. 1

## Christ is revealed to us at Epiphany

Sophronios are read on the day of the feast. Other than this, the service is the same.

The holy water distributed on both days is for the sanctification of our souls. A practice that the holy water should be in a place motionless, in Greek (akinito), is not valid. Containers of holy water will be distributed to everyone. Please do not bring your own bottles.

The Baptism of the Lord reveals and establishes the role of baptism in our new birth, founded upon a rite used by the prophets.

Christ initiated the Eucharist at the Last Supper based upon the rite of the Passover meal. On this Feast day, we are given a continuing picture of the true meaning of our baptism.

Finally, through the Great Blessing of the Waters, we encounter the first fruits of His redemption of all creation, which benefits us in every way, as we experience the use of the blessed water, immediately and in the succeeding days. It is a fitting conclusion indeed to a season stretching from November to January,

from the anticipation of the coming of the Lord, through His coming, to His revelation to the world and His blessing of the waters for the sake of all creation. Epiphany is not the conclusion, but the beginning of the Gospel. As Christ is revealed and the Trinity is made manifest, we begin a renewed life.

A blessed new year to all!



Nicholas Crouthamel plays a shepherd.



At left, the three wisemen Michael Mutz, Konstantine Kinnas, and Nicholas Magas rehearse before the pageant



# Our Christmas Pageant, a spectacular group effort



Christaki Kirkeles' understudy tries on his costume.



Stars and angels surround the Holy Family, above. At left, Toulia Kirkeles helps Ellie Chiganos get ready for the pageant.

*Photos by Michael Mutz*

Amalia Linardakis, left, and pageant director Sandy Pihos, right, help Star of the East Nikki Linardakis with her costume.



Pageant choir members enjoy a moment prior to the pageant.

# Youth activities abound at Holy Apostles

Demetra Fotopoulos, left, as a talking Christmas Tree, and Ankit Chataut plays an angel in *The Unwanted*.



Photos by Peter Bell

Mike Caterinis reads the story of the Nativity as his fellow actors settle in for the night.



Bishop Demetrios gives communion during a recent Divine Liturgy, assisted by George Lamberis.



Greek School children perform the Kalanda after the December 6 Divine Liturgy.

The **HARC** CORNER

**The Jesus Prayer  
The Ancient Desert Prayer  
that Tunes the Heart to God**  
By Frederica Mathewes-Green

The Jesus Prayer has historically been passed on down the generations ever since the desert saints. The author offers a comprehensive book—a spiritual jewel for anyone who yearns for a real and continuous presence with Christ. She illuminates the history, theology, and spirituality of Orthodoxy so that the Prayer can be understood and provides practical steps for making it part of your being.

Softbound, \$17.00

**Naming the Child  
Hope-filled Reflections on  
Miscarriage, Stillbirth,  
and Infant Death**  
By Jenny Schroedel

*Naming the Child* creates a community of love and support for bereaving parents and siblings, written with a light touch and sensitive spirit. This gentle resource offers stories of hope and wisdom; practical advice based on the experiences of many; comfort and ways to honor and remember.

Softbound, \$16.00

**The Beginner Bible for Toddlers**  
Illustrated by Kelly Pulley

The Beginner's Bible is the perfect starting point for children. Now toddlers have an edition designed just for them with simple text, bright art, an easy Velcro closure, and a soft handle. Created especially for toddlers on the move, this cute edition provides a great overview of the Bible stories they can understand.

Hardbound, \$10.00

*Registry*

**Baptisms**

None

**Wedding**

None



**Parish Council Treasurer Steve Savas addresses parishioners gathered for the General Assembly meeting.**

# Called to the Holy Mountain

The current issue of the National Geographic magazine has a wonderful feature article about Mount Athos. In addition to the article written by Robert Draper, there are 16 stunning and beautiful color photos by Travis Dove of the monks of the Holy Mountain. There is also a detailed color map of the holy peninsula on which there are 20 monasteries.

Athonite monasticism has a 1,000 year history on the Holy Mountain. While a self-governing part of Greece, the peninsula is walled-off from the rest of the country with access

possible only by boat. The peninsula reaches 31 miles into the Aegean Sea.

There are two ways for you to enjoy reading the article. You may buy the National Geographic magazine available now at book sellers, such as Barnes & Noble, or you can read the article and view the beautiful photographs on-line at the National Geographic web site:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/12/athos/draper-text/1>.

By Elias P. Kusulas

**Fr. Nicholas from P. 2**

## Preparation critical for experiencing Epiphany

ond baptism. It is a continual dying to sin as we walk daily in this newness of life. St. Paul challenges us: “put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil, desire and covetousness.” (Colossians 3:13)

Theophany or Epiphany is a wonderful opportunity for us to renew the baptism that we received. We remember our own baptism as we sing, “All those that have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ”. We have put on Christ! We can revive the grace that we were given. The sacramental graces, even if they are interrupted or suspended by sin, can become alive in us again! We must sincerely turn to the Lord. During this great feast, we can ask the Lord to spiritually wash us again in the waters of baptism. We are challenged to drown the old, sinful creature and immerse ourselves in Christ. The chanting at Epiphany reminds us: “We behold an earthly event, but what we comprehend is higher than the heavens; through cleansing comes salvation; through water, the Spirit, through descent into the water, our ascent to God. He who takes away the sin of the world is cleansed, that I

might be made clean.”

Preparation is the key to renewing ourselves. We must be prepared for this personal encounter with Christ. Many people surrounded Christ and even touched Him. Of all those people, the sick woman who was prepared, touched Jesus in faith and was healed. Christ’s touch through holy water is not magical or mechanical. It is just as personal as the sick woman’s touch. Our challenge is to humbly approach Christ in all of the sacraments with faith, obedience and deep penitence for our sins.

At each blessing of the water, we offer the same prayers prayed at our own baptism: Lord sanctify this water and “make it a gift of sanctification, a remission of sins, a protection against disease, a destruction to demons, filled with angelic strength: that all who draw from it and partake of it may have it for the cleansing of their souls and bodies and sanctification of their dwellings.” Our invitation from the Gospel of John reminds us: “but whoever drinks of the water I shall give him will never thirst.” (John 4:14)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:15am Awaken To God</b> <b>9:30am Divine Liturgy</b> Fellowship Hour		<b>EVE OF HOLY EPIPHANY</b> <b>6:00pm Vespers</b> Liturgy & Blessing Of The Water	<b>HOLY EPIPHANY</b> <b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:00am Divine Liturgy &amp; Blessing Of The Water</b>	<b>FEAST DAY OF ST. JOHN</b> <b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:00am Divine Liturgy</b> 4:30pm Greek School	<b>FEAST DAY OF ST. BASIL</b> <b>9:00am Orthros</b> <b>10:00am Divine Liturgy</b> 4:30pm Adventure Theater	2 <b>5:00pm Vespers</b> 6:00pm Family Synaxis Meeting
<b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:15am Awaken To God</b> <b>9:30am Divine Liturgy</b> Vasilopita Celebration	5:30pm The Way	10:00am TOTS 4:30pm Greek School	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group	4:30pm Greek School	4:30pm Adventure Theater	8 9 16
<b>FEAST DAY OF ST. ANTHONY</b> <b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:15am Awaken To God</b> <b>9:30am Divine Liturgy</b> Fellowship Hour	<b>FEAST DAY OF ST. ATHANASIOS</b> <b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:00am Divine Liturgy</b> 11:00am GOYA Ski Outing	4:30pm Greek School	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group Catechism	4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting	4:30pm Adventure Theater	15 22 23
<b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:15am Awaken To God</b> <b>9:30am Divine Liturgy</b> Fellowship Hour	<b>FEAST DAY OF ST. GREGORY</b> <b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:00am Divine Liturgy</b> 5:30pm The Way	10:00am TOTS 4:30pm Greek School	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group Catechism	11:00am Panel Outing 4:30pm Greek School	8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:30am Altar Boys Meeting	24 25 26 27 28 29 30
<b>GODPARENTS' SUNDAY</b> <b>8:00am Orthros</b> <b>9:15am Awaken To God</b> <b>9:30am Divine Liturgy</b> Godparents' Luncheon	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>To relive the moment...</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">To view and order photographs from the 50th Anniversary Celebration,                      visit <a href="http://www.pictage.com/755081">www.pictage.com/755081</a></p>					
3	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

*Georgia Ladas  
Peter Ladas  
Steven Karavatos  
Michael Sfikas  
Helen Sfikas  
Chris Platon  
Niki Platon  
Efstratios Albani  
Maria Albani  
Anastasia Georgiou  
Paul Kuchuris, Sr.  
Harry Psimos  
Nicholas Asvos  
Bertha Asvos  
William Asvos  
George Karonis  
Anastasia Karonis  
James Karonis  
George Karones  
Areti Karones  
George Marta  
Fotis Tagalos  
Constantina Tagalos  
William Kordonis  
Helen Kordonis  
Nicholas Vasiliou  
Panayiota Vasiliou  
Marina Spiropoulos  
Christine Burbulis*

## Weekday Services

### Feast Day of St. Basil

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

### Eve of Holy Epiphany

Tuesday, January 5  
6:00pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy  
& Blessing of the Water

### Holy Epiphany

8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy  
& Blessing of the Water

### Feast Day of St. John

8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

## Memorials cont.

*George Karmis  
Evangelios Karmis  
Amalia Karmis*

## Weekday Services

### Vespers

Saturday, January 9  
5:00p

### Feast Day of St. Athanasios

Monday January, 18  
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

### Feast Day of St. Gregory

Monday, January 25  
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

### Feast Day of The Three Hierarchs

Saturday, January 30  
8:00am Orthros, 9:00am Divine Liturgy

## Funeral

*Christine Burbulis*

## Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for the February Mosaic  
is Tuesday, January 5.

Postmaster: Please deliver by the 4th of January

Address Service Requested

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