



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Metropolis of Atlanta
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
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www.holytrinitybiloxi.org

September 2017 Bulletin

From Father Dean

Throughout our lifetime, each one of us has received many gifts. Beyond the gift of life, we have been given parents to nurture us, food, shelter, clothes, family, security and love, just to name a few. The greatest gift we have received, however, is a gift from God, the gift of his Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The words in John 13:6 are so true....*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Jesus came to us as the Messiah, the Savior, the Teacher, the Healer. He came and walked with the sick, ate with sinners, gave to the poor. He became the standard by which we believers and followers of GOOD live by day in and day out.

We Orthodox Christians have a most unique opportunity every Sunday, every special feast day, every Divine Liturgy that is celebrated, to receive Christ by partaking of the Holy Communion. Each time we come forward to receive with the fear of God, faith and love, we are professing our faith. Each time we receive, we are declaring that we have committed our WHOLE life to Christ and His teachings. Each time we receive, we are professing our devotion to the truth. Each time we receive, we give of ourselves, we humbly submit ourselves, we turn ourselves over to God so He may live and dwell in us. Have you ever stopped to think that each time we receive Holy Communion, it is the most important act of stewardship we can ever offer? Once we make the decision, once we develop a positive attitude, once we commit our whole life to Christ, once we dedicate our life to God, it is then and only then that we truly begin living our lives as Orthodox Christians. When we reach this point of our spiritual journey, the act of becoming a true steward for Christ becomes second nature and we lovingly give of our time, our talent and our treasure so His Church can accomplish its divine mission.

There are many people and groups in today's society who like to make up their own rules by which we should live. But God does not allow that. The fact is, God has given us the only sure plan to salvation. God has given us His Son who taught us how to live and how to believe. God has given us the Church to guide us to salvation.

Whether or not we believe is up to each one of us. God does not force us to believe. In fact He created us with free will, with the ability to choose between what is right and what is wrong; to choose whether we want an abundant life now and eternal life in heaven or if we want a life far from Him not only now but forever. What is really important to you? Which will you choose?

Schedule of Services

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on September 3 with Fr Ezekiel
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on September 10 with Fr Dean
Saturday Vesper Service at 6:00 pm on September 16 with Fr. Ezekiel
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on September 17 with Fr Dean
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on September 24 with Fr Dean

Visitors

A warm welcome to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
We are glad to have you worship with us today
Please join us for Fellowship Hour in our Social Hall after Liturgy

Visitors & Sacraments

Everyone is welcome in the Orthodox Church & may receive the blessed bread (antidoron) at the end of the service, but only practicing Orthodox Christians may receive the sacrament of Holy Communion.

September 1st is the beginning of the Ecclesiastical year in the Orthodox Church.

To the present day, the Church has always celebrated the beginning of the New Year on September 1. This was the custom in Constantinople until its fall in 1453 and in Russia until the reign of Peter I. September 1 is still festively celebrated as the New Year at the Patriarchate of Constantinople; among the Jews also the New Year, although reckoned according to a moveable calendar, usually falls in September.

Elevation of the Cross, September 14th. . . Saint Helen, the mother of Saint Constantine the Great, when she was already advanced in years, undertook, in her great piety, the hardships of a journey to Jerusalem in search of the cross, about the year 325. A temple to Aphrodite had been raised up by the Emperor Hadrian upon Golgotha, to defile and cover with oblivion the place where the saving Passion had been suffered. The venerable Helen had the statue of Aphrodite destroyed, and the earth removed, revealing the Tomb of our Lord, and three crosses. Of these, it was believed that one must be that of our Lord, the other two of the thieves crucified with Him; but Saint Helen was at a loss which one might be the Wood of our salvation. At the inspiration of Saint Macarius, Archbishop of Jerusalem, a lady of Jerusalem, who was already at the point of death from a certain disease, was brought to touch the crosses, and as soon as she came near to the Cross of our Lord, she was made perfectly whole. Consequently, the precious Cross was lifted on high by Archbishop Macarius of Jerusalem; as he stood on the ambo, and when the people beheld it, they cried out, "Lord have mercy." It should be noted that after its discovery, a portion of the

venerable Cross was taken to Constantinople as a blessing. The rest was left in Jerusalem in the magnificent church built by Saint Helen, until the year 614. At that time, the Persians plundered Palestine and took the Cross to their own country (see Jan. 22, Saint Anastasius the Persian). Late, in the year 628, Emperor Heraclius set out on a military campaign, retrieved the Cross, and after bringing it to Constantinople, himself escorted it back to Jerusalem, where he restored it to its place.

Community Christmas Card 2017 . . . Chrisanthi Beach is in charge of the Christmas card this year. We encourage you to be part of the community Christmas card. Please provide a donation to Chrisanthi to have your name included on the card. We do not specify an amount, but average donations are between \$10-20. Please get your donations done early. The deadline is December 3.

Making Prosfora, September 3 . . . Elizabeth Vamvakas will be instructing anyone interested in learning how to make prosfora this Sunday, Sep 3, after fellowship hour and religious education. Please join us.

Prayer Service/Study Group, Wednesday, September 6 & 20 . . . We will be starting up a Lay Prayer Service at 5:30 pm, followed by our new book study at 6:00 pm led by Nancy Malek. All are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Ladies of the Agape Sunday September 10 Luncheon . . . The Ladies of the Agape will be serving their monthly fundraiser luncheon on Sunday Sept. 10 after Divine Liturgy. The donation will be a minimum of \$5.00. The proceeds will go to our Cry Room renovation fund. A reminder to members of the group: bring in your favorite breakfast dish in support of the luncheon.

International Christmas Festival & Pastry Sale, December 9 . . . all parishioners will need to help their church for the International Christmas Festival & Pastry Sale this coming December 9. Please do not plan any vacations for this date, and mark your calendar for this event. Youth can bring their friends to help out, as in the past, they have been a tremendous help in making our festival successful.

This year's festival has many changes: The event will run from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. It will not start at 9:00 am as in the past. Nick Trivelas will be playing music at our festival this year. We will have the Victory Belles from the National WWII Museum in NOLA do three performances. We have Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, and German dancers perform folk dances. Traditional foods will be provided from 13 countries and pastries from some of the countries. A complete menu will be available by the end of September. For further information contact George or Sheila Yurchak at georgeyurchak@yahoo.com or 228-831-5820.

Fellowship Hour After Liturgy . . . Holy Trinity needs every parishioner to sign up and host a fellowship hour after Sunday Liturgy. Everyone should be proud to host a fellowship hour. Show your culinary creativity. Bring your favorite ethnic foods. Hosting

a fellowship hour makes everyone more a part of the church community. Thanks to everyone who has stepped up to host fellowship for the next month, but we still need volunteers in the future.

Religious Education

Fr Dean and Fr Ezekiel will continue their weekly religious education classes after Fellowship Hour. **ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.**

Religious Needs

Clergy are available for talk, confession, pastoral counseling, spiritual care, individual prayer. Tours of our church can be arranged. If you want to set up an appointment, please contact George Yurchak – 228-831-5820 or georgeyurchak@yahoo.com.

Many thanks to all who helped and volunteered their time and effort at Holy Trinity. It is hard work but spiritually rewarding. It shows us how we can all come together as an Orthodox Family and grow spiritually by giving of ourselves.

September Birthdays . . . Happy Birthday to Gus Ravanos-Sep 5, Eleni Michailo-Sep 7, Ruthie Beach & Maria Koskan-Sep 11, Melissa Schwartz-Sep 12, Fr. Ezekiel-Sep 13, Adrianna Vaporis-Sep 15, Helen Cardaciotto-Sep 17, Anastasia Lawson-Sep 19, Presvytera Joanie Mayenick-Sep 20, George Contas-Sep 27, and Eva Magiros-Sep 30. If we missed your birthday it means we don't have your info. Let us know. We love to recognize you on this wonderful day.

Happy Anniversary . . . If you have a September anniversary, please let us know. May God grant you many for more years together.

Get Well . . . Prayers and blessings to Fr Jim Karagas, Karen Bridges, Elizabeth Vamvakas, Alan Koskan, Photine and Angelo Hagicostas, George Vaporis, Lela Roberts, Melissa Schwartz, Nikki Arnold, Virginia Freeman, and Tom Portaritis, Fr Dean or Fr Ezekiel will conduct home visitations and give communion to those parishioners who are ill and can't be with us for Liturgy. Please contact a parish council member or the priest to make arrangements. If we missed someone please contact Nancy Malek at 228-265-1411. We want to pray as a community for those that may be too ill to be with us during church services.

Prayer Box. . . We have a prayer box in the Narthex. If there is anyone you wish a prayer said, place their name in the box, or contact Nancy Malek at 228-265-1411.

Ethnic Marketplace & Gift Corner

Please remember the Ethnic Marketplace and Gift Corner for your shopping needs. We provide these items as a service to our parishioners and mark up the price we pay by only 10%. This allows Holy Trinity a small margin of fundraising profit and allows our parishioners the convenience of shopping at church.

We have many ethnic items for sale. Included in the Marketplace are olive oil, halva, olives, jellies, pickled tomatoes, seaweed salad, candies, Greek cheeses and coffee,

etc. In the Gift Corner we have Greek tablecloths and aprons, icons, bracelets, Greek coffeepot & coffee, jewelry, Greek CDs, incense and charcoal, Russian nesting dolls, lacquered Russian products, Russian kitchen supplies, Greek T-shirts, etc.

Prioritize Sunday as the Anchor of Your Family's Week

The Divine Liturgy is the primary worship service in the life of the Orthodox Church. It is where the Body and Blood of Our Lord and Savior is offered for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Simply put, attending the Divine Liturgy as a family should be a priority. The Lord's Day isn't merely the day we go to church – it is the primary day we become the Church – the people of God. (By George Tsongranis)

Prayer for the Military

We thank Thee, O Lord our God for all the blessings which Thou givest us. Thou has kept us by Thy power in good health during the night and Thou has called us up from sleep, that we may enjoy the light of day and to marvel at Thy Majesty. We entreat Thee, O Lord, grant that we may live this day without danger or sin, but full of Thy mercies and Thy divine care. Protect my family and the families of my fellow-servicemen from all evil. Enlighten the peoples who conquer and torture other nations; make them repent and seek peace, leaving other lands and their dwellers free. Open Thou the eyes of our mind to see Thy divine law and incline our hearts ever to do Thy commandments, to the glory of Thine all-holy Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

O Thou Loving Father of us all, Who are here and everywhere, let Thy blessing be upon my loved ones at home. Keep them in Thy gracious care, protect them by Thy power and make their hearts glad in the thought of Thy nearness. Help them and help me to feel that however separated we are by distance, in Thee we are close to each other. Amen.

Chaplain W. Basil Stroyen, USAF, wrote to Metropolitan Leonty during the Korean War, asking him for a prayer which would be appropriate for use the servicemen under his care. This prayer was sent to him. He had copies made for distribution and for pasting in the Divine Liturgy book, which was used at Services. It was recited by the congregation following the Services and used by many of the servicemen in their daily lives. Just two years ago a copy was sent to him a serviceman, who had kept it in his wallet since 1955. (Source: The Orthodox Herald, May 2003)

STEWARDSHIP

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE FOR 2017

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is grateful for every donation received throughout the year. Your generous support enables Holy Trinity to spread the teaching of Our Lord Jesus Christ, serve regular Divine Liturgies and Sacraments and provide spiritual nourishment to our faithful, their families and those in need. Your pledge of support is a sign of your heartfelt participation in the life of our parish family and it plays a vital role enabling us to meet our financial responsibilities.

We pray that everybody who attends Holy Trinity and cares for its financial security will make a pledge for 2017. If you haven't received a pledge form you can download it from www/holytrinitybiloxi.org website, under Stewardship or pick up a hard copy either at the candle counter or from any Parish Council member. You need to make a pledge as soon as possible. Pledge forms will be available at church. Please

take a few minutes to fill out the pledge form and submit it to Craig Henderson (Stewardship Chairman), George Yurchak (President, Parish Council) or Rodney Bridges (Treasurer, Parish Council).

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH STEWARDS FOR 2017

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the 2017 Stewardship Program as of August 31. Holy Trinity has received pledges totaling \$24,020 from the following parishioners:

Chrisanthi Beach
Mike Bodisch
Rodney & Karen Bridges
Steve & CoCo Collins
George Contas
John Demetrakopoulos
Hugh & Brandi Donohoe
Julia Foskey
Norman Foskey
Virginia Freeman
Stamatina Giallourakis
Natalya Grey

Angelo & Photine Hagicostas
Craig & Karen Henderson
Cristian & Meri Ionescu
Mihail Kastrinos
Karen Komenko
Chrisie Soula Kiessling
Karen Kohl
John & Cornelia Koniditsiotis
Irene & Alan Koskan
Al & Kathy Lawson
Eva Magiros
Shelby McCloud

Nataliya Petrovska
Tom & Pat Portaritis
Nancy & Carl Malek
Melissa Schwartz
Angelos & Elizabeth Vamvakas
Akaterina Vamvakas
George Vaporis
Eleni Vganges
Spiro Vganges
Dimitrios Virvilis
George & Sheila Yurchak

Church Directory

Liturgical Services

Sundays – Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Church Clergy

Rev. Fr. Dean Gigicos
Rev. Fr. Ezekiel Vieages

Chanters – Angelos Vamvakas, Rodney Bridges,
Hugh Donohoe, Luke Pappas, Ryan Waldrop

2017 Parish Council

President – George Yurchak
Vice President – Craig Henderson
Treasurer – Rodney Bridges
Secretary – Jerry Strickland
Member – Cristian Ionescu

Librarian Hugh Donohoe, Brandi Donohoe

Historian Brandi Donohoe, Akaterina Vamvakas

Maintenance and Repair

Chair – Craig Henderson

50 Anniversary Celebration

Commemorative Album - Brandi Donohoe

Youth Education & Culture Committee

Chair – George Yurchak

Greek Culture Chair – George Yurchak

Ukrainian Culture Chair – Nataliya Petrovska

Romanian Culture Chair – Meri Ionescu

Georgian Culture Chair – Medea Ghurtskaia

Moldovan Culture Chair – Alexandru Tulburi

Russian Culture Chair – Anna Slepova

Kazakhstan Culture Chair - Natalya Gray

Belarousian Culture Chair – Darya Borst

Staff

Kiosk – George Yurchak

Office Administrator – Sheila Yurchak, Karen Henderson

Publications Editor – Sheila Yurchak

Cleaning – Chrisanthi Beach, Fanoula Christidis, Virginia Freeman,
Akaterina Vamvakas,

Parish Ministries

Youth Ministries – George Yurchak

Youth Group Chair – Joseph Lawson, Korina Bodisch

Feed the Hungry – Jerry Strickland, Virginia Freeman, Nancy Malek

Sunday School – Akaterina Vamvakas

Ladies of the Agape Chair – Nancy Malek

Stewardship Chair – Craig Henderson

Reader – Rodney Bridges, John Collins, CoCo Collins

Adult Education – George Yurchak

Prayer/Study Group – Nancy Malek

Outreach – Karen Weinberg, Akaterina Vamvakas

Technology – Karen Kohl, Spiro Vganges

Web Master – Steve Collins

Pastoral Assistant – Craig Henderson, Caleb Bridges

Altar Boys – Joseph Lawson

Society of Wisdom – George Vaporis

Strategic Planning – Chair, CoCo Collins

