

MOSAIC

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

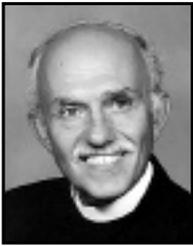
Vol. 20, No. 1

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

April 2015

Editor's note: While Fr. Bill is recuperating, we are reprinting one of our favorite past articles of his. Keep cared and letters coming for Fr. Bill and deposit them in the box at the candle stand.

From Father Bill



What difference does Easter make?

While I collected my thoughts for this month's article, I raised several questions. First, my question to you is has the observance of the Lenten period had any impact on your life? Can you honestly say there has been a change in your life? While pondering these questions, I came across an interesting story from the Gerontikon (a compilation of several volumes of stories about the lives of holy elders) related to the life of an elder known as Abba Isaiah, the spiritual guide to a group of monks.

One of the disciples had difficulties relating to the other monks. He was irritable and constantly grumbling and angry. At the same time, he recognized that he had a problem and wished to overcome it. One day he went to his elder and said: "I am convinced that if I go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land I will be able to absorb the grace that emanates from the holy shrines. It will help me free myself from my anger and become a good monk." The elder urged him to stay put and carry on with his personal struggle and told him that there was no need to travel all the way to the Holy Land. The elder advised that conditions at the monastery were more conducive to helping him to overcome his shortcomings. "If you genuinely struggle to overcome your problem," the elder said, "then I believe God will help you. What you need is not pilgrimages, but to struggle against your passions."



The Search for Truth, The Book of Nature, and The World of Scripture were the titles of Fr. Maximos of Simonopetra's talks at this year's Celebration of Books.

But the monk persisted and finally was allowed to go to Jerusalem.

Several months later, he returned but there was no change in his life, because he put in little or no effort. Being in the presence of all the holy shrines meant very little to him.

What about your pilgrimage? Is not this entire period our return to Jerusalem? You may have attended the holy services, received the holy sacraments frequently, but did anything significantly change in your life? Did you shed any tears of repentance, recognizing the Crucified Lord during the Holy Thursday services? Will you keep alive the icon of the death of our Lord on Good Friday fresh in your mind? Did you bow down before the Cross and give your life to God? As you left the church on Good Friday, was your only thought how beautiful the music was? Will you keep alive the memory of that moment when Jesus had given up the spirit and how He had been left hanging on to the cross? There was no one there to bury Him. Only

one person gave thought to what would become of the sacred remains of the Incarnate Logos. This man was Joseph of Arimathea, who up to that time was a follower of Christ in secret.

All of us will attend the Midnight Easter service for different reasons. We will be careful to light candles and prepare to sing with a resounding triumph the Paschal refrain: "Christos Anesti" and "Christ has risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and granting life to those in the tombs!" Some of you will come because it's the traditional thing to do. Others will come because a friend invited you. Some of you will come because you haven't been to church for a while. Many will arrive late and leave early. It seems the thought of indulging in the early Paschal meal means much more than remaining for the midnight Liturgy, partaking of Holy Communion and listening to the reading of the powerful Easter homily of St. John

...See Fr. Bill on P. 4

From Father Nicholas



Entering the exciting world of Scripture

A few weeks ago, a dear Orthodox Christian friend of ours dogmatically proclaimed: "He is a Bible thumper. All he does is study the Bible. We Orthodox have tradition and the Liturgy. We don't need to read the Bible." Really?

Last month our dynamic Book Week speaker, Fr. Maximos of Siminopetra, answered this question and many others as he spoke about the World of Scripture. He quoted from St. John Chrysostom's commentary on St. Matthew: "It were indeed meet for us not at all to require the aid of the written Word, but to exhibit a life so pure, that the grace of the Spirit should be instead of books to our souls, and that as these are inscribed with ink, even so should our hearts be with the Spirit. But, since we have utterly put away from us this grace, come, let us at any rate embrace the second best course." In other words, it would be better if we did not need the written scriptures but had the Holy Spirit living in our hearts.

The Holy Spirit is the author of the Scriptures. If we have the author living in our hearts, why do we need the book? But, because we have lost the grace of the Holy Spirit, God has given us the written Scriptures in place of His living presence. St. John asks: "What are you thinking if having lost the Holy Spirit and been given scriptures you do not read them? What is God supposed to do with us?"

Our loving Lord left us His Word. Because we have "thick minds", according to St. Maximos the Confessor, God expresses Himself through "letters, symbols and sounds" that we can understand.

Scripture is a cosmos or whole world and the revelation of God. This world possesses visible and invisible realities. The Scriptures possess a body and soul. Body is the words, and Spirit is the meaning.

God becomes tangible and concrete through words of the Bible. St. John Chrysostom wrote: "The Holy Scriptures lead us to God and open the path to the knowledge of God."

Preparation is key to understanding the Bible's invisible meaning and mysteries. Because it is a world, we cannot approach it like reading a magazine or newspaper. Scripture reading requires moral effort. Our focus and desires condition how we see this

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 4



Gavel to Gavel



Highlights of the January Parish Council Meeting

BY NICK KOUCHIS, SECRETARY

Present: Father Nicholas Georgiou, George Alex, Peter Bell, George Chechopoulos, Terry Chiganos, Cindy Clark, Spyro Demakis, Ted Dres, Tom Gregory, Paul Kallis, Louis Katzioris, Nick Kirkeles, Nick Kouchis, Alicia Magas, Norman Pomrening, and Steven Savas

Financial/Treasurer's Report:

✦ Peter Bell reviewed the financial report for the month ending December, 2014. Lou Katzioris moved to approve the report pending the year-end audit. The motion was passed unanimously.

Stewardship Report:

✦ Lou Katzioris reviewed the Stewardship Report for December, 2014. Pledges to date for 2015 are 5 better than this period last year. Total amount pledged to date for 2015 is \$17,500.00 more than the same period last year. The average pledge of \$869 is \$17 more than this period last year.

Correspondence:

- ✦ Nick Kouchis recommended that for future meetings, donation requests be evaluated by the Missions Committee and presented as part of their report.
- ✦ Merry Christmas & Happy New Year letter from Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea.
- ✦ Thank you from Nick Paloumpis for support of the Choir Federation 57th Annual Conference.
- ✦ Thank you from Saint Basil Academy in Garrison, NY – Serving Children in Need.
- ✦ Thank you from Greek American Rehabilitation & Care Centre in Wheeling.
- ✦ Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago is hosting St. John Chrysostom Oratorical and Arts Festival on Saturday, April 18, at St Spyridon in Palos Heights.
- ✦ Orthodox Christian Network (OCN)

requests a donation in honor of their 20th Anniversary. Paul Kallis made a motion to donate \$500.00 as has been done in the past. The motion passed.

- ✦ Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) requested a donation for an upcoming dinner event and program advertisement. George Chechopoulos made a motion to purchase one table for Holy Apostles for \$350 and \$250 as a program book sponsor. The motion passed unanimously.

Meditation:

- ✦ Fr. Nicholas reflected on the guidance and mentoring that Fr. Bill has provided to our church and to him personally. He noted that under past difficult times with illness and family loss, Fr. Bill would advise to "keep dancing with God's help" in gathering the strength and focus to move forward with the work at hand. Fr. Nicholas also discussed the role, function, and position of an effective Council member.

Building & Grounds:

- ✦ George Alex provided an update on maintenance activities. Replacement of windows and doors that are aged and not working properly and cleaning the candle soot from the Narthex will be put out for bids.

Old Business:

- ✦ Nick Kirkeles provided an update of the on bathroom remodel.

New Business:

- ✦ Peter Bell presented the 2015 Budget Proposal. George Alex made a motion to approve the 2015 Budget. The motion passed.
- ✦ Steve Savas presented the committee assignments and definitions for 2015.
- ✦ Defibrillator training for the ushers and Council members was discussed and will be scheduled.

Coming in May to Holy Apostles

A new, reformulated Holy Apostles PAREA group is coming. Members of the Parea committee decided on a new agenda that will include all ages for social events. Our first program will be held at church on Thursday, May 7 at 7pm. We will have no annual membership fees and no charge for this event. Hors d'oeuvres, wine, and dessert will be served.

We are happy to welcome back Paula

Renee Burzawa. Her first presentation on her award winning book *Seasons of Sun* was enjoyed by all when she visited us a few years ago. She has written a new novel titled, *Tasso's Journey*. This is a heartbreaking, triumphant story of the survival of her Spartan ancestors who endured the Nazi invasion.

Further details will follow. Please save the date and plan to join us!

Philoptochos Updates for April through fall

Philoptochos Membership - needed by April 20

Did you forget to renew your membership for 2014-2015? It is not too late – you have until April 20 to sign up. Your membership fair-share dues help fund our many obligations and projects. Membership envelopes are available in the church office. If you would like more information, contact Faye Adams at 630.517.8097.

Philoptochos Happenings

April 4, 5 and 8 - Easter Candles Sale

Godparents get ready to buy your special Pascha candles for your godchildren! If you are interested in decorating some of these candles, contact Deanna Markos at 708.246.6711.

April 4 & 5 - Easter Bake Sale

We will be selling traditional Easter breads (tsourekia) and cookies (koulouria) as well as a variety of other sweets. People are needed to bake koulouria and other items. Contact Jennifer Govostis at 630.455.1388 if you can assist.

April 4 - Saturday of Lazarus Breakfast

Saturday of Lazarus Community Lenten Breakfast will be served following the Liturgy. We hope you will attend with your families. If interested in assisting with this event or to make reservations, contact Stacy Kinnas at 630.325.4979.

May 12 - Annual Feed the Hungry Service Commitment

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

May 19 - General Meeting and Board Elections

On this evening, we will be featuring a fun presentation of fashions from Chico's. The meeting begins at 7 pm and, as always,

Adventure Theater cast members take to the stage again

On Sunday, April 19, immediately following The Divine Liturgy, the Adventure Theater will present its spring play, Pedimoo, in the multipurpose room preceded by a delicious luncheon. We will be taking reservations (donation \$10.00) on Palm Sunday, April 5 in Mr. D's office following The Divine Liturgy. The play is the story of 12 year old Pedimoo. After being passed from one family to another, he had no memory of his real family. The only connection he had to them was

refreshments will be served.

If you are a member in good standing and are considering running for the Philoptochos Board, then the Election Screening Committee needs to be notified of your intent. Contact Chair Anthoula Pomrening at 708.588.0258. All members will be receiving additional information in the mail regarding election procedures.

Upcoming Philoptochos Pillars and Rocks programs

April 3 to 6 - Easter visits to our shut-ins

If you know of someone that would welcome a visit from our Philoptochos members, please contact Cathy Magas at 630.941.8448. Also, contact Cathy if you would like to assist with this philanthropic outreach to our Holy Apostles family.

April 23 - Visit to Greek American Rehab Center

We have planned an afternoon visit to see the residents of the Nursing Home and Rehab Center in Wheeling. If interested in baking for this visit and/or being part of the group going, contact Faye Adams at 630.517.8097.

May 5 - Koukla's Kafenion

It's time to celebrate Spring at our next luncheon for our senior Holy Apostles members. We are planning an afternoon of special fun! We are always looking for new Koukles (dolls) to assist us with the Kafenion. If you can dedicate some of your time and energy to this very rewarding event, contact Cathy Magas at 630.941.8448.

Fundraising for St. Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero

National Philoptochos continues a fundraising initiative to support the rebuilding of St. Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero. When completed, this beautiful house of worship – open to all people visiting at Ground Zero – will put a spotlight on our Greek Orthodox faith and our perseverance to prevail.

Contributions can be made by check payable to: Holy Apostles Philoptochos and earmarked for the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero (SNNNGZ). There are St. Nicholas Shrine packets available in the multi-urpouse room. For additional informa-

tion, go to philoptochos.org and goarch.org.
his gold cross he wore around his neck with Greek letters engraved on it. Later, with a blizzard raging outside his lodgings, Pedimoo was forced out into the storm after surprising a burgler. Come to the play to see if Pedimoo is saved and what becomes of him.

Pedimoo's moving and unforgettable story, dramatized by our Adventure Theater actors and actresses, is chock-full of adventure, suspense, and surprises, and promises to hold your attention to the very end.

tion, go to philoptochos.org and goarch.org.
Saturday, October 17

Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show

Please mark your calendars for "A Southern Soiree" – a genteel afternoon visit to the elegant south. The event will be held once again at Empress Banquets in Addison. Fashions by Zzazz Productions. Cocktails/ raffle viewing will be at 11 am. Lunch will be served at 12 pm.

If you would like to serve on the Fashion Show committee, please contact our 2015 Chairwoman, Marita Urban, at 708.606.3839.

The HARC Corner

Becoming A Healing Presence

by Albert S. Rossi, Ph.D

In a simple yet profound way, Dr. Rossi has touched on the mystery of Love: the Love of God and the Love of neighbor which Jesus revealed as Love intimately connected. He masterfully shares insights into the development of a deeper relationship with the Lord by which the disciple may experience more fully the Love of God and share that love selflessly with others.

\$14.00

The Art of Seeing Paradox and Perception in Orthodox Iconography

by Fr. Maximos Constas

In his mesmerizing new book, Fr Maximos provides us with much more than simply another book on icons. With equal parts patristics scholar, art historian, theologian, and spiritual father, he deftly guides readers on a pilgrimage into the deeper spiritual meaning of some of the tradition's more beloved images: the Sinai Christ, the Annunciation, St George, and the Byzantine iconostasis.

\$30.00

My Prayer Book

Prayer is essential. It is the very life breath of the human soul. Through the helpful explanations and vivid illustrations of this book, we learn, together with our children, what every Orthodox Christian family needs to know in order to love this life breath of the soul, which is so often neglected.

\$28.00



Macaronatha Luncheon

Norm Pomrening and Ted Dres prepare the pasta, above, while Mike Cotsillis hands a platter of pasta to Eleni Hatzichristodoulou.

Fr. Bill from P. 1...

The Easter message is that God cares for you

Chrysostom.

We shall be singing this jubilant troparion for a period of forty days, since Christ's sojourn upon the earth after the resurrection was of this duration. We shall continue to greet one another with "Christ is risen" and "Truly He is risen," until the observance of the Ascension of Christ to heaven. It is the resurrection that validates and confirms everything Jesus did and taught during His early ministry. The resurrection proves that Christ is no mere teacher of moral truths who tells us how to live in this life. Philosophers and sages before Christ did a good job of this. Christ is unique, because He did what no one else had the power to do: to transform human nature and grant man the fulfillment of his basic deep-seated need, namely to live eternally in a state of blessedness.

As we celebrate Easter throughout the forty-day Paschal period, the glorious light of the resurrection continues to flood the Church seeking to envelop the hearts and minds of all believers.

I hope you are beginning to sense the difference Easter can make. Understanding why Easter happened, why Christ rose from the dead, is not enough. You have to do more than crack a red egg and exchange an Easter greeting. The Easter message is that God cares for you and loves you. He wants to have a relationship with you. Let the walk of the risen man be yours, and may you experience something absolutely wonderful in this life. Nobody will ever love you as much as Jesus Christ does. Nobody. Let's tell the whole world about the risen Lord. The myrrhbearing women and the apostles did it, because of their unshaken faith in Christ. We can join them too because we know what a difference Easter can make.

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2...

Scripture should be read with discernment

world. Imagine viewing a mountain. An artist will see its beauty, majesty, height, and color. The strip miner will analyze how much money he can extract from its contents. If we approach the scriptures as literary critics, historians, or archeologists, this is what will be drawn from them. But, the spiritual content will be missing.

The Bible should be approached with a pure body, mind and soul to be understood. St. Isaac the Syrian writes: "Keep your mind at peace, and then, when you read the Scripture, your mind will be astonished by the extent to which it can understand the meanings." The Holy Scriptures are so important that the Church devotes the first part of the Divine Liturgy to God's Word. Before the priest reads the Gospel during the Divine Liturgy, he quietly prays: "Shine within our hearts, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our minds that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel." Spiritual preparation is key!

Once we are spiritually prepared, God speaks to us through the Scriptures!

According to St. Maximos, God speaks in "terms relative to the disposition of those under His providential care." He is called a lion, a bear, a leopard, a panther, a man, an ox, a sheep, the sun, a star, fire, wind and many other things. However, God Himself is none of these things. He is "contemplated according to the meaning of each term." The Lord communicates relative to the spiritual state of the person receiving. For example, God appeared to Abraham, who was perfect in knowledge and "possessed a mind beyond matter." The Lord taught him about the immaterial principle of unity in the Holy Trinity.

God appeared to Abraham as Three and

spoke to him as One. (18th chapter of Genesis) But God appeared to Lot in a different way. Lot believed that God created only visible creation. God appeared as a duality and not trinity. (Genesis 19:1) This indicates that Lot's mind had not gone beyond matter and form. God speaks in a variety of ways that relate to the disposition of the reader.

Reading the Holy Scriptures should be done carefully and with discernment. Both our and the Church's understanding should be the same. St. Jerome warns: "the proud sin greatly who, after studying secular literature and having turned to the Holy Scriptures, consider all that they say to be the Law of God, and do not endeavor to come to the thoughts of the prophets and apostles but seek out from the scriptures inappropriate texts for their own thoughts, as if this were a good work, and not the most defiled study: to distort the thoughts of Scripture and submit them to their own intentions, in spite of obvious contradictions."

St. John Cassian reminds us: "When Christ Himself spoke to Paul and called him, he could have opened his eyes at once and made known to him the ways of perfection." Instead he sent him to Ananias to learn the truth and said: "Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do." (Acts 9:6) We should be careful about claiming God has shown us something "new" that has never been proclaimed by the Church before.

During this Lenten season, keep studying the Scriptures. If you have not read the Bible daily, start. St. John Chrysostom provides a wonderful guarantee for scripture readers: "Of all the afflictions that burden the human race, there is not one, whether spiritual or bodily, that cannot be healed by the Holy Scriptures."

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church **April 2015** 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Time to dust off your running shoes!</p> <p>Whether you plan to run fast, run slow, or walk, keep Saturday, May 9 clear for this year's annual Holy Apostles 5k. Enjoy an easy morning jaunt through Westchester for fun, fellowship, and a worthy cause.</p>						
PALM SUNDAY 8:00am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour Philoptochos Easter Candle & Bake Sale 7:00pm Nymphios Service 5	HOLY MONDAY 7:00pm Nymphios Service 6	HOLY TUESDAY 4:30pm Greek School 7:00pm Nymphios Service & Hymn Of Kassiani 7	HOLY WEDNESDAY 10:00am Holy Unction 3:30pm Holy Unction 7:00pm Orthros Of Holy Thursday And Anointing Of Holy Unction 8	HOLY THURSDAY 6:30am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm NO Greek School 7:00pm Twelve Holy Gospels 9	HOLY FRIDAY 9:00am Royal Hours 3:00pm Apokathelosis 7:00pm Lamentations 10	HOLY SATURDAY 8:00am First Anastasi Liturgy 10:30pm Choir Concert 11:00pm Pre-Pascha Service & Resurrection Liturgy 11
EASTER SUNDAY 11:00am Agape Service 12	5:15pm The Way 13	10:00am TOTIS 4:30pm Greek School 6:30pm GOYA Bright Week Dinner 7:30pm Philoptochos Board Mtg. 14	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 15	4:30pm Greek School 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting 16	4:30pm Adventure Theater 17	5:00pm Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal 18
SUNDAY OF ST. THOMAS 8:00am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Adventure Theater Luncheon & Play 19	20	4:30pm Greek School 21	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 22	FEAST DAY OF ST. GEORGE 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm Greek School 23	24	25
8:00am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour 26	5:15pm The Way 27	10:00am TOTIS 4:30pm Greek School 6:30pm GOYA Meeting 28	1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship & Bible Study 29	4:30pm Greek School 30		

Memorials

*Liberty Poteres
Christos Karamatskos
James Poulos
Tessie Soulides
George T. Mannos
Helen Kostopoulos
Chrisy Banakis
Pauline Hamalis
Gail Patinos
Dr. Nicholas Patinos
Peter Terovolos
Jayne Terovolos
Popi Couropoulou
John Gramas
Nick Zografos*

Funerals

*William Tselepis
Arthur Andrews*

Baptism

*Gus, son of
Erica & Danny Tzoumas
Sponsors: Demetri & Angelica Kladis*

Weddings

*Ashley Devic & Daniel Logan
Sponsor: Nicholas Logan

Kara Bessert & Angelo Paleothodoros
Sponsor: Peter Paleothodoros*

Weekday Services

See the calendar on P. 5

Flowers in Church

Please join the committee of pious and dedicated women who take turns throughout the year arranging beautiful bouquets for our altar. We are most grateful to Maria Lagios for overseeing this committee and for offering us her assistance and guidance. If you would like to become one of the flower volunteers for the altar, please contact Maria at 312.465.2696.

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for
the May Mosaic
is Wednesday, April 8.

Did you know?

Fellowship Hour... is held each Sunday, directly after Liturgy, in the multi-purpose room. It's a time of offering hospitality to everyone with beverages, coffee, snacks, breakfast and brunch treats. It is an opportunity to pause for a while from our busy schedules and catch up with each other, chat and visit with old and new friends while building and strengthening Christian Fellowship. We encourage parish families to join together in hosting. **There are several dates during the summer months for which volunteers are needed.** If interested, please email the church office at holyapostleschurchoffice@comcast.net or call at 708.562.2744. The office can provide you with details regarding the necessary quantities.

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