



"Yea, Thou dost light my lamp; the Lord my God lightens my darkness. . ." (Psalms 18:28)

The Lamplighter is the official publication of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Lansing. It has been published monthly since 1967. Visit us at www.holytrinity-lansing.org.

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Volume XXXVIII

December 2005

Christ is Born!



Glorify Him!

On Thursday morning, November 17, at 7:03 a.m., Vasiliki (Bessie) Sietsema was born at University Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She weighed 5 pounds and was 15 and ½ inches long. She lived for more than three hours and passed away in her father's arms. Back in June, Bessie has been diagnosed with Trisomy 18, a genetic condition that is incompatible with life outside the womb. Bessie had multiple disabilities, and it was not certain that she would even make it to a live birth. Bessie's funeral took place on Monday, November 21, at 11 a.m. at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Lansing, Michigan.

Through this long summer, Presvytera Kathy and I were able to keep going in large part through the prayers and help of our family and friends in the community of Holy Trinity. We have no way to thank you, nor even words of gratitude befitting your kindness through this time of trial. Please accept as a gesture of love and appreciation the gift of seeing this poem that I wrote for Bessie. I share it with you, not because it is any great work of literature, but because it expresses what is in my heart.

God bless you always and forever.
With much love, Fr. Mark

For Baby Bessie

A father's heart asks nothing more
Than that his child should simply *be*.
And being, to receive the love
He offers – constant, full, and free.

My sweet, my darling baby girl,
How often have I sought God's grace
With sighs, with tears, in darkest night,
That I might see your precious face.

How can I heed the voice of Him
Who to th' Apostles gave command
To suffer little ones to come,
Nor hinder them from His own hand

A touch, a blessing to receive;
Or on his Lap to find a place,
And in His bosom to enjoy,
His smile, His kiss, His kind embrace?

Your swift departure to His arms
I would have hindered if I could
And clasped you near me hour by hour
Here to remain with us for good.

Though you might never take a step
To come and kiss my cheek goodnight,
Nor laugh at Daddy's silly jokes,
Nor with one word my love requite;

Ev'n so, to have you here, with me,
With us—one happy family—
To lavish on you all my care:
That would be paradise for me.

But suffer you to go I must,
Lest you should suffer anymore
While better love than mine awaits
Upon the Kingdom's radiant shore.

For never could my mind conceive—
Sweet apple of your daddy's eye—
That He whose very name is love
Might love you any less than I.

I trust that Father's love to call
You forth from death once more to *be*;
Then shall two fathers' hearts rejoice
Embracing you eternally.

Daddy loves Bessie

OUR HEARTFELT SYMPATHY

Our hearts go out to Fr. Mark and Presvytera at the falling asleep of their infant daughter, Vasiliki Marie "Bessie."

Words seem so inadequate at times like these to express the feelings all of us have for Fr. Mark, Presvytera and their family for the great loss they are suffering.

Fr. Mark has always been available during the times of great need and suffering of those of the parish. We want him to know that we are available to him and his family now. We are one family in the eyes of God.

May their hearts be lifted by the prayers and love of so many in the Holy Trinity family.

A UNITED COMMUNITY

Fr. Mark & Presvytera's great loss united our Holy Trinity community to come together in planning and serving the Makaria luncheon.

Special thanks to the Philoptochos Society, Soussana Tesseris, Harry & KiKi Saites, Sue Vlahakis and Nick Garyet for their generous contributions of time and resources. Many thanks to all who set up, served, and cleaned up after the meal. Holy Trinity is truly blessed to have so many caring community members.

-Parish Council



CONDOLENCES TO . . .

Fr. Mark & Presvytera Sietsema at the Falling Asleep of their infant daughter, Vasiliki Marie "Bessie."

George Mansour on the Falling Asleep of his cousin, Louis Souan.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Matthew 5:4

PARISH COUNCIL

By . . . George Mansour

As the current year comes to a close and the new year rapidly approaches, it is appropriate to reflect on 2005 and peek ahead to 2006. In doing so, we quickly become aware of how busy a year we have had and how engaged the community has been. The year's multiple experiences cut across many vectors of the parish, its community and its facilities.

2005: The presence of the community at divine services remained high with pews regularly filled to capacity. The Sunday School sustained its record high enrollment and continued to inform the community through its weekly Newsletter of activities and plans. Since the beginning of the school year, between 55 and 65 students weekly receive Holy Communion. This pattern bodes well for sustained growth in the future and the need to factor them into any and all plans for our programs and facilities.

A new program of Narthex attendants was instituted this fall. It represents an opportunity for teen-age females to serve the community during the Divine Liturgy. Service as altar boy and service as Narthex attendant actively involve the youth. Their involvement constitutes an experience to build on as they later take the step to become leaders in the parish.

The active presence of the community for other events was also notable in 2005. The Holy Trinity community came together often for fellowship and/or work. The parish and its organizations offered numerous opportunities for this to happen through teas, dances, recognition events, cultural celebrations, fund raisers, and picnics. The number of parishioners who volunteer time and energy suggest not only commitment to the parish but a thirst for fellowship as well. The annual Folk Festival, AHEPA events, Athenian Luncheon and Bake Sale, Odyssey events and the Fall Dinner-Dance are prime examples of how Holy Trinity worked collaboratively and provided enjoyable activities for young and old. The numerous events of this year show once again the mettle of Holy Trinity parishioners to work together for a common goal.

Several important projects were undertaken this year; some have been completed, and others are in process.

The new steeple and cross reestablish Holy Trinity's presence in the Lansing skyline and

symbolize the renovation and rejuvenation of our facilities. The new roof is one step away from being completed: painting the new covering is the remaining step.

The Iconography project is one step closer to completion – 28 iconographic pieces (the original 24 and 4 additional ones) have been fully pledged, and all have been commissioned to be written, a major undertaking that is made possible through the enthusiasm and commitment of the community. The project will enrich the spiritual and aesthetic qualities of our sanctuary. The dome for the Pantokrator and the frame for the Platytera have been installed. The preparation of the plenum surfaces to receive the iconographic medallions and panels has begun. A design for the new iconostasis has been approved, and a sculptor has been chosen to craft it.

Landscaping work was undertaken this summer and autumn to beautify the grounds of the Lord's house. Trees were trimmed and plantings were thinned and replaced. Considerable work went into rejuvenating and beautifying the memorial garden on the circle drive. Additional work will be done in the spring.

The Baryames Social Hall committee, chaired by Hiram Fitzgerald, submitted its fact-finding report concerning the renovation or renovation and expansion of the Hall. The formation of the committee resulted from the Needs Assessment conducted in the community in 2004. The Parish Council will soon consider which option, if any, to recommend be implemented.

2006: In the coming year, we look forward to the completion of some of these major projects and the celebration that accompany their completion. We anticipate joyfully the installation and consecration of the new iconography and iconostasis, a day that we can appropriately celebrate what has been accomplished through the grace of God and the hard work and commitment of the community.

The Holy Trinity community will be called on in 2006 to do once more what it has shown over the years that it can do exceptionally well: to work together collaboratively, to confront and resolve challenges and vicissitudes – spiritual, financial, interpersonal, structural, to accompany the renovation of our parish facilities with a personal, spiritual renewal. Through the grace of God we will be able to do this.

JOY

By Alicia Hostetler & Stacie

Seventeen JOY members and their families enjoyed a nice afternoon at Andy T's farm in October. The weather was perfect for a hay ride and running around the corn maze!

A very big thank you to those who assisted with the coffee hour, and extra gratitude to those of you who helped fold the boxes for the bake sale. Your assistance is truly appreciated!!

In December JOY will be adopting a family for the holidays through Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Clinton County. ALL parishioners are invited to contribute. A list of desired items will be available shortly. On December 18 JOY will meet after church services in the Small Social Room to watch a holiday movie and wrap the presents contributed for JOY's adopted family.

Message to Holy Trinity

The following is an email from Presvytera Alexandra Poulos on learning in the November Lamplighter of our new steeple and cross and the preparatory work that is being done in the sanctuary.

What a wonderful time for Holy Trinity in Lansing! The Lord teaches us that renewal is a constant process whether in the physical or spiritual world. When we first entered our new facility, I think people thought "this is it!" The truth is that all things need constant and prayerful attention and care. As you all renew His Temple, may you all renew your temple... He resides in the building, and He resides in each of us. God bless you all. I love you and I miss you.

Presvytera

PROSFORON

Sunday, December 4. Sheryl Sinas
St. Barbara
Sunday, December 11. Chris Skorna
Sunday, December 18. Barbara Smalley
Saturday, December 24. Cynthia Stajos
Vesperal Divine Liturgy of Christmas
Sunday, December 25. Stella Sorovigas
Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

AHEPA

By . . . Phillip Frangos

The members of Wolverine Chapter are delighted to welcome several new members into the chapter. They include Kenneth Lycos, Stuart Vanis, James Vlahakis, and Nick Vlahakis.

Other individuals wishing to join AHEPA have a golden opportunity if they act now. The initiation fee has been waived by AHEPA Headquarters through December 31 and any dues paid now by new members cover the period through December 31, 2006. Please contact any of the officers - Vackis Nicolaou, Mike Alexander, Tony Fragale, or Phillip Frangos.

Several years ago, Presbytera Poulos prepared a history of our parish for the booklet commemorating Holy Trinity's 50th anniversary. Anyone having a copy of that history, please contact Phillip Frangos. Also, anyone having any materials relating to the establishment of Wolverine Chapter and its original members, please contact Phillip Frangos. Your assistance in sharing these materials will be invaluable.

Open Letter to the Community

Following my five-month hospitalization and convalescence during which time I almost died, I returned home on October 28 to discover two large boxes filled with cards, notes and letters. I am overwhelmed by the church community, friends, and relatives for their prayers, love, flowers, phone calls and visits.

I particularly thank Fr. Mark for his visitations, prayers, Communion and encouragement. Fr. Mark gave me the strength to "go on with my life." For this and more, I thank you and your family.

For all of this. . . I thank God and bless you all from the bottom of my heart.

Sophia Koutouzos

PHILOPTOCHOS

Our 56th Athenian Coffee Shop was a success. We had many people from the Lansing area community come and support us on a very windy and cold day. It was great to see so many people turn out to help on the day of the bake sale. I want to thank all of the charmen for their commitment and time to make all of the wonderful pastries and pitas, and to all the members who helped on the baking days.

On many days we worked with skeleton crews. It was tough. With more people helping on the committes we would finish much more quickly and people would not be as exhausted and discouraged. We must have more people helping on the preperation days as the alternative would be to either stop having the bake sale or change it in other ways. It would be a shame to have the bake sale stop after one of its most successful years because we are not getting enough people to help on the preparation days.

Philoptochos members have been sent a volunteer form about helping with the different events for the year. So far only eight forms have been filled out and returned to us. We need YOU to commit to both helping for the bake sale and helping with our other projects throughout the year.

On the positive side, we had good income from our pastries, pitas and bread. Our gift shop, sale of grocery items and our new Philoptochos Cookbook were very well received. The money we help raise will help many local charities that we always give throughout the year. The emphasis of Philoptochos has been to assist people and charitable organizations in need in the area. Our bake sale is our biggest fund raiser. It has so much tradition and creates much good will for our community. We do not want to lose it. What we need is more people to help prepare for it and make it better.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

December 5 Philoptochos Annual
Christmas Pot-luck Dinner
December 11 St. Spyridon Coffee Hour
January 8 Philoptochos Vasilopita
Coffee Hour

Soussana Tesseris

BAKE SALE THANK YOU

Thank you to all who helped make the sale the great success it was. We appreciate all the volunteers who helped on sale day. It was wonderful to see so many new faces and, of course, we appreciate our veteran pastry & pita sellers, coffee servers, kitchen staff & gift shop helpers. Great job!

Stella Economy

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thanks to everyone for contributing to the coffee hour in October. We had plenty of food and help which makes it an easy event to plan and host.

This month we sponsor the coffee hour on December 18th. Please plan to bring a dessert, fruit plate, or cheese & crackers. If you signed up to help with this event, you will receive a telephone call as a reminder.

Remember, this school year the Sunday School will donate all coffee hour proceeds to the Iconography Project.

Important Dates

December 18th	Sunday School Christmas Program & Coffee Hour
December 25th	No Sunday School
January 1st	No Sunday School
January 8th	Classes resume

Stephanie Haynie

The following article is by Fr. Christopher Metropulos, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Founder and Director of Come, Receive the Light. - Orthodox Christian Radio Program, he composes and publishes the weekly newsletter of the Orthodox Christian Network.

ADDICTED

Karl Marx said that “religion is the opiate of the people.” What he meant by this is that religion dulls people’s senses and makes them easier to control. I would argue that true religion does just the opposite. The Orthodox faith produces a mindful sobriety, rather than intoxicated mindlessness.

No one who is even remotely aware of modern life can escape the reality that we live in a compulsive, addicted world. From the common addictions to drugs, alcohol, smoking, and gambling and other obvious “vices” to the more insidious but prevalent addictions to possessions, fame, and yes, even religion, we are a people who are constantly tempted to abandon our sober faith for the current fad addiction of the day. Addiction tempts us because it appears EASY! It comes across as a “quick” way to escape pain or sadness or fear. But this is a deception!

Addictions rob us of freedom. At the very foundation of any addiction is the attempt to avoid the pain of reality by escaping into the deceptive soothing “medicine” of numbness or even denial. Our addictions become distractions from the pain of our lives, ways of escaping from instead of facing the challenges of living. But, as usual, these escapes are actually traps that lead us to a deeper “prison of soul.”

The antidote to this spiraling loss of true freedom and humanity is found not in substituting one “drug” for another, but finally understanding that authentic faith calls us to physical and spiritual sobriety. The Fathers of the Church called this “nepsis” or “sober joy.” They understood that life is always attempting to intoxicate you with either the euphoria of elation or the debilitating power of depression. Both extremes are temptations to deception. Because life is always a mix of good and tragic circumstances, allowing ourselves to focus too strongly on either reality leads us to a distorted view of our own lives.

The spiritual “therapia” of Orthodoxy is a call to a sober view of life. It is a call to see the whole spectrum of reality always through the eyes of the faith we declare each week when we conclude the Creed – “I believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.” It is this

eternal perspective that enables me, participating in the New Life given to the whole world through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to see both good and bad times from a transfigured vantage point. I will not surrender this mindful, energetic sobriety in light of any circumstance in my life, whether good or tragic, because I KNOW that this moment is NOT THE END OF MY STORY! The truth of the resurrection assures me of this and allows me to fend off the temptation to slip into an addiction to anything “temporary” or deadly!

Let me leave you with three entry points into this Eternal Perspective:

First, Take your Faith Seriously. This Orthodox path to “sober joy” is a remedy for the addictions of the soul. But it is a path we must walk with purpose. The treasures of our faith will remain nothing more than dusty heirlooms if we don’t actively apply their wisdom to our daily lives. This process requires eternal diligence, especially in a world where we are constantly tempted to stop and “rest,” and thereby avoid the hard work of spiritual maturity. But this temptation is deadly. Take your faith seriously, and those around you will see the difference in your life.

Second, Travel the Path Courageously. It will take courage to ask as King David asked of God in the psalms – “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts” (Psalm 139:23). King David knew that he couldn’t trust himself to be honest about his own spiritual needs, so he turned to God. David was confident that God would reveal the weaknesses of David’s own soul without condemning him, but only to help him escape the sickness of his spiritual neediness. You must do the same, but you are not alone. Your priest is there to help apply the wisdom of the Path to your spiritual needs through confession, the Eucharist, and spiritual counsel. Take the chance. Be willing to actually apply the wisdom of the faith to your everyday life.

Finally, Trust the Outcome to Christ. Jesus Christ has defeated death, our last and most potent Enemy. His victory over death means that all other, lesser enemies are impotent against our lives. As we courageously travel the path of our faith and take it seriously, not just as some cultural expression of our former homeland but as the actual transfiguring message meant for all the world, we will see how the transformative power of this faith we so dearly love is meant to set us free from every addiction that attempts to enslave us to an existence that is far below how we could live if only we would allow Christ and His message to SET US FREE!

CHOIR

We continue to invite any interested singers to join us in the choir loft. We are happy that some students, elementary through college age, are singing with us and welcome any other interested students on Sundays.

If anyone would also like to try a rehearsal, even just to learn the Nativity hymns, we will be rehearsing Thursday evenings, December 1, 8 and 15, from 7:00-8:30 p.m..

The choir will join JOY and GOYA in Christmas caroling December 18th. If you would like us to sing for any parishioners in healthcare centers or confined at home, either on that date or another time, please let us know.

The choir wishes all our Holy Trinity family a very blessed celebration of our Lord's Nativity!

-Mary Brown

ETHIOPIAN ORPHANS

The nuns of the Gethsemane Orthodox Monastery and orphanages thank everyone for their generous donations to the special collections taken in November to help them build more classrooms and a health clinic.

If you would still like to contribute, we will keep the special fund account open through December 31st. Please spread the word to friends and family who may be looking for a worthy cause for a year-end donation. Checks can be made payable to "Holy Trinity" with a notation "Ethiopian orphans" and donors will receive a receipt for tax purposes.

The nuns also ask that any donors include a list of names of people, living and departed, for them to pray for. If you donated during the November special collections or coffee hours, you can still give a list of names to Mary Heiderson in the office to be sent with the funds to Ethiopia.

Stay tuned to the January Lamplighter for a report on the total amount collected.

HOLY TRINITY BOOKSTORE

Attention all readers! The Bookstore is receiving many new books and pamphlets in time for Christmas.

Divine Liturgy Books containing both Greek and English are available for purchase.

We now feature a selection of Orthodox cross pendants and a few chains. See the jewelry box on the booktable.

Shop the Holy Trinity Bookstore for gift items such as music cd's, books, icons, and more.

-Cynthia Hoag

GOYA NEWS

GOYA Basketball practices have started. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Mrs. Nicholaou or Mrs. Alexander.

Two Turkeys were raffled at our recent Coffee Hour. Winners were Georgia Kaplan and Nonie Vsetula. Congratulations.

Our annual Christmas Card project signup began Sunday, November 27th. The absolute, final day to participate is December 11th. No names will be added after this day.

Our Christmas Caroling outing will be held Sunday, December 18th. Please let us know if you would like to be 'serenaded'.

P.S. We are looking for someone to host the GOYA Christmas Party. If you are interested, please let us know.

-Maria Alexander, Koula Nicolaou

**FEAST DAY OF ST. NICHOLAS:
OPEN HOUSE RECEPTION
FEAST DAY OF ST. SPYRIDON:
VESPERS AND LITURGY**

Tuesday, December 6 - 2:00 pm - 8:00 pm, Open House Reception for His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas. Everyone is welcome to come to the Metropolis Center to wish his Eminence a Happy Name Day.

Sunday, December 11 - 5:00 pm - Great Vespers
Monday, December 12 - 9:00 am - Orthros and Divine Liturgy at the Metropolis Chapel. A reception will follow Vespers and Liturgy in honor of the Feast Day of St. Spyridon.

Everyone is invited to attend!

**END-OF-THE-YEAR-DONATIONS:
A REMINDER**

Parishioners who make their stewardship contributions at the end of the calendar year are reminded of IRS regulations:

The parish must consider as 2005 donations those that have been received at the parish or, if mailed, postmarked no later than December 31.

This regulation applies to any type of contribution — cash, check, stock certificates or transfers, or property.

ELECTION RESULTS

Elections for 4 seats on the Parish Council were held on November 6. Of the six candidates, the following were elected:

Hiram Fitzgerald
Yvonne Joseph
George Mansour
Alexis Popoff

These four candidates will serve a 3-year term of office, 2006-2008. The tally of votes may be viewed in the Parish Office. Members of the Parish Council will take the oath of office on Sunday, December 11 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

**FRIENDS OF THE METROPOLIS
CAMPAIGN 2005**

Parishioners are encouraged to enroll in the Friends of the Metropolis program. This is one way individuals can help assure that the apostolic function of the Metropolitan's Office and the Metropolis-based programs of outreach and Christian ministry will not be hampered by financial constraints.

The support of individuals will help ensure that the needs of the faithful throughout the Metropolis are answered and that Orthodox Christianity can become a more visible religious presence in local civic communities as well.

The Metropolis receives no Archdiocesan support to fund the day-to-day operations of the Metropolis or to pay such necessary expenses as telephones, computers, stationery, copiers, office equipment, postage, office supplies, repairs, utilities, maintenance, or travel-related expenses. The Archdiocese currently allocates such benefit funding to the Metropolis as salaries for limited personnel, and the associated costs of FICA, medical insurance, and pension costs.

The Friends Campaign has a target goal of \$150,000. Monies will be used to: support the functioning of the Metropolis Center, provide support services to the Clergy and Parishes, provide Training and Leadership Seminars throughout the Metropolis, help fund the Youth Office and related expenses, improve Adult Catechetical Programs, support Outreach Programs, and to help continue Endowed Scholarship and Mission programs.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas and the Metropolis Council ask parishioners to participate in the "Friends of the Metropolis" Campaign by making an annual commitment that will help assure that the work of the Church will continue unhindered.

Enroll today. Pledge forms are available in the Parish Office.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

By . . . George Mansour

In a 2004 article with this title, a lay leader in our national church provided information and perspectives on stewardship giving patterns among Greek Orthodox; and he raised that critical question: "How do we compare?" The lay leader is Andrew E. Manatos, member of the Finance Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, Archon, and member of Leadership 100. He was also former Assistant Secretary to the US Department of Commerce.

Much of the information he cited came from a nation-wide survey of 29 denominations and from the Consumer Price Index. Among the data, he referenced the following three points:

1. The average American family contributed 2.66% of annual income to their church.
2. Many individual parishes of other denominations have budgets larger than that of the combined 500 parishes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.
3. The dollar bill that many of us automatically leave at the candle stand or put in the collection tray today is worth only 50 cents compared to the dollar contributed in 1982, and only 20 cents compared to 1972.

How do we at Holy Trinity compare?

The question cannot be answered without surveying every member of the community. That is certainly nothing that I want to be involved in, and it is nothing that I want anyone in the parish to do.

However, the question is a valid one, one that we can individually ask ourselves.

For example, are we average? Average like the American family that Mr. Manatos references, the one that contributes 2.66% of annual income to the church? In dollars and cents "average" means: a total \$2660 stewardship contribution for \$100,000 income; \$1995 for \$75,000 income; \$1330 for \$50,000 income; \$798 for \$30,000 income.

Is "average" the level that we individually or collectively want to attain? It's my understanding that several parishioners believe that "average" is highly inadequate and well below a commitment to the Biblical concept of "tithing," which is why they contribute 10% to the church.

Mr. Manatos' second point concerning the high budgets of individual parishes of other denominations shows that our Greek Orthodox sister parishes have relatively small budgets. Holy Trinity's annual budget of \$250,000 +/- clearly fits into the category of

"small," yet as a parish of almost 200 pledging units, we annually have difficulty meeting it! Our operating budget, which comes from contributions and which is based on actual expenses – utilities, insurance, personnel, maintenance and repair, programs, supplies – requires, as was reported in the October General Assembly, a collection of \$4900 weekly.

The third point cited by Mr. Manatos is a datum that helps to put into perspective the functional value of the dollar.

In trying to offer an explanation of "how we compare," Mr. Manatos makes the following statement: *"The larger problem — I believe, is a holdover from our "old country" Greece — where parishioners are not used to contributing. The government pays the priests, and most churches have no mortgages."*

His observation may have some validity *grosso modo* across the Archdiocese as an ethnic or cultural explanation; however, I am not willing to say that it is applicable as a generalization that characterizes Holy Trinity of Lansing.

Stewardship contributions may, nevertheless, be culturally related in the sense that one often does what one sees at home. I know that is the situation in my own personal case. I grew up witnessing the customary "dollar" in the collection plate, and I followed that example thinking that was the standard to achieve. I then saw in my father-in-law a culturally different model, one based on different operating principles. My father-in-law – a man clearly of financially humble means, but one who recognized the importance of stewardship – explained to me his way of supporting his church.

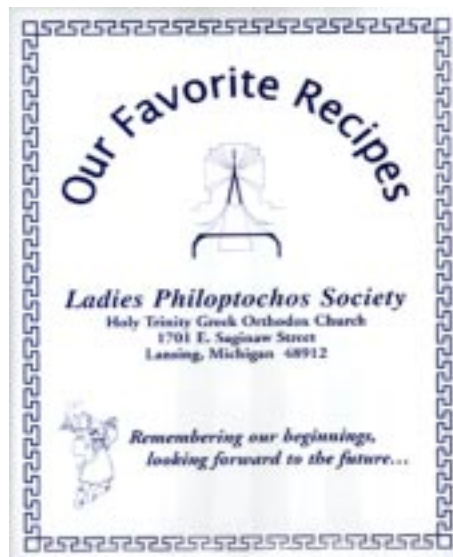
He said, "When I receive my paycheck, I take my church contribution off the top. That way, I give to the Lord first; His money doesn't get mixed up with household expenses; and that way I never miss it." This was a culturally different approach for me; it was a pattern that was very different, but one that seemed quite worthy of consideration because it implemented in a real way several of Biblical lessons and charges. It made the theoretical real!

How do we compare? Only as individuals can we answer that question.

As we make our end-of-the-year contributions or as we consider our 2006 pledges, other questions may help us provide answers:

- Do we want to be just "average?"
- Are we doing our fair share to help our church meet its operating budget?
- Is our "dollar" worth, 100, 50 or 20 cents?

The Philoptochos Book of Recipes is now available.



To order a copy of *Our Favorite Recipes*,
send a check or money order to:

Ladies Philoptochos Society
1701 East Saginaw Street
Lansing, MI 48912

The books are \$20.00 a copy and \$5.00 shipping and handling per book.

**Holy Trinity 2005
Community Christmas Card**
**Our GOYA members will be available to receive
names following the Divine Liturgy on
December 4th and 11th**
The cost is \$15 per family
Checks made payable to "GOYA"
**You may submit your name by mail. Print your name
legibly below as you would like it to appear on the
card and include you check to:**
Nonie Vsetula
718 Bates Street Lansing MI 48906
Deadline for receiving names is December 11th
Name(s) _____
