



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Metropolis of Atlanta

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Christ is Risen!

May 2019 Newsletter

Attached is Holy Trinity's May 2019 Newsletter dedicated to motherhood. Please enjoy.



A Word from our Council President, George Yurchak

We have had plenty happening during the month of May at Holy Trinity. We will have a special dedication to Mother's Day and the mothers of Holy Trinity. A few of our parishioners took the time and wrote a special tribute to their mother. We participated in the Gulf Coast Historical Society's Annual Event with our dancing, singing and bagpipe/harp playing. We had two Forty Day Blessings: Virillis and McKnight family. The "ChoRuss" Vocal Ensemble from St Petersburg Russia performed in a concert at Holy Trinity – their first in Mississippi and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Holy Trinity supported Nataliya Molsbee's Spring Awakening Concert at the Mary O'Keefe Cultural Center celebrating Mother's Day. Some of our

parishioners attended the Romanian and Serbian Festival in Potomac Maryland and the New Orleans Greek Festival. Helena Docherty, our Art Coordinator, is arranging an Art Exhibit at Gulfport's Galleria of Art to showcase the work of the many talented artists in our small parish for the Mississippi Gulf Coast. We say farewell to Margarita Lopova who will move on to the next chapter of her life in North Carolina. Make-A-Wish-Mississippi recognized Holy Trinity at an Appreciation Breakfast supporting their work granting wishes to children with critical illnesses. We wish Korina Bodisch well on her journey as she graduated from High School and starts her college at Iowa State in the fall. Helena Docherty wrote an article on Orthodoxy in her homeland of the Czech Republic. Finally we like to remember Memorial Day for the service to our country provided by those veterans who have passed away, and as Billy Ray Cyrus sang in his song "Some Gave All."

*The loveliest masterpiece of the
Heart of God is the heart of a Mother.
--St Therese of Lisieux*

Celebrating Mother's Day –Orthodox Weekly Bulletin

The past several decades have seen great changes in the status of women in our society. But we should begin by examining the impact that Christ made for women during the years of His life, and their continuing impact on His Church.

At the time of Our Lord, under Roman law, women were under perpetual guardianship; this means they had no legal authority over their own children, and husband exercised authority of life and death over them. She was more of a piece of property than a living soul and child of God.

In many parts of the world, even today, the status of women is far from what it should be. But Christ gave women a place of dignity. He accepted women to be disciples, followers of His. Women were among Paul's helpers in spreading the Gospel. We think of the three Mary's of the Scripture: first, the Holy Virgin, the first among women, the mother of God; then Mary Magdalene, our Lords' devoted follower; and Mary, the mother of two great apostles, James and John.

Jesus took the time, even when hungry and thirsty, to talk to the woman of Samaria. Although a despised race, Jesus spoke tenderly to her and taught her great spiritual truths. Think of the woman caught in adultery and condemned by the men of her time, myrrh-bearing women who ministered to Jesus in life and death. It is thanks to the influence of Christ that women have reached their status of today, and it is through the influence of His teachings that this enlightenment will continue in the future.

A woman does not become a mother in the full sense simply because she biologically produces a child. It is the woman who loves and cherishes, who nourishes and sacrifices, that deserve the honor of Mother's Day. Let us on this day, pray for our mothers, be they with us or with our Lord.

*A mother's happiness is like a
beacon, lighting up the future but
reflected also on the past in the
guise of fond memories.
--Honore de Balzac*

Mothers Day Tributes

Angelo Hagicostas on his mother Anna Hagicostas

She was small in size, but very big on discipline and religion. There were 5 of us, 3 boys and 2 girls. I was always getting hurt, and had two serious accidents, near death, and she always cared and nursed me back. She loved us all. One day she didn't pick me up from school, so I went on my own to get home, but I had to cross a large intersection, 4 lanes. Unfortunately I didn't see the laundry truck and I was struck down, I had a concussion/fracture and was in a coma, and survived. I was out of school for almost a year. She nursed me back to health and I never forgot her love for me. She was a strong caring woman. One day, my brother Peter made me a shoe shine box. So I started to shine shoes to make extra money. I was doing pretty well, so I brought mom some money. She was overwhelmed that I was doing so well, and pleased that I was trying to help and make her happy. I would buy her gifts to show appreciation of her. She always wanted fresh fish...she loved that.

Photine Vlahos Hagicostas on her mother Stratigo K. Vlahos

This lady was remarkable. She came to America from Greece, November of 1935, with my father, Nicholas. Papa had gone to Greece earlier that year, married Mama on March 25th. When they arrived at Ellis Island, they came to Biloxi. They liked it here because it reminded them of their homeland. Mama came here and delivered twins in February. The only words she knew were nurse and bed pan. She was involved with the community and family. After the twins, then came Demetri, Kosta and myself.



Mama called spelling words to me, and helped with homework with all of us. She was active with the PTA, and involved with our activities...be it band, baseball, honor roll, piano lessons, or Greek school classes. We had a teacher from New Orleans come to our house and teach us grammar and language. We had several Greek families on the coast, and their kids came over to take classes with us on Saturdays. During the month, mama would take all of us kids, by train, to go to church in New Orleans. Papa worked the late shift at our restaurant, Pastime Cafe, and wasn't able to go with us. We had family in New Orleans, and they'd meet us at the station. She would have us participate with Greek school plays/programs in New Orleans.

Our parents taught us how to folk dance, when papa would slip over for supper, rarely, but he did. Our religion was very important to them, and all of the

family. Mama would prepare the prosforo for the church services. Mama and Libby Marodis took turns in making it. Then Toula Contas took the preparation. Mama was one of the founding Ladies of Agapi. She was a strong person. In 1969, Hurricane Camille took our home and restaurant; Mama had had kidney stone surgery one month prior. She never gave up. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina took our home once again. Family and church were very important to her. Mama loved the faith, family, people and community. She supported all of us with our projects, education, political/judgeship and our becoming what we are today. Mama became an American citizen, and was so proud of it. She was a great mother.

Brandi Donohoe on her mother Pennie Maufray

I would like to take a moment to honor my mother, Pennie Maufray. She was born in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. She is the eldest child of Stephen Maufray, Sr. and Catherine Ladner Maufray. She has one brother and three sisters. She was raised in Long Beach, Mississippi and graduated from Long Beach High School. After graduation, she worked for General Electric at Stennis Space Center for ten years. Moving on from G.E., she worked for NASA at Stennis for 26 years and recently retired. She has two daughters, Brandi Donohoe and Sherri Robbins, as well as 4 grandchildren: Allison Ladner, Catherine Ladner (Case), Fort Robbins, and Mia Koedi Robbins. I would like to thank my mother for being the best anyone could ask.



Oleksandra Petrovska on her mother Nataliya Petrovska

I was very lucky that I was born in a family where there was both father and mother. My parents were teachers at the school for hearing-impaired children. My father was a Geography teacher and my mother was Russian language and literature teacher. My father was a very creative person and my mother was always very kind, understanding, tender and extremely patient. And you know, I could write a huge amount of my mother's excellent skills. For example, my mother has three higher education degrees, and she cooks incredibly delicious. But I think that her patience is her most important trait, because without patience love will be simply impossible. I got an incredible amount of love from my mother, and now I know that I very often was very wrong. But even when I was wrong, my mother always supported me and believed in me. I think that any person who has the ability to endure life's trials and go through life with love in their heart is a real person of light. And it's simple to understand, because this person lives to help those whom they love. Over the years, as I grow older, I understand that this gift only comes with a lot of zeal and hard work from oneself. But this is what everyone can do. Sure, it will not always go very smoothly, but one needs to continue working at it. In any case, there is no limit to perfection. And the true



reward from this result is really priceless for you and for all who are close to you. My mother is a true lover of life. God bless you, mom and everyone who is close to you. I love you so much!

Al Lawson on his mother, Shirlee Lawson

My mom was born in 1934 in the small town of Waldo, Arkansas by an emergency C-section. Both she and my grandmother barely survived the birth, so the doctor advised her to not have any more children. So my mom was an only child, always dreaming about having a large family. At 17 she eloped with my dad, who she had known since elementary school. Before she was 30 she had five children. And today she also has 17 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. She's only 4'11" - but she's the biggest woman I've ever known in love, wisdom and determination.



Cathy Lawson on her mother Shirley White Funk

So thankful for my mom. She grew up on a ranch in South Dakota. She and my dad met during WW II at the USO and married because they were great dancers together. She loved and joined the Orthodox Church six years before she died at 85. Her patroness was the Theotokos. She could do anything. She was an encyclopedia of knowledge (before Google). She was kind. A volunteer at church and in the community. She was relentlessly loving. She was faithful in her church and loved God. She knew how to sew, crochet and knit. She knew absolutely everything about animals, plants and rocks. She was a great writing editor. Mom was a fearless horsewoman - who would use her bullwhip to stun a rattlesnake and then jump off her horse to kill it with her spurs. She loved the beach. She played golf. She was a huge sports fan. She owned a successful business. She was just so many things you think a mom should be....except baking. But that's ok. She did everything else. Memory Eternal mom.



Louis Peters to My Mom, Alexandra Peters

Alexandra Peters was special. Her passions were her faith in God, her grandchildren, making new friends, and pursuing her desire to cook and entertain. She has a contagious smile, was always quoting some parable or “old Greek quote,” and continually had a new story to tell the grandchildren about her life on Skopelos, escaping to the mountains during the Nazi occupation, or how she acclimated to the new world of Clarksdale, MS. Her niece stated “Alexandra was a smart lady who got involved and made a mark wherever she dropped anchor.” She will be missed by those whose lives she touched in the United States as well as in Greece. May her memory be eternal.



George Yurchak to his mother Helen Yurchak



My mother brings special memories. She is like the treasure at the end of a rainbow, always giving, always caring. She gave me happiness, wisdom, a caring attitude, and the knowledge to build my life and vision to make me believe in and fulfill my dreams. Thank you for giving me the best things in life – your love, your care, your knowledge in how to cook, your love of gardening – all of which have shaped my life. You have provided me with a wonderful journey through life.



Nata Petrovska-Molsbee on her mother Nataliya Petrovska

My sister is an Artist and I am a Singer, that's all because of my mom. She is a unique and special lady. She always was interested in theater and art. Me and my sister got such a great degree because she worked so hard all her life. If in the future I would give at least half of what she gave to me to my children, I would be a great mom. She is my best friend and I love her so much. I came to Mississippi because of her and who knows what's going to happen in the future, I just want her to be happy, healthy and well and see a big smile on her face every day. She is so beautiful when she smiles.



Маргарита Лопарева to a very special mother Olga

First of all, I want to congratulate all mothers with this Great Mother's Day! It is a big day for every Mom, because it is hard to bring up children, and we should respect all mothers, who taking care, because it's one of the hardest "job".

This is my Mother! She was born in Moscow, And now she works as teacher for small children! She has her own program for developing children education. Also, she is a master of other things: she can embroider, knit in different ways, sew and cook. My Mother always supports me in difficult times, which is very important. We should love our life already for the fact that she gave us a Mother — so cheerful, sincere, kind and wise.



Karen Komenko to her mother Olga Komenko

My Mom, Olga Komenko, taught me to love God and always remain young at heart. Love you Mom.



Sheila Hemenway Yurchak to her mother Mary Hildebrand Hemenway

My mother was a beautiful, talented woman, and a gifted, creative thinker. She married my dad when she was only 16, and

had 3 children before she was 20. She was multi-talented and loved to design, sew, do crafts, dance, play the piano, and sing. Her mind was full of ideas that she translated into on-going projects, which she generously shared with family and friends. She was and is my creative inspiration. She encouraged me to be an artist, and I am. She told me to find a man who had spunk, and I did.

And to her Godmother, Eleni Vganges



Eleni became my Godmother on Palm Sunday 2013. She sponsored me during my chrismation into the Orthodox faith. Eleni is a wonderful lady – kind, generous, wise, and beautiful. She makes me smile with stories of her childhood in Greece. Eleni has prevailed over tragedy in her life yet she maintains a “Joie de Vivre” which she shares with everyone. I am thankful she is my Godmother because I love her with all my heart.

Mother’s Day Celebration

Holy Trinity honored all the mothers with a delicious luncheon of ham, potato salad, corn and a variety of desserts and drinks. The most senior mother, Eleni Vganges and the youngest mother, Betelhem, were honored and given a spring flower bouquet, while the rest of the women were also given roses. It was a great Mother’s Day for all who attended.





Holy Trinity performs for Gulf Coast Historical Society

Holy Trinity parishioners performed at the Gulf Coast Historical Society's Annual Event at the Biloxi Civic Center. George & Sheila Yurchak danced Ukrainian, Sheila Yurchak, Maria Loukatos and Chrysanthe Beach danced Greek and Ayler Coates played the Irish Harp and Scottish bagpipes. Tamara Manley sang Russian. We were a big hit for the people attending this event.



“ChoRuss” Vocal Ensemble in Concert at Holy Trinity

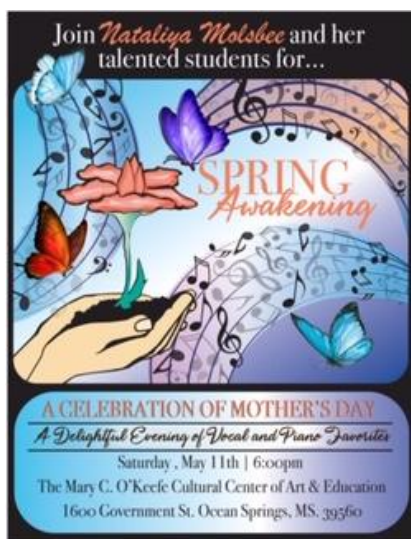
“ChoRuss” Vocal Ensemble, who came from St Petersburg Russia, performed at Holy Trinity with songs sung at Orthodox church services and Russian folk songs. This was their first ever appearance in Mississippi and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. They performed to a packed church who gave them a standing ovation and wants them to come back next year for a follow-on performance. They were interviewed on WLOX-TV and WXXV-TV came to Holy Trinity at 5:30 am to conduct a series of live interviews and filming of songs that aired throughout the morning to promote the evening concert.





Spring Awakening: A Celebration of Mother's Day

Holy Trinity helped promote Nataliya Molsbee and her Talented Students Spring Awakening Concert at the Mary O'Keefe Cultural Center. Sheila Yurchak was interviewed by Karen Abernathy on WLOX-TV and Sheila and George Yurchak, Tamara Manley and Helena Docherty came and helped out selling drinks and Greek pastries. Other parishioners came and gave support by attending this wonderful concert which was dedicated to all the mothers in our lives. Elena Shilova, one of our parishioners also sang in the concert. Marina Lucangeli's young daughter also performed in the concert.





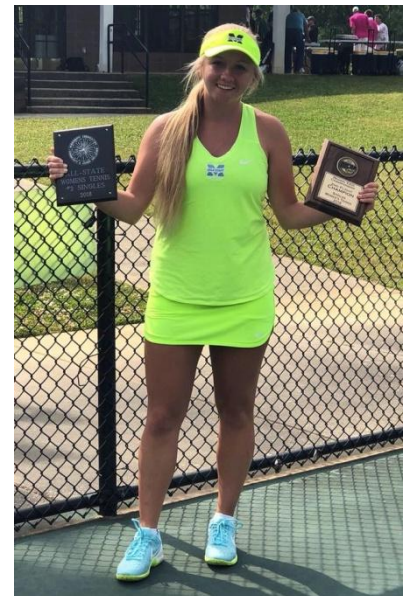
Romanian and Serbian Festivals

George and Sheila Yurchak travelled to visit his parents and sister in Arlington Virginia, and while there, had a chance to attend the Romanian and Serbian Festivals in Potomac Maryland. Great Romanian food, drink music and dance. While at the Romanian Festival we were told about the Serbian Festival close by so we decided to take it in also. Great entertainment.



Greek Festival in New Orleans

Sheila & George Yurchak, along with Jerry Strickland attended the New Orleans Greek Festival where we ran into fellow parishioners from Holy Trinity, Steve & CoCo Collins, John & Cornelia Koniditsiotis, Dina Craig and her family. Natalya Gray and her family (Craig, Alexander and Charlize) also enjoyed the festival as well as others that came throughout the weekend. We talked with Fr. George from our sister church. Great food, music, dancing and drink. OPA!



A Farewell to Margarita Lopova

It is always hard saying good-bye to a dear friend of Holy Trinity, Margarita Lopova, who finished up her two years at Perkinston as their top ranked tennis player as she returns to Moscow for the summer before completing her final two years at North Carolina next year. We got to know Margarita well these past two years and we wish her well in her tennis journey. I understand Margarita may visit us in the fall before going to North Carolina.

40 Day Blessings

Fr Dean performed the forty day blessing at Holy Trinity for Eleni Virillis, daughter of Tina Giallourakis and Dimitrios Virillis. Fr Dean also



performed the forty day blessing for Drew Alexander, the son of Ruthie Beach and Trey McKnight.



Kids-Make-A-Wish Mississippi Recognizes Holy Trinity

Sheila & George Yurchak represented Holy Trinity at the Kids-Make-A-Wish Mississippi Appreciation Breakfast held at IP Casino. Shown are Shellie Moses and Brittany Day, Director and Assistant Director who presented George Yurchak with Certificate recognizing Holy Trinity for their support to this wonderful organization which helps children



with critical illnesses achieve their wish. Some of their kids come to our International Christmas Festivals and help our youth, Korina Bodisch and Nina Gestring, at our Drink, Ice Cream and Outside Pastry Booth. Shellie told me that the family we donated a Christmas tree to last year was very appreciative of Holy Trinity for helping them at Christmas. I told her we will have four to donate this year. Holy Trinity's bi-annual collections, Souper Bowl Sunday and Ice Cream Month, have allowed a four year old cancer patient to have a tree house built for him at his home.

Gulfport Galleria of Art to feature Holy Trinity Art Exhibit

Holy Trinity will hold an Art Exhibit at the Gulfport Galleria of Art 1-31 August. Helena Docherty, who is from the Czech Republic, and Holy Trinity's Art Coordinator sits on the Galleria Board of Directors is bringing our Art Exhibit to fruition. She and Sheila Yurchak will be pulling the Art Exhibit together. Holy Trinity is blessed to have many talented artists. Each one has a story to tell about how their God-given talent allowed them to pursue their artistic expression and we

plan to bring that to the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Korina Bodisch Graduates

Korina Bodisch graduated from Sacred Heart High School with honors and will continue her journey through life at Iowa State. Korina has accomplished so much at Holy Trinity, receiving the Archangel Michael Award from Metropolitan Alexios. She will be missed by all, but we all wish her well.



Orthodoxy in Czech Republic – by Helena Docherty

The History of the Orthodox Church in the Czech and Slovak Lands

The earliest history of the Orthodox Church in our lands is connected with the mission of Saint Cyril (Konstantin) and Saint Methodius who came to us from Constantinople in 863. Both the Orthodox Christians and the Roman Catholics celebrate their holiday on July 5. It is a state holiday since 1990. The two brothers, who were Byzantine Christian theologians, brought the liturgical and canonical order of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Konstantin established the rules of Hlaholice, an ancient Slavic language, as the official language of the holy liturgy. Konstantin became a monk shortly before his death and took on a name Cyrillus (lat.) that became more known throughout the centuries.

Methodius founded the Moravian-Panonic archdiocese and became its first bishop. After Methodius's death the Eastern Orthodox order of the holy liturgy was forbidden by the pope Stephan V. The students of the Eastern Orthodoxy were forced to leave the country. But wherever they went, they established the order of the Eastern Orthodox Church. This is why our Czech and Slovak Orthodox Church builds directly on the cyrillic-methodius work and considers itself its follower. The Church existed widely supported till 1054-the time of the great schism. In 1097 the Eastern Orthodox rite was forbidden in our lands that fell under the influence of the Roman patriarchate. The last churches in Slovakia were forcefully converted by Jesuits and Viennese aristocracy in 1649.

During the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century the Church enjoyed some revival when the idea of Panslavism (the unity of all Slavic nations) gained popularity.

On September 25th, 1921 one thousand years after Cyril and Methodius, Matej Pavlik was ordained as Czech and Moravian-Silesian bishop Gorazd (named symbolically after one of their students) in Belgrade, Serbia. The period between the 1st World War and the 2nd World War was not very conducive for the development of the Church. Despite that bishop Gorazd managed to lay the foundation for the Orthodox Church in our lands, even managed to build several new churches. He also reconnected with other Orthodox Churches, namely with the Russian Orthodox Church.

During the Second World War our small Church showed how closely it is connected with the Czech nation and that it can fight courageously for freedom and justice. The church of Cyril and Methodius in Prague hid the paratroopers that assassinated Reinhard Heydrich, the high-ranking German SS and police official who was in control of occupied Bohemia and Moravia (the Czech republic now). When discovered, the church officials were shot, their families sent to concentration camps where they all died. All orthodox priests were sent to labor camps, the Church was forbidden by the Nazi Germans, its property confiscated. After the war the Orthodox Church was resurrected and reconnected with the Russian Orthodox Church. From 1952 to 1992 the Church was autonomic (autocephalic).

In 1993, when Czechoslovakia divided into the Czech and the Slovak republics, the Orthodox Church became independent in each country. The Church has four eparchies now: in Prague, Olomouc-Brno, Presov and Michalovce-Kosice. The Church has 82 parishes with 130,000 believers.

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is a day where we remember the service to our country provided by those veterans who have passed away and as Billy Ray Cyrus said in his song - "Some Gave All." As President Trump said "words cannot measure the depth of their devotion, the purity of their love, or the totality of their courage." On Memorial Day in 1945, General Truscott spoke at the American Cemetery in Sicily-Rome. In an act that showed his true character, he turned away from those gathered at the ceremony and instead faced the graves of his men and said "he apologized to those men and said that he knew as their leader he was partially to blame for their deaths. He said he hoped those who died by any mistake of his own would forgive him, but admitted he was asking a lot."

