

THE **LAMPLIGHTER**

MAY 2011

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

This issue is sponsored by a parishioner with prayers for a glorious Paschal season for all. Christ is Risen!

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Sunday May 1**

'Poikilia' & Movie 6 p.m.

**Monday May 2**

Philoptochos General Meeting & Dinner 6 p.m.

**Saturday May 7**

Parish Fun Night 6 p.m.

**Sunday May 15th**

Spring General Assembly

**Sunday, May 22nd**

Odyssey Commencement and Loukoumathes

**Thursday June 9th**

Taste of Greece

**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**

1701 E. Saginaw St.

Lansing, MI 48912

(517) 482-7341

holyltrinitygreek@sbcglobal.net

*Pastoral Reflection* | **Where There's a Will ...** by Fr. Mark Sietsema

*Christos Anesti!* Christ is Risen! *Al-Massiah Qam!*

In this beautiful Paschal season, we greet one another with the proclamation of Christ's rising from the dead. His victory over death was a triumph not just for one, but for all. In Christ's Resurrection, we receive the assurance of our own resurrection, for Christ is "the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20). Death is no more to be feared as an end, but to be awaited as a new beginning. This is the hope that gave boldness to the Apostles and courage to the Martyrs.

When we say "Christ is Risen," we herald the good tidings that the power of Death is overthrown for all people. The very reason that the Son of God was born, crucified, and resurrected was to impart immortality to the race of mortal men. If we ourselves were not afflicted by Death, Christ would have no need of death or resurrection.

And so, in saying "Christ is Risen," we also preach another profound truth: *We shall all die.* If we are to be resurrected, then it stands to reason that we all have need of resurrection. It is inevitable that our passage into new life goes through the door of death. True spirituality—healthy spirituality—begins with our acknowledgement of this fact. *(continued on page 2)*

**PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE by Elaine Christofilis**

Join us for the **GENERAL ASSEMBLY May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011**  
Following the Divine Liturgy.

*Christos Anesti! Christ is Risen!*

- Thank you to Alexis Popoff and her committee for the delicious Agape Dinner which took place following the Pascha Vigil. This is a wonderful tradition and an event many of us look forward to every year. Thank you!
- Thank you to Michael Karagoulis and fellow volunteers who helped out on the Spring Clean Up Day. Your time and efforts are much appreciated. It made the Pascha season more beautiful!
- Leading up to Pascha all parishioners did their part to make the season brighter. The Parish Council would like

to thank each and everyone of you for your love towards Holy Trinity! *Kai Tou Chronou!*

**SAVE THE DATE:** The TASTE OF GREECE fund-raising event will take place on **Thursday, June 9<sup>th</sup>**. This a great event! Volunteers will be needed before and on the day of the event. Watch for sign up sheets to volunteer.

**Stewardship 2011**

To date we have 142 stewardship units who have pledged \$182,509.00 for 2011.

Thank you to all those who have submitted their *2011 Stewardship Pledge Form!* Please remember to submit your stewardship pledge form as soon as possible. Make your contributions easier, sign up for the EFT program today! All forms are available at the church office.

(continued)

Denial of death is one of the key themes of modern culture. We idolize youth, we spend billions of dollars on products that seem to reverse the aging process, we cloak the discussion of death in endless euphemisms. This refusal to admit to our personal date with destiny is a form of mental illness. Sanity comes only from the frank admission to the face in the mirror: Someday you shall die.

*Remembrance of death* is at the heart of Orthodox Christian spirituality. The desert fathers and mothers have much to say on this topic. Many of their counsels apply to people who have a monastic-style practice of prayer. For the average Orthodox Christian, the proper remembrance of death manifests itself in other ways.

The most practical is this: drawing up a last will and testament. It is a simple thing, an easy thing. Yet more than half of all Americans die without a will. They are afraid to face the reality of death. They stick their head in the sand and wait ... until the day the undertaker buries the rest of them, too.

It is a terrible failure of love to die without a will. It is essentially telling your family: "Once I'm gone, I don't care what happens to you. I don't care if you fight and squabble; I don't care if you lose half of my estate to the lawyer or the taxman. Too bad for you that I couldn't be bothered to spend the equivalent of two months of cable TV to save you years of headaches and heartaches." If you are living now without a will, you may as well leave instructions with the funeral director to pose you in the casket with both middle fingers extended. Because that's what you're saying to your family and society by your ongoing choice to ignore the most predictable event in life.

**Where's there's a will, there is love.** Where's there's no will, there is something worse than hatred—namely, *indifference*. Indifference is diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christianity. If it were in my power to add to the canons of the Church, I would author a rule that excludes an Orthodox adult from the Communion line until he or she has a valid will in place, updated as need be throughout life. There is simply no excuse for dying without a will, or for failing to keep your will current. Cowardice and laziness are not excuses accepted before the judgment seat of Christ.

Who should have a will? Everyone over the age of 21. But especially those whose family history includes:

- A divorce or a remarriage
- A blended family or step-children
- Estrangement of a parent and a child
- Estrangement of siblings
- A family business or any business partnership
- Shared property or joint financial interests

If your life involves any of these elements, and you don't have an up-to-date will, there is something wrong, either with your intelligence or with your soul. Please—for love's sake—get your affairs in order. Don't put it off. None of us knows when our last breath is being drawn. You may not have until next week. Make the appointment with an attorney today, and start living—and loving—in the true light of the Resurrection.

## A SUMMER OF SPECIAL SERVICE

I recently received word from the Archdiocese that I have been selected by Archbishop Demetrios to serve as a clergyman on staff for a three-week session of Ionian Village this summer. Ionian Village is a Camp of the Archdiocese of America that is located in Greece. Americans kids can go for part of the summer to have fun and to grow in their Orthodox faith. A significant part of the IV experience is traveling to places of pilgrimage in Greece, such as the shrine of Saint Dionysios in Zakynthos and of Saint Nectarios in Aegina. Ionian Village is a life-changing experience for many Orthodox young people.

It is also an opportunity of a lifetime for a priest. I am very grateful to be chosen from among the priests of the Archdiocese for this duty. Make no mistake—this is not a vacation! I will be on the job 24-7 for three weeks straight! But it will be a wonderful opportunity for service to the Church, one that will assist me in serving our own young people here at home and up at our Metropolis Summer Camp as well.

While I am gone, the pastoral and liturgical needs of

parishioners will be ably supplied by other priests of the diocese—as they have been with every absence of mine from the parish. There are many priests, but one and the same Jesus Christ. Each priest is given the same grace as every other, to bring the presence of Christ into your lives. One priest may have a better voice than another priest, but no priest brings a better Christ to the sacraments—which at the end of the day is what our liturgical life all about.

The important ministries of our Church at large depend on the availability of priests to receive special assignments (such as this one) from the bishop or the archbishop. Without this, there could be no summer camp programs for our youth, no retreats, no mission parishes, no diocesan or Archdiocesan Councils, no special ministries of any kind. Needless to say, this would be a formula for the death of our Archdiocese in this era of clergy shortage. The loan of your priest for a portion of this summer should be viewed as a meaningful contribution to an important and life-changing ministry of the Church.

## PHILOPTOCHOS by Secretary Elan Stavros Nichols

*Kali Anastasi!* A Glorious Resurrection to you and your family. count, only one-third of our Philoptochos members have paid their dues this year.

We thank our members and others for putting on the Friday Lenten coffee hours following the Salutations to the Theotokos services in March and April. They prepared a lovely light meal for all to enjoy, with fine fellowship.

We have elected our Philoptochos Board for the year beginning fall 2011: Olga Pascalenos will continue to serve as President, with Glykeria Christofilis as Vice President, Frances Katsiris as Secretary, Angela Vlahakis continuing to serve as Treasurer, and Eleanor Spalding as Advisor.

2011 dues of \$25 can always be paid to Angela. At last

A speaker from the Lansing City Rescue Mission, a Christian organization, spoke to us on April 4 at our General Meeting. We are one of its supporters, and have again placed a bin for donations in the Church entryway, with specific requests appearing in the Church bulletins. Please be generous to this organization in its 100th year of service.

In case you get this newsletter in time, come to Coral Gables for our last General Meeting dinner on May 2. Our last Board Meeting will be May 23. Please join us in the fall!



## ODYSSEY GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURAL PROGRAM by Zana Litos

*Christos Anesti!*

**Up-coming events:**

**Sunday, May 22<sup>th</sup>:** Odyssey Program Commencement and Loukoumathes Coffee Hour



The Odyssey Program will recognize the students who have participated in the program this past year after the Divine Liturgy. The coffee hour following the service will be sponsored by Odyssey and will feature hot and delicious

Loukoumathes under the special and talented guidance of George Lafkas.

The Odyssey Board sends a thank you note to our students, parents and teachers for the excellent school year we had and for making the learning of Greek language and culture an enjoyable and fun process. We wish everyone a wonderful summer and we hope to see you back in September.

**Καλό Καλοκαίρι !**



## HOLY TRINITY'S GOT TALENT SHOW AND DINNER DANCE!

MAY 7

Do you have a special talent? Do you dance, sing, play a musical instrument, do magic tricks or tell jokes? Then this is the place for you. On May 7<sup>th</sup> from 6-9 pm you have an opportunity to entertain your parish family.

If not, come and enjoy the talents of others and enjoy some refreshment while you watch and do a little dancing afterward!

The sign-up "Sharing your Talent Sheet" will be on the table in the foyer.

Any questions, contact Nonie Vsetula (487-6528) or Olga Pascalenos (485-7092).



## TASTE OF GREECE—JUNE 9TH

The incredibly popular annual fund-raising event will take place on Thursday, June 9th.

Volunteers will be needed before and on the day of the event.

Please watch for sign up sheets to volunteer!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Condolences** to Peter Priggooris on the passing of his niece Demetra Mehas in Farmington Hills. Her funeral was on April 9 at Holy Cross Church.

*Aionia aftis e mneme!*

**Congratulations** to Dean and Katy Gavrilides (and to grandparents Greg and Rosemary Gavrilides) on the birth of their daughter Kallisti Teagan Gavrilides on March 30. *Na sas zisei!*

### Lamplighter sponsorships are needed for July — December

Sponsoring the monthly newsletter is a great way to commemorate a loved one, offer a prayer for the health of family and friends, or celebrate a special occasion or anniversary.

The donation is \$200 for an issue. Please call the church office (482-7341) if you are interested in sponsoring an issue.

### Are You Receiving Parish Emails?

If you have not been receiving news and updates from Holy Trinity via email lately, you must not be on the parish e-mailing list! In order to receive notices by email, please send a note to [holytrinitygreek@sbcglobal.net](mailto:holytrinitygreek@sbcglobal.net) and let us know that you wish to

**Bulletin announcements** should be communicated to the Church office by e-mail or phone by Thursday morning. The parish e-mail is : [holytrinitygreek@sbcglobal.net](mailto:holytrinitygreek@sbcglobal.net)



### GRECIAN OLIVE OIL (FIRST PRESS)

This fine olive oil from the village of Metamorphosis is back in and available once again in the church office Monday-Friday from 9-1 p.m. The oil is available in 3 liter cans and half-liter bottles.

**Kali Orexi!**

## Holy Trinity Greek orthodox Church

Lansing, Michigan

### 2011 Stewardship Commitment

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### My/Our Stewardship Pledge

to the parish for 2011 is::

● \$10,000 ● \$7,500 ● \$5,000 ● \$3,000 ● \$2,500

● 1,500 ● \$1,000

● \$500 (suggested minimum)

● Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*"We offer these gifts from*

*Your own gifts"*

## TREASURER'S REPORT by Nick Gavrilides

*Christos Anesti.*

I am pleased to report that the financial health of the parish is reasonably good. I do, however, need to make a call for stewardship contributions. The pledge form and the form for direct electronic payments is included in this issue of the Lamplighter.

I am currently working on learning the systems and adding my touches where appropriate. Feel free to contact me via email should you have any questions or concerns.

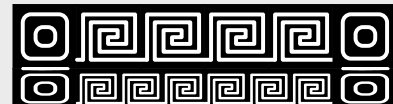
The church has many needs beyond our daily operations. Thankfully, your stewardship continues to meet the parishes' daily needs; however there are special needs and special funds which parishioners can support such as :

- Sunday school donations
- Camp scholarships
- Unforeseen maintenance and repair
- Parishioner support

Memorial donations may be designed to any of these needs and to the following funds:

- Fr. Mark Discretionary Fund
- Fr. John Poulos Fund
- Camp Fund

Your help is greatly appreciated!



**Consistency in Stewardship Giving**

Looking specifically at Stewardship, one can easily see that parishioners have recognized the importance of consistent giving – making their stewardship offerings throughout the year, rather than waiting and doing it in one or two checks.

Enrolling for automatic bank transfers of stewardship not only simplifies meeting one’s pledge, it benefits the parish by having stewardship offerings made regularly, even when one is away or not in attendance church services.

To become part of this program, please complete the form below and return it to the parish office.

\* \* \* \* \*

**AGREEMENT FOR DIRECT STEWARDSHIP PAYMENTS TO**

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Lansing, Michigan

I (We) authorize HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF LANSING, MICHIGAN, (HTGOC) to initiate transfers of my stewardship from my (our) account specified below at the financial institution named below. In addition, I (We) acknowledge that the direct payment (EFT) transactions from the account must comply with the provisions of U.S. law.

I (We) further acknowledge that if a transfer fails because of Insufficient Funds, Closed Account, or Wrong Account Number, I (we) may be responsible for any fee which the financial institution may assess HTGOC.

**NAME OF YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOUNT NAME:** (e.g., Special Checking, Money Market Savings, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOUNT NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] Checking [ ] Savings

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTION ROUTING Number** (This 9-digit number, which identifies your bank, appears on the bottom line of your checks:: \_\_\_\_\_

**AMOUNT TO BE TRANSFERRED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FREQUENCY:** [ ] Every Month [ ] Each Week

**IF MONTHLY, ON WHAT DAY OF THE MONTH:** \_\_\_\_\_

This authorization will remain in full force and effect until HTGOC has received written notification from me (us) of its termination in such time and in such a manner as to afford HTGOC and the Originating Financial Institution a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Return completed form to the Parish Office**

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
 1701 East Saginaw Street  
 Lansing MI 48912  
 Office: 517-482-7341 Fax: 517-482-8524

8:45am ORTHROS SERVICE  
 10:00am DIVINE LITURGY  
 Fellowship coffee following Liturgy

# May 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Parish Council hosts coffee Odyssey 'Poikilia' & Movie 6pm	2 Philoptochos General Meeting & Dinner 6pm at Coral Gables	3	4	5	6 Final Odyssey Classes	7 Parish Fun Night 6 pm
8 GOYA & Youth host coffee <i>Mother's Day</i>	9 Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	10	11	12	13	14
15 SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY Philoptochos hosts Coffee - Southside Community Kitchen	16 Lampighter Deadline	17	18	19 M.A.R.S.P. Lunch Meeting, 11-2pm	20	21
22 Loukourmadhes Sunday School & Odyssey Student Recognition & coffee hosts	23 Philoptochos Board, 7pm	24	25	26	27	28
29 Open coffee	30 <i>Memorial Day</i>	31				

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# June 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Memorial Garden hosts coffee				Taste of Greece, 4-7pm		Liturgy, 10am Saturday of Souls
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Parish Council hosts Name Day luncheon <b>Pentecost</b>	Parish Council Meeting, 7pm					
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>All Saints Sunday</b> Open coffee Father's Day	Lampighter Deadline					
26	27	28	29	30		
Summer coffee host begins						