



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
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January 2022 Bulletin



Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

As we begin this civil New Year, may we celebrate this Sunday's Great Feast, and all its miracles and blessings, as faithful Orthodox Christians: prepared to follow our Incarnate Lord and Savior on the true path of submission to God with humble and contrite hearts—both this year, and all the days of our lives. Καλή Χρονία!
+ALEXIOS Metropolitan of Atlanta



From Father Paisius

Christ is Baptized! In the Jordan! Happy New Year!

Glory to Jesus Christ and Greetings to the faithful of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Parish Community of Biloxi. Here we are entering into the New Year of 2022 with the Blessing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are entering a time that is brand new and a time where we have never been. Yet as we begin this journey into the New Year, we do so with complete and abiding trust and faith that our God continues to walk with us. In this year of 2022, He will guide us as we endeavor to continue living out our Faith as His Faithful disciples. We endeavor to continue to grow in our Faith as both individuals and as a parish community and in being faithful to our calling to teach and share the eternal message of the Gospel to those in our community who are in need of the salvific message of Grace and Salvation through Jesus Christ.

As we end the year of 2021 and begin the coming year of 2022, let us examine our lives and see where we can grow in our Faith. Let us acknowledge the times in the past we have perhaps not lived up fully to our calling as Disciples of our Lord. Let us use those times as an opportunity to resolve to more zealously grow spiritually and more Christ-like. Above all let us endeavor to truly love out our Faith in both word and deed, let our individual and corporate lives be a shining example of living a life of true Christian virtue. Let our Faith and our walk truly be connected so that others may see Christ shining in and through us.

Our Holy Church calls our attention to how the story of the Gospel and the hallmarks of our Faith are explained to us through the celebrations and commemorations of our community liturgical life in the month of January. Let us truly allow our liturgical life to teach us the true meaning of our Faith.

In January we see first and foremost the great and holy celebration of the Feast of Epiphany or Theophany. In this Feast we celebrate the Holy Baptism of our Lord, and through it the baptism and sanctification of all creation. In this Feast, we see the Holy

Trinity revealed: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit present and revealed as our Lord accepts baptism for our Salvation. This is a time of renewal and sanctification for us all.

As we celebrate this Great Feast, we are confronted with the Sanctification of God in every aspect of our lives. We see this through the Great Sanctification of Water in Church on Epiphany Eve, the 2nd Great Sanctification of Water at an outdoor body of water, and also in the Sanctification of our Homes in the weeks following Epiphany. Let us enter fully into the sanctifying actions of this Feast, let us come to Church for the Blessing of Water and let us experience the Sanctification of our Homes in the Blessing of our Homes. Let each of us make every effort to not only receive the blessing of the new blessed water in Church but also to invite our priest to come and sanctify our homes as well.

As we begin this New Year and as we celebrate Holy Epiphany/ Theophany and the other liturgical celebrations of January, may God truly shower His blessings upon us. Let us grow together through His blessing and allow Him to truly be present in our lives every day. May God bless us all!

Our Holy Orthodox Christian Church has a beautiful tradition of having the priest come to bless our home with the Holy Water of Epiphany thereby bringing Christ and His blessings into our home for the New Year. Homes East of the church will be blessed on January 23rd. Homes West of the church will be blessed on January 30th. To have your home blessed, give your name, address and phone number to one of the Parish Council members. Prepare your home to be blessed by placing a bowl of water, an icon and a candle on a table. Fr. Paisius will offer special prayers for your family and bless all the rooms of your home with the Holy Water of Epiphany.

Schedule of Services

Saturday, January 1, Circumcision of Christ/ Feast of Saint Basil the Great, Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil 10 am
Great Vespers 5 pm

Sunday, January 2, Sunday before Epiphany/ Saint Seraphim of Sarov, Orthros 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am

Wednesday, January 5, Epiphany Eve
Royal Hours 9:30 am
Vespers Liturgy of Saint Basil and Great Sanctification of Water 11 am
Great Compline with Artoklasia 6 pm

Thursday, January 6, Feast of Epiphany/Theophany, Orthros 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am
Great Compline with Artoklasia for Julian Calendar Nativity 6 pm

Friday, January 7, Julian Calendar Nativity of Christ, Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am

Saturday, January 8, Outdoor Blessing of Water 10 am at Ocean Springs Harbor
Great Vespers 5 pm

Sunday, January 9, Sunday after Epiphany,
Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am
Baby Shower for Bassem and Maria Vamvakas

Monday, January 10, Saint Gregory of Nyssa,
Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am

Wednesday, January 13, Daily Vespers and Talk 6 pm

Thursday, January 14, Apodosis/Leavetaking of Epiphany, Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
10 am

Saturday, January 15, Great Vespers 5 pm

Sunday, January 16, 12th Sunday of Saint Luke/ The Chains of Saint Peter,
Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am

Monday, January 17, Saint Anthony the Great of Egypt,
Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am

Wednesday, January 19, Saint Macarios the Great/ Saint Mark of Ephesus,
Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am
Great Compline with Artoklasia for Julian Calendar Epiphany 6 pm

Thursday, January 20, Julian Calendar Epiphany
Orthros 9: 30 am Divine Liturgy with Great Blessing of Water 10 am

Friday, January 21, Saint Maximus the Confessor, Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10am

Saturday, January 22, Great Vespers 5 pm

Sunday, January 23, 14th Sunday of Saint Luke, Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am.

Friday, January 28, Saint Ephraim the Syrian and Saint Isaac the Syrian, Orthros 9:30 am
Divine Liturgy 10 am

Saturday, January 29, Great Vespers with Artoklasia 5 pm

Sunday, January 30, Feast of The Three Holy Hierarchs,
Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10 am

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

2021 – A Year of Faith by George Yurchak . . . Holy Trinity still stands in faith as a
“Beacon of Orthodoxy” for the Mississippi Gulf Coast. As we look back over the past
year, we have much to be thankful for. It was a year of challenge, especially with

COVID, and joy. God worked in mysterious ways when he brought Fr Paisius McGrath to the Mississippi Gulf Coast and he became Holy Trinity's full time priest.

As our parish moves forward we are no longer strictly Greek. We continue to welcome new members from a wide range of geographic and ethnic backgrounds, including a growing number of new converts to Orthodoxy. Today is God's time for us . . . and this is God's place for us. Holy Trinity will live on!

Your Parish Council and Ladies of the Agape worked hard, but you worked harder to make it happen.

Donna Collins and Caleb Bridges in 2019, and Akaterina Vamvakes and Cristian Ionescu in 2020, were honored with the Archangel Michael Award from His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios. The medals were sent to Holy Trinity where they were presented to the honorees, followed by a Luncheon in their honor.

We had the most successful International Christmas Pastry Sale with pastries from Greece, Russia, Ukraine and Hungary. Our pastries have become well known up and down the Mississippi Gulf Coast these past 50 years and the people look forward to getting them for Christmas. Many were disappointed that we were unable to have our International Christmas Festival which they always look forward to.

We continued with the Slavic tradition of Blessing Easter Baskets and had a wonderful Holy Week with the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and a very well attended Agape Feast. We honored Holy Trinity's veterans who give and gave so much through service to our country.

We celebrated International Women's Day and International Men's Day at Holy Trinity with a special luncheon and gifts

Holy Trinity again participated in the Gulf Coast Historical Society's Cultural Exposition with Greek and Ukrainian dancing, as well as playing the Scottish bagpipes and drum. Also, Holy Trinity helped with the Christmas and Mother's Day Concerts at Mary O'Keefe Cultural Center put on by Nataliya Molsbee, which also featured some of our parishioners.

Holy Trinity continued to support the International Seamen Center for the Russian/Ukrainian seamen when their ship came into Gulfport Harbor. Holy Trinity put in an Orthodox prayer section in the Chapel in the Seaman Center with a stained glass window of St Nicholas, as well as Russian, Ukrainian, Greek and English Liturgy books, Holy Water, and icons.

We installed a bell tower, built by Seth Willison, on the church grounds in time for our Holy Week Services. The new bell replaced the bell tower in the dome that had to be removed. The new bell rings throughout the year.

We continued to be involved in a number of charities. We were involved with Focus North America in the school backpack program where we provided 24 backpacks filled with school supplies, to the Biloxi School System for disadvantaged school children. We continued with Feeding the Hungry by giving monetary, food donations and "Bags of Love" to those in need.

We stay involved with the Mississippi Kids-Make-A-Wish Program, whose kids have terminal illnesses and want a special wish fulfilled. We took collections for Souper Bowl Sunday and all during the month of July which is Ice Cream Month (ice cream was

provided every Sunday during Fellowship and donations were collected if you ate ice cream). All donations were provided to Kids-Make-A-Wish. We also donated four Christmas Trees to four families with kids making their wish come true. We contributed to "Give Kids The World" charity which provides vacations to Disney World to terminally ill children and their families. We contributed to the Diakonia Retreat Center as part of the Guardian Angel Program.

When Hurricane Ida devastated the east coast we answered the call for Hurricane Relief and took collections to support our sister churches and families in need. We also helped when Greece was devastated by fires.

ChoRuss Vocal Ensemble from St Petersburg Russia was hosted and performed at Holy Trinity with songs sung at Orthodox Church services and Russian folk songs. This was their second appearance in Mississippi and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Holy Trinity is dedicated to the spirituality, culture, art, music and food of the different ethnic cultures that make up the "Orthodox" faith at Holy Trinity: Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Belarusian, Kazakhstani, Georgian, Moldovan, Uzbekistani, Czech Republic, those with Hungarian and German backgrounds, as well as the many converts to Orthodoxy.

Now we look forward to 2022 and building upon our accomplishments with a sense of anticipation, contemplation of what may come, setting of goals, and prayer for health and happiness in the community. May we share in the joy of this season of light and life, expecting the great and abundant blessings of God in the coming year. Let us offer our worship and prayers, as we serve one another and all of the people, in the grace and power of Jesus Christ Our Lord. To start the year we are blessed to celebrate two beautiful and holy feasts of the Church – the Feasts of St Basil and Theophany.

Feast of St Basil - January 1st . . . Saint Basil was born into a wealthy Christian family in Caesarea Cappadocia, Asia Minor, in 330 AD. He was one of six children, all of whom became saints. He visited monastic centers and he himself founded a monastic community where he lived with other monks for about five years. He wrote many rules and guidelines for monastics so that all Eastern monasticism owes something to his spirit. He greatly cared for the poor and suffering and built an estate which included houses for travelers, a church, a hospital and a hospice all with a complete staff. A famine struck the area and sent many poor and starving into his care; their pain grieved him and he labored to feed them with his own hands. He wrote, "If you are reduced to your last loaf of bread and a beggar appears at your door then take the loaf and lift your hands to heaven and say, O Lord, I have but this one loaf. Hunger lies in wait for me but I revere Your commandments more than all other things". If you should say this, then the bread you gave in your poverty will be changed for an abundant harvest. Basil was aware of his own shortcomings and dispirited by disappointments in his life of struggles, wrote: "For my sins, I seem to fall in everything". Nevertheless, he was far from a failure. His labors, including his writings On the Holy Spirit greatly contributed to the final triumph of Nicene orthodoxy at the second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in 381. He had a great effect on the

formulation of monasticism, the Liturgy of Saint Basil is largely his own work, celebrated ten times during the liturgical year and author of the Anaphora (the central portion of the Divine Liturgy). We also celebrate St Basil with St Gregory the Great and St John Chrysostom on the Feast of the Three Great Hierarchs on January 30th.

Feast of Theophany - January 6th . . . Make ready, O Zebulon and prepare thyself, Nephthali. River Jordan, stop flowing and leap for joy at the Lord's coming for Baptism. Rejoice, O Adam, with our first mother; hide not yourself as in Paradise of old. For seeing us naked He has appeared, to clothe us with our first garment. Christ has appeared, to renew the whole of creation. Theophany means the "Manifestation of God." Jesus' Baptism by St. John the Forerunner in the Jordan was the beginning of His public ministry. All three Persons of the Trinity were shown forth at one time and place: the Father testified from on high to the divine Sonship of Jesus; the Son received His Father's testimony; the Holy Spirit was seen in the form of a dove descending from the Father and resting upon the Son. Personification of the Sea and the Jordan are seen in the water, recalling the words of Psalm 113: "The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back." On the left, we see the olive tree with the branch cut off and the ax laying across it. This signifies that this is the divide between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and we are grafted into spiritual Israel, the Church, by Baptism. See the poster at the end of this bulletin for more on the Feast of Theophany. Other January Feasts . . . Other major feasts during January include: Synaxis of St John the Forerunner, January 7th; St Anthony the Great, January 17th; Euthymios the Great, January 20th, St Gregory the Theologian, January 25th and the Three Hierarchs, January 30th.

Blessing of Water and Homes . . . January 6 is Holy Theophany where we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord. The difference between His Baptism and our baptism is that when we are baptized, we are changed. When Jesus was baptized, He changed the water. See Schedule of Services for Blessing of the Water. Please bring a small container. If you don't have one, we will make them available in the church. With the Feast of Theophany begins a season for the Blessing of Homes. There are two goals in this: 1) To recognize the Baptism of our Lord and our own as well and 2) To pray for God's blessing on our homes and our families. God made our bodies as well as our souls and is concerned with the whole; where we eat, where we sleep, what we drive, our pets – May God bring his blessing to it all. Blessings will take place on:

- Sunday, January 23, homes East of Gulfport by Fr Paisius.
- Sunday, January 30, homes West of our church by Fr Paisius.

If you would like your home blessed, contact Fr Paisius at 724-841-9016 or frpaisius@zoominternet.net or Council President George Yurchak at 228-860-3376 or georgeyurchak@yahoo.com

January 9, Baby Shower for Bassem and Maria Vamvakas . . . There will be a baby shower for Bassem and Maria Vamvakas on January 9 after Fellowship and cutting of

the Vasilopita. They are registered at Walmart if you want to get a gift. Click on Registration under name Maria Zeidan, state MS and you will see her page; or you can just get a gift of your choice.

Redo of Parish Council Election January 16 . . . Do to several problems with the December 19 election, it has been rescheduled for January 16. Please make sure your Stewardship Pledge is up to date as of December 31 in order to vote. A list of all those authorized to vote will be provided to Fr Paisius and the Election Committee. Fr Paisius will start the election process on that day. George Yurchak, Dr Eva Magiros, Maria Loukatos and George Vaporis are running for election to replace Parish Council members whose terms ended December 31, 2021. You will need to vote for three people.

January 16, Vasilopita . . . We will have the Greek tradition of cutting the Vasilopita Bread on January 16 after Liturgy. On this day we will also continue the tradition of taking a collection for St Basil's Academy, the orphanage maintained by the Archdiocese in upstate New York.

General Assembly Meeting, Sunday February 2. . . At the General Assembly we will bring everyone up to date on business from 2021 and a look ahead into activities in 2022. Treasurer's report will also be provided along with a Stewardship update.

2022 Church Calendars . . . The 2022 Church Calendars are available in the Church Narthex. They were donated by Donna Collins, Maria Loukatos and George Contas.

January Birthdays . . . Happy Birthday to Leonardo Aron-3, Demetri Vlahos-10, Vona Wawryszcuk-12, Tatianna LaSalle-18, Hayley Spoon-19, Linda Peters-22, Natalie Kirkby-24, Niki Arnold-25, Elaine Stevens-26, Sheila Yurchak-30, Cyril Hugh Donohue-31. If we don't have your birthday please contact Sheila Yurchak at 228-297-0526.

Anniversaries for January. . . Brandi and Hugh Donohue will celebrate their 8th on January 10.

Church Thanks . . . Thanks to all those who have given their time and talents in helping out at Holy Trinity throughout the year. Your time and help contributes significantly in welcoming new parishioners, keeping up the church/grounds and keeping the church available for all Orthodox to attend. Thanks again to those generous parishioners who have brought their special food items for our after Liturgy social hour. Many thanks to Eleni Vganges, for making the Prosforo throughout the year. HUUUGE thanks to all those who gave their time and talent to the 2021 International Christmas Pastry Sale in helping make this event a very successful fund raiser. Thanks to George & Sheila Yurchak for putting together our Bulletin each month.

Religious Needs . . . Clergy are available for talk, confession, pastoral counseling, spiritual care, individual prayer. Please contact Fr Paisius at frpaisius@zoominternet.net or 724-841-9016. Tours of our church can be arranged. If you want to set up an appointment, please contact George Yurchak – 228-860-3376 or georgeyurchak@yahoo.com.

Get Well . . . Prayers and blessings to Fr Jim Karagas, Karen Bridges, Elizabeth and Akaterina Vamvakas, Photine and Angelo Hagicostas, George Vaporis, Mitch & Lela Roberts and Nikki Arnold. Fr Paisius 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.

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 have many ethnic items for sale. Included in the Marketplace are olive oil, halva, olives, jellies, pickled tomatoes, 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 dolls, 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)

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE FOR 2022

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 2022. If you haven't received a pledge form you can download it from [www//holytrinitybiloxi.org](http://www/holytrinitybiloxi.org) website, under Stewardship or pick up a hard copy either at the candle counter or from any Parish Council member. We need to collect all pledge forms prior to January 9. 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), Donna Collins (VP Parish Council) or RodneyBridges (Treasurer, Parish Council).

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH STEWARDS FOR 2021

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the 2021 Stewardship Program as of December 30, 2021. Holy Trinity has received pledges from 43 parishioners, totaling \$43,995 from the following:

Chrisanthi Beach
Melissa & Caleb Bridges
Rodney & Karen Bridges
Robert Brouillette III
John & Donna Collins
Steve & CoCo Collins
Nicoletta Conner
George Contas
John Demetrakopoulos
Virginia Freeman
Angelo & Photine Hagicostas

Craig & Karen Henderson
Cristian & Meri Ionescu
Katherine Kaletto
Mihail Kastrinos
John & Cornelia Koniditsiotis
Irene Koskan
Howard Lassalle
George & Christina Loukatos
Maria & Peter Loukatos
Eva Magiros
Stratos Mandas

George & Janie Mavromahalais
Louis & Linda Peters
Melissa Schwartz
Leah Summers
Angelos & Elizabeth Vamvakas
Katerina Vamvakas
George Vaporis
Eleni Vganges
Spiro Vganges
Kosta Vlahos
George & Sheila Yurchak

Church Directory

Church Clergy

Rev. Fr. Paisius

Chanters – Lead, Angelos Vamvakas,
Melissa Bridges, Rodney Bridges, ,
CoCo Collins, Akaterina Vamvakas

2021 Parish Council

President – George Yurchak
Vice President – Donna Collins
Treasurer – Rodney Bridges
Secretary – Craig Henderson
Member at Large – Evie Magiros

Librarian Hugh Donohoe, Brandi Donohoe

Historian Brandi Donohoe, Akaterina Vamvakas

Facilities

Chair – Craig Henderson, Cristian Ionescu

Education & Culture Committees

Chair – George Yurchak

Greek Culture Chair – Maria Loukatos

Ukrainian Culture Chair – Natalie Kirkby

Romanian Culture Chair – Meri Ionescu

Moldovan Culture Chair – Alexandru Tulburi

Russian Culture Chair – George Yurchak

Kazakhstan Culture Chair - Natalya Gray

Society of Wisdom – George Vaporis
Strategic Planning – Chair, CoCo Collins
Greek Dance Instruction – Steve & CoCo Collins
Art Coordinator – Helena Docherty
Church Tours – John Collins

Staff

Kiosk – George Yurchak
Publications Editor – Sheila Hemenway-Yurchak
Cleaning – Chrisanthi Beach, Fanoula Christidis,
Melissa Schwartz, Mihail Kastrinos, & Akaterina Vamvakas,

Parish Ministries

Feed the Hungry – Melissa Bridges
Ladies of the Agape Chair – Meri Ionescu
Stewardship Chair – Craig Henderson
Reader – Rodney Bridges, John Collins, CoCo Collins
Sunday School – Akaterina Vamvakas
Adult Education – Fr Paisius
Outreach – George Yurchak, Akaterina Vamvakas
Web Master – Steve Collins
Pastoral Assistant – Craig Henderson, Caleb Bridges, Mihail
Kastrinos, Jeffrey

*We are no longer just Greek Orthodox,
Russian Orthodox, or Romanian Orthodox.
We are all one family
united through our Orthodox faith.*



*His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios
at the occasion of Holy Trinity's 50th Anniversary*