

# MOSAIC

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

Vol. 18, No. 10

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

February 2014

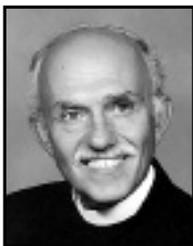
## Vasilopita means "sweet bread of basil"

Father Nicholas and Father Bill prepare the vasilopita for distribution. The bread with the coin symbolizes the hope that the new year will be filled with the sweetness of life, liberty, and happiness for all who participate.

Photo by Peter Bell



From Father Bill



## Renewal Notices

The daily and reliable delivery of the mail was interrupted recently due to the inclement snow, ice and freezing temperatures. However, after two day's delay, the faithful postal carrier arrived at our door looking like a frozen man but carrying the usual bundle of mail, advertisements, magazines, newspapers and, of course, our share of monthly statements plus Christmas bills. Included in the bundle of mail was a notice to renew my subscription to an excellent national magazine. There followed one renewal notice after another. Three times, I received a letter indicating that this was absolutely my last

opportunity to renew the subscription at the least expensive rate. Someone even called on the telephone and asked if I was certain about letting the subscription lapse.

I was not annoyed by the publishing company, because I had genuinely appreciated the magazine. In fact their persistence finally led me to examine carefully my motives for not renewing the subscription.

This small incident set me to examining some of the other renewal notices in our lives that challenge us. In the realm of our spiritual lives renewal is very significant. The term renewal associated with our faith is not new. Since the inception of the Church, our souls have yearned for renewal, a yearning for more peace or greater vision.

Sometimes our renewal notices are more forceful than an inner yearning. We feel dissatisfied with what we are doing or thinking. We feel that our inspiration has lapsed. We

hunger for something better, some kind of renewing experience. It happens when we become attracted to a book and find ourselves unable to put it down, and then when we turn the last page, we look for something else even better, another book or story to refresh us.

The Bible speaks of renewing experiences, indeed, insists upon them. The Bible does not merely present philosophical ideas about inner renewal. It tells about the actual struggle of people searching for a reliable source of joy, health, and struggle. In a host of different ways, the searchers find God as the source of renewal. As the great Prophet Isaiah put it: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength..." (Isaiah 40:11).

Some additional readings from the Old Testament speak of renewal from the Book of Jonah which tells of the need for urban renewal. Specifically it addresses the need for

...See Fr. Bill on P. 3

From Father Nicholas



## Opening our eyes

Recently, our family started watching *Restaurant Impossible*.

The show's host, a world renowned chef, travels to distressed restaurants and has two days to transform the business. Before the transformation begins, Chef Robert prepares a plan. He interviews staff and customers. The chef prepares the restaurant by pulling out old fixtures and poorly functioning kitchen equipment. He prepares a new menu and trains the staff. St. Mark also focuses on preparation. His, however, is a different preparation – spiritual preparation. He quotes the prophet Isaiah writing in the Old Testament. Isaiah prophesied about the coming of Christ 700 years before He was born. Isaiah wrote, "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." As we look forward to our Lenten journey, these words are so appropriate. Prepare and get ready. Preparation is essential to all that we do in our lives.

The Lord wants to visit and revive us. God wants to revive His Church and the hearts of His people. He wants His presence to be known in our churches, homes, and in our personal, daily lives. Preparation is the key. Prepare the way for the Lord to come and visit your family and your life. God wants to visit. He wants to come and meet with His people. We are commanded to prepare this highway in the desert. Prepare the way of the Lord. If we have broken relationships, mend them. Obstacles, or sins, are hindrances. Clear the highway.

Preparation takes time. The preparation begins this month, with the Triodion period starting on February 9. It is a time to prepare for Lent. The Gospel readings leading up to Lent provide the keys to preparation. They assist our hearts and souls in getting ready for the great and Holy Lenten season. The readings provide the tools to prepare for a successful Lenten journey.

First is the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee. Humility is the focus of this reading. It is acknowledging our sinfulness and is fundamental to progress in the Christian life. Acknowledgement brings repentance and a pledge to place our total dependence in God's great mercy and infinite grace. Once we realize how much we have alienated ourselves from God, we can take the necessary steps to true and lasting communion with Him.

The Pre-Lenten season begins with a very deliberate question that is essential to remember throughout Lent: "Will we humble our-



# Gavel to Gavel



## Highlights of the November Parish Council Meeting

By PAUL KALLIS, SECRETARY

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

### Financial/Treasurers Report:

✦ The comparative financial report dated Oct. 31, 2013 was reviewed by Peter Bell. Paul Kallis moved to approve the financial statements dated Oct. 31, 2013, subject to year-end review. The motion passed unanimously.

### Stewardship Report:

✦ Louis Katziotis reviewed the Stewardship Report for October 31, 2013. Pledges to date for 2013 are 770 which are 12 better than this period last year. Total amount pledged to date for 2013 is \$658,634.25 which is \$11,840.71 less than the same period last year. The average pledge of \$855.37 is \$29.17 less than this period last year. Percent paid to date is 92% vs. 91% for the same period last year.

### Correspondence:

The correspondence was reviewed by Paul Kallis:

- ✦ Thank you from the OCN for our \$500 donation.
- ✦ Thank you from St. Nicholas of Myra and the University of Kansas OCF for our choir robe donation.
- ✦ Thank you from Nick Paloumpis for our support of the Choir Federation.
- ✦ Thank you from the Hinsdale Hospital Foundation for our donation in the memory of Mary Postulka.
- ✦ George Chechopoulos read a letter from Archbishop Demetrios regarding the Philippines relief fund. The Council also discussed the tornado damage in Illinois. Jim Fotopoulos made a motion to pass a

selves before God?"

Next is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. This is a moving parable of a father reuniting with his lost and wayward son. The passage encourages deeper reflection upon the great mystery of reconciliation and the unconditional love of God towards us. This parable conveys the infinite magnitude of our Lord's great love and mercy.

Before we begin our Lenten journey, we are reminded that no degree of alienation from God is too great. God does not reject the person who truly desires lasting commu-

nion with Him. Instead, He offers that person divine grace, restoration and forgiveness.

### Building & Grounds:

Jim Fotopoulos and Steve Savas presented the report.

- ✦ The RPZ Back Flow Preventer has been installed.
- ✦ The electrical work has been completed.
- ✦ The work on the new shed on the south side has been completed.
- ✦ Steve Savas and Nick Kirkeles met with the town inspector on 10/21 regarding the bathroom permit. They are now waiting for a response from the state inspector.
- ✦ Steve contacted our A/V company to look at the A/V system now that electrical has been fixed in order to make sure the system is working.

### Old Business:

- ✦ Nick Kirkeles gave an update on the Gus Danos sponsored luncheon. Nick thanked Mr. Danos and Greek Islands for having the event, as well as Eleni Hatzichristodoulou who made the candy favors for the luncheon. George Chechopoulos thanked Nick Kirkeles for organizing the event.

### New Business:

- ✦ George Chechopoulos said that in light of the computer issues we faced, he provided the committee with a list of items to look at regarding our overall IT infrastructure. He also thanked Nick Kouchis and the committee for helping resolve the immediate virus issue. Nick Kouchis provided an update on the incident.
- ✦ Cindy Clark presented a concept for having a new visitor sign in.

nion with Him. Instead, He offers that person divine grace, restoration and forgiveness.

Meatfare or the Sunday of Judgment is the next Sunday. Our Lord reminds us that although He is a loving and merciful God, He is also the great Judge of all. Our Lord is just and fair. We are reminded that after we receive the freely given grace of God, we must convey genuine and limitless love to each other. This includes love and help for our neighbors and even our enemies. Did we forget the things that really matter? Did we do

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 4

## The HARC Corner

### A World of Prayers

Selected by Jeremy Brooks  
Illustrated by Elena Gomez

A good prayer makes you think, and it may even make you laugh! These prayers have been collected from every corner of the globe. The words may differ from country to country, but the same universal themes of love, forgiveness, and hope run through them all. There are prayers for night and day, graces for mealtimes, and blessings, too. Beautiful illustrations help to make this a perfect first prayer book for young children.

\$16.00

### Ask for the Ancient Paths Discovering what Church is meant to be

By Fr. James Guirguis

At a time when so many disaffected Christians are trying to recreate the Church from scratch, Fr. James offers a clear and accessible apology for simply returning to what Christ's Church was always meant to be.

\$14.00

### Traveling Companions

#### Walking with the Saints of the Church

Do you long to establish a relationship with the saints but find them, or the volumes written about them, a little intimidating? *Traveling Companions* is a manageable volume that briefly introduces saints from a variety of times, places, and walks of life, all in language that brings them close to contemporary readers' lives.

\$19.00

**Don't let your worries  
get the best of you;  
remember,  
Moses started out  
as a basket case,**

# Philoptochos Update

## Philoptochos Happenings

**February 9** – Godparents' Sunday.

Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy. Adults \$10, Children (10 years and under) \$5. Reservations required. Please contact Jennifer Govostis at 630.455.1388 or Diane Hank at 708.246.3391.

**February 13** – Koukla's Kafenio. Once again, we welcome our older adults for lunch at 12 pm. Reservations required. Please contact Cathy Magas at 630.941.8448.

**February 18** – General Meeting. Refreshments will be served beginning at 7 pm. Meeting to follow.

**February 9 through 18** – Blankets of Love service project. Do you like to knit or crochet? Would you consider making a blanket or two for a sick infant or child? We will be collecting these Blankets of Love and then donating them to local children's hospitals/clinics. Even if you cannot knit or crochet, you can participate by donating yarn

for others to make the blankets. For complete details, contact Faye Adams at 630.517.8097.

**March 8** – Dress-a-Girl Around the World service project. Once again, we will sponsor this charitable project to create girls' dresses to send to impoverished areas of the world. We will meet from 10 am until 3 pm at Holy Apostles to sew the dresses. The pattern is very simple and everyone's assistance is necessary to iron, pin, sew and create.

At this time we are asking for donations of cotton fabric pieces of one yard or more, elastic, double wide bias tape, thread and other embellishments that might be used to decorate the dresses. Monetary donations for supplies are also welcome.

Sewers and non-sewers are needed. Please bring your irons, ironing boards, and sewing machines. We invite children age 8 or older to help as runners. For questions or to offer your help, please contact Cynthia Stathopoulos at 630.986.0630.

## Fr. Bill from P. 1

# Become close to the Church this Lent

these city dwellers in Nineveh to change to repent and become renewed. They were given 40 days to do the job and Jonah was the messenger sent to carry the renewal notice to Nineveh.

From the Gospel of Mark, renewal is synonymous with repentance and indicates that this is the basic message of the gospel, the primary emphasis of Jesus. It's time to renew, Jesus is saying in His first public utterance; "repent and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

Nicholas Cabasilas captures the concreteness of spiritual renewal when he describes the growth of the new inner man in terms of that of an unborn child. The child, while still in its mother's womb develops his or her basic human features—limbs, eyes, mouth, ears and other organs—all of which are necessary for a fullness of life upon birth.

A child could not survive or could not fully enjoy the gift of life without properly developed physical senses and organs. So likewise, the Christian through God's grace forms his or her basic spiritual features during the course of this life—being united with Christ, receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit and developing Christ-like traits which are necessary for a greater fullness of life with God in heaven.

Our task is not to check the renewal box with no obligation rather to be alert, awake and ready through obedience to unite our lives with Christ. Our part is not primarily to do something as if we ourselves could produce renewal, but to open our hearts to the presence of the risen Christ and to let Him renew us by His grace.

Our 'doing' is being prayerful, open, seeking, asking and receiving. In other words, the fundamental practical guideline for this New Year is always to look to God, when we know in Christ and on whom we entirely depend for renewal.

We began the New Year with the observance of Epiphany, the Feast of Lights, and the glorious event of God's revelation of His love to us. We were reminded of the blessing of the waters and remembrance that Christ became one of us and accepted the role to be baptized by the servant. Through this incredible act of extreme humility we were forgiven, sanctified, blessed, and born again. In the Divine Liturgy, we are made aware that Christ is in our midst, in our minds, and directing our hearts to the risen Christ. Then we begin to feel the newness in our lives.

The Orthodox Christian way of life is summed up in God's command "Be holy!" (1 Peter 1:5). During the last part of the Divine Liturgy, just prior to Holy Communion, the priest lifts up the consecrated Host and cries out to be faithful: "The holy gifts for the holy people of God!"

Many respond to the priest's invitation on Sunday: "With the fear of God, with faith and with love draw near." This condition for a Christian is a process over time. Maintain the closeness with your Church. Renew your efforts to be transformed and through the year change begins to occur in your life. This renewal notice is for all of us. Let the process begin.



Father Bill and Father Nicholas bless the congregation January 5 during the Eve of Epiphany Liturgy.

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2

## If God can forgive us, we should forgive ourselves also

things only because we wanted to be recognized by others? Were we motivated by some other personal or selfish reason? These are some of the difficult questions we must ask ourselves.

Finally, the last day before Lent begins is Cheesefare Sunday. On this day, we are reminded of our great need for forgiveness. We seek forgiveness from the Lord after forgiving others first. The readings remind us to forgive ourselves. If God can forgive us, we should forgive ourselves. We are encouraged to fast secretly. The passage tells us: "when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites with a sad countenance – but (fast) to your Father who is in the secret place." (Matthew 6:18)

These four Sundays preceding Lent are great tools that the Church gives us. Growing in humility, returning from spiritual exile, serving our neighbor and forgiving others are essential. They prepare us for Lent and the struggles that it brings. By utilizing these Sundays to prepare for Lent, our souls and minds will be illumined. The *Restaurant Impossible* show concludes with Chef Robert bringing the restaurant owners with their eyes closed, into their newly transformed restau-

rant. He brings them inside and enthusiastically says, "Open your eyes." The Church's preparation tools can open our spiritual eyes. Then, as Great Lent begins and the Church proclaims, "Open your eyes," we will begin to be transformed by God!

### Stewardship

#### Did You Know?

\$3,014 is the daily revenue required to open our doors.

\$21,096 is the amount of our weekly expenses.

\$921 is the average stewardship pledge required in 2014.

Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put in your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back. (Luke 6:38)

### Baptisms

Noah Christopher, son of  
Christina & Brian Hansen  
Sponsor: Michael Conway

Samuel Arthur, son of  
Christina & Brian Hansen  
Sponsor: Catherine Tomaras

Chris, son of  
Lindsey & George Zurales  
Sponsor: Nick Chiganos

Costandinos, son of  
Tina & Christos Meintanis  
Sponsors: Kathy & Louis Paskalides

Oskar, son of  
Heidi & Nicholas Wendland  
Sponsor: Erik Wendland

Evgenios, son of  
Katherine & Quentin Ratay  
Sponsors: Maria & Jason Patrinos

### Wedding

Nicole Paleothodoros & Peter Demarakis  
Sponsor: Peter Vlahakis

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

<p align="center"><b>Mark Your Calendars</b>  <i>Great Lent begins Monday, March 3. Celebration Of Books Begins Sunday, March 16.</i>  <i>Details To Follow</i></p>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD</b>                      8:00am Orthros                      9:15am Awaken To God                      9:30am Divine Liturgy                      Fellowship Hour</p> <p align="center"><b>2</b></p>	<p>5:15pm The Way</p> <p align="center"><b>3</b></p>	<p>9:30am TOTS                      4:30pm Greek School</p> <p align="center"><b>4</b></p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship                      &amp; Bible Study                      7:30pm Catechism</p> <p align="center"><b>5</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p> <p align="center"><b>6</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p> <p align="center"><b>7</b></p>	<p>9:00am Department Of Religious                      Education Meeting</p> <p align="center"><b>1</b></p>
<p><b>8:00am Orthros</b>                      9:15am Awaken To God                      9:30am Divine Liturgy                      Fellowship Hour</p> <p align="center"><b>9</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>FEAST DAY OF                      ST. HARALAMBOS</b>                      8:00am Orthros                      9:00am Divine Liturgy</p> <p align="center"><b>10</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School                      5:00pm PTO Meeting</p> <p align="center"><b>11</b></p>	<p>7:30pm Catechism</p> <p align="center"><b>12</b></p>	<p>12:00pm Koukla's Katenio                      4:30pm Greek School</p> <p align="center"><b>13</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p> <p align="center"><b>14</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>15</b></p>
<p><b>8:00am Orthros</b>                      9:15am Awaken To God                      9:30am Divine Liturgy                      Fellowship Hour                      Greek School Dinner Dance</p> <p align="center"><b>16</b></p>	<p>5:15pm The Way</p> <p align="center"><b>17</b></p>	<p>9:30am TOTS                      4:30pm Greek School                      7:30pm Philoptochos Meeting</p> <p align="center"><b>18</b></p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship                      &amp; Bible Study                      7:30pm Catechism</p> <p align="center"><b>19</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School                      7:30pm Parish Council Meeting</p> <p align="center"><b>20</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater                      7:00pm Parea Night</p> <p align="center"><b>21</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>SATURDAY OF THE SOULS</b>                      8:00am Orthros                      9:00am Divine Liturgy                      10:00am Adventure Theater Retreat                      &amp; Bowling Activity</p> <p align="center"><b>22</b></p>
<p><b>8:00am Orthros</b>                      9:15am Awaken To God                      9:30am Divine Liturgy                      Fellowship Hour</p> <p align="center"><b>23</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>24</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p> <p align="center"><b>25</b></p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship                      &amp; Bible Study                      7:30pm Catechism</p> <p align="center"><b>26</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p> <p align="center"><b>27</b></p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p> <p align="center"><b>28</b></p>	

## Memorials

*Nicholas Papadakis  
Solon Bannos  
Rudolph Dorner  
Theodora Dorner  
Anna Cotsilis  
Peter Cotsilis  
Betty Tomaras  
Dr. Andrew P. Tomaras  
John George Karones  
Gregory Stoumbelis  
Marianthy Stoumbelis  
Eleni Stoumbelis Papananias  
Gust Kouimelis  
Helen Alex*

## Funeral

*Helen Alex  
San Geroulis*

## Mosaic Deadline

The March 2014 Mosaic deadline  
is Wednesday, February 5.

## Spend the Evening Under the Blue & White Big Top!

The Annual Holy Apostles Church

## Greek School Dinner Dance Gala

Sunday, February 16th at The Diplomat West in Elmhurst.

All are welcome and encouraged to attend!  
Music by The John Linardakis Band

Silent Auction, Raffle Prizes and Entertainment

Reservations will be taken on Sundays after Liturgy  
or

Contact Diane Hank (630) 673-2307  
or Tiffany Pappas (708) 426-6226.!

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Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church  
2501 S. Wolf Rd.  
Westchester, IL 60154  
(708) 562-2744  
Address Service Requested