



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
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February 2019 Newsletter



A Word from our Council President, George Yurchak

This month we will highlight Caleb Bridges "Journey to Orthodoxy" Holy Trinity held a special Fellowship Luncheon in honor of Malama Thrasivoulou's 99th birthday, along with Fr Dean for his birthday. Some parishioners participated in the 1st Annual Croatian Festival in Belle Chasse Louisiana and had a great time. At the invitation of the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH), Holy Trinity showcased its ethnic cultures that we bring to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. "Holy Trinity also recognized all its married couples on "World Marriage Day" with a special luncheon. Ladies of Agape deonated hand bags to the Gulf Coast Women Center for Non-Violence. And finally, many of our parishioners enjoyed Mardi Gras celebrations.

Caleb Bridges, My "Journey to Orthodoxy"

Caleb converted to the Orthodox faith 8 years ago. That single decision has been the greatest and most life transforming decision he has ever made. And while he uses the word "decision", it was completely the leading of Christ that brought him home to Orthodoxy. After many years as a Protestant, Caleb found within his heart a longing. A longing for truth, for depth, for beauty, for participation and for one more thing that he still couldn't quite grasp or figure out at the time. That thing was Holy Communion. His conversion was slow (he wasn't even fully aware it was happening). His heart was changing; then his thoughts and convictions and lastly his devotion and commitment. Slowly but surely Caleb found exactly what his heart has been craving all along. And since that

beautiful Lazarus Saturday, he has never second guessed that decision for one minute! Thank God for His Church!



Malama Thrasivoulou Celebrates Her 99th Birthday

Holy Trinity helped Malama Thrasivoulou celebrate her 99th birthday, along with Fr Dean's birthday. Malama had a beautiful Birthday Luncheon after Divine Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. Malama is such a beautiful person in everything she does. She comes to all activities, whether it is baking pastries for the International Christmas Festival, supporting our ethnic groups as they perform at public schools, the Armed Forces Retirement Home, etc. She is always there for Holy Trinity and never misses a Divine Liturgy. Malama always has that



beautiful smile. Holy Trinity also helped Fr Dean celebrate his birthday also. Two great people celebrated their birthdays on that one Sunday. Many parishioners attended this special celebration.



Croatian Festival in Belle Chasse

Sheila & George Yurchak and CoCo & Steve Collins attended the 1st Annual Croatian Festival in Belle Chasse Louisiana. The Croatian food, wines and beer, music and dancing was great. Polka music played throughout the festival and we all loved to polka. The band and singers came from Croatia and the Croatian dancers were local. Can't wait to next year.



Cultural Day at Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH).

Holy Trinity was once again invited to come and perform at the AFRH like we do every year. The residents love to see our Greek and Ukrainian dancing and see our ethnic displays. The AFRH asked if we could do more this year with more culture and we did. Steve Collins and Eyler Coates played the Scottish and Irish bagpipes, Eyler played the harp. Our talented Russian singer/performer Tamara Manley won the hearts of the AFRH residents with her song and dance. In addition to our Russian, Greek and Romanian display tables we also provided Ukrainian, Moldovan, Kazakhstani, Uzbekistani, Georgian and Armenian display tables. Our own Gulf Coast Hellenic Dancers (Steve Collins, Soula Kiessling, Chisanthe Beach, Maria Loukatos and Kristen Beddoe) performed 3 beautiful Greek dances. George Yurchak and Kristen Beddoe (who learned the Ukrainian dance 10 minutes before performing as a stand-in for Sheila Yurchak who was sick) performed a beautiful Ukrainian polka. They invited us to come back again next year. Holy Trinity always tries to help out our veterans who love to come to all events at Holy Trinity.





Gulf Coast Women's Center for Non-Violence

Ladies of the Agape donated new hand bags filled with toiletries and other items to the Gulf Coast Women's Center for Non-Violence. Gracie from the Center came to Holy Trinity and to pick up the handbags. She was grateful to our Ladies of Agape for the donations. Shown with Gracie are Meri Ionescu and Soula Kiessling.



Holy Trinity Honors Married Couples on World Marriage Day

Holy Trinity had a beautiful luncheon for all our married couples in recognition of World Marriage Day, which honors the husband and wife as the foundation of the family, the basic unit of society; saluting the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice and joy in daily married life. Craig & Karen Henderson and George & Sheila attended a beautiful dinner and dance held in celebration of World Marriage Day.



Mardi Gras Celebration

Many of our parishioners enjoyed the Mardi Gras celebrations that were ongoing in February on the Gulf Coast and in New Orleans.

