



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Metropolis of Atlanta
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
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Biloxi, Mississippi 39531
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August 2016 Bulletin



A Message from Father Dean

PREPARING FOR AUGUST 15th

On August 15th we will be commemorating the Falling Asleep of the Lord's Mother, the Theotokos, the Virgin Mary. Nothing is said in the Bible about her last days, however, many stories have come to be known about her departure from this world, stories which come to us through Holy Tradition, from Hymns and from the Holy Icons.

The Icon of the Falling Asleep of the Theotokos shows the figure of Christ in the background, holding an infant in His arms. This was the iconographer's unique way of depicting the Virgin's soul being received into the realm of eternity by her Son, Jesus Christ.

Orthodox Christians around the world participate in a two week fast period that precedes the commemoration of this feast day. These two weeks give us time to think about our own falling asleep in Christ. During this time we should repeat and reflect on the petition of the Divine Liturgy which states: "For a Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful; and for a good defense before the awesome judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord."

One of the great lessons to be learned from this feast day is that death is not to be feared. If death means to "fall asleep" or to "rest eternally" it cannot haunt the Christian.

Unfortunately there are those who fear death. They forget that Jesus said "Do not fear those who can kill the body, but fear those who can kill the body and the soul."

Some fear death because of the great unknown. Whenever we have to do something we have never done before, something unknown and inexperienced...a fear rises up in us. But Jesus tells us not to fear, but to believe.

Some fear death because they love the world. The person who has served the world and has come to love it and has served it all through life, instead of serving God, for that person, death is indeed to be feared for it cuts a person completely from that which means the most to him. Jesus tells us to be in the world, but not of it.

Some fear death because of an uneasy conscience. They should remember what Jesus said: "Though your sins be scarlet, they can become as white as snow." We have the water of Baptism that washes away every sin, but it is the mystery, the sacrament of Confession that continues to wash away our every sin, and for that reason we should participate in Confession regularly.

Others fear death because they are uncertain of salvation. But true Christian believers have the assurance of the Lord that they will be with Him in eternity. Jesus said; "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, even though he dies, shall live."

"Neither grave nor death have power over the Birthgiver of God" this is what we chant in one of the hymns in reference to the Virgin Mary. We can also say of every true believer that "Neither grave nor death have power over a true follower of Jesus.

Jesus has not only taken the sting out of death, He has destroyed it by His crucifixion and Resurrection.

It remains for us to so believe in Christ, to love Him and to serve Him, so that when the day of our passing comes, we will "fall asleep" in the Lord. I pray that our spiritual journey of life leads us to the point that we can shout from the depths of our souls that "neither grave nor death has power over us." True believers can say this because they believe that "Christ is risen from the dead trampling death with death and giving life to those in the tombs." Amen

Schedule of Services

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on August 7 with Fr Dimitri

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on August 14 with Fr Dean followed by Lamentations for the Theotokos

Monday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on August 15 with Fr Dean

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on August 21 with Fr Ezekiel

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on August 28 with Fr Ezekiel

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.

August in the Orthodox Church is a month where we pay special religious observance to events in the lives of the three main figures of the Christian world: Christ, the Theotokos, and John the Baptist.



The Transfiguration . . . August 6th Our Lord had spoken to His disciples many times not only concerning His Passion, Cross, and Death, but also concerning the coming persecutions and afflictions that they themselves would endure. Since all these evils were near at hand,

but the enjoyment of good things which they hoped to receive in their stead was yet to come, our Savior desired to give them full assurance, evidently and openly, concerning that glory which is prepared for those who endure to the end. Therefore, fulfilling that which He had promised shortly before, that "there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom" (Matt. 16:28), He took His three foremost disciples and ascended Mount Tabor, where He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as the light. Suddenly, together with this dread and marvelous effulgence of light, there appeared those pinnacles of the Prophets, Moses and Elias, who spoke with the Lord Jesus concerning His saving Passion which was about to take place. Standing before Him as reverent servants, they showed that He is the Lord of both the living and the dead, for Moses came forth from Hades, having died many centuries before, and Elias, as it were from heaven, whither he had been taken up while yet alive. After a little while a radiant cloud overshadowed them and out of the cloud they heard that same voice which had been heard at the Jordan at the Baptism of Christ, testifying to the Divinity of Jesus and saying: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased; hear ye Him" (Matt. 17: 5).



The Dormition of the Theotokos. . . August 15th - Concerning the Dormition of the Theotokos, this is what the Church has received from ancient times from the tradition of the Fathers. When the time drew nigh that our Savior was well-pleased to take His Mother to Himself, He declared unto her through an Angel that three days hence, He would translate her from this temporal life to eternity and bliss. On hearing this, she went up with haste to the Mount of Olives, where she prayed continuously. Giving thanks to God, she returned to her house and prepared whatever was necessary for her burial. While these things were taking place, clouds caught up the Apostles from the ends of the earth, where each one happened to be preaching, and brought them at once to the house of the Mother of God, who informed them of the cause of their sudden gathering. As a mother, she consoled them in their affliction as was meet, and then raised her hands to Heaven and prayed for the peace of the world. She blessed the Apostles, and, reclining upon her bed with seemliness, gave up her all-holy spirit into the hands of her Son and God.



Beheading of St John the Baptist . . . August 29th - Thus Herod, apprehended John the Baptist and shut him in prison; and perhaps he would have killed him straightway, had he not feared the people, who had extreme reverence for John. Certainly, in the beginning, he himself

had great reverence for this just and holy man. But finally, being pierced with the sting of a mad lust for the woman Herodias, he laid his defiled hands on the teacher of purity on the very day he was celebrating his birthday. When Salome, Herodias' daughter, had danced in order to please him and those who were supping with him, he promised her -- with an oath more foolish than any foolishness -- that he would give her anything she asked, even unto the half of his kingdom. And she, consulting with her mother, straightway asked for the head of John the Baptist in a charger. Hence this transgressor of the Law, preferring his lawless oath above the precepts of the Law, fulfilled this godless promise and filled his loathsome banquet with the blood of the Prophet. So it was that all-venerable head, revered by the Angels, was given as a prize for an abominable dance, and became the plaything of the dissolute daughter of a debauched mother. As for the body of the divine Baptist, it was taken up by his disciples and placed in a tomb (Mark 6: 21 - 29). Concerning the finding of his holy head, see February 24 and May 25.

Feeding the Hungry Meeting August 3 . . . Nancy Malek will hold a meeting at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, August 3, of interested parishioners to address Feeding the Hungry Ministry.

Parish General Assembly Meeting – Sunday, August 7 . . . The next Parish General Assembly Meeting will be held on Sunday, August 7, after Church Services. Please put it on your calendar as we have various items to discuss. We will discuss old items, stewardship, financial update, etc. Plan to attend this very important meeting as it is a way we update everyone on what the church is doing, advise the many new items that are coming up, and where you can provide feedback to the Parish Council. Please insure you are up to date with your stewardship pledge in order to vote. A list of those current in their pledge will be posted on the bulletin board in the social hall on July 31..

Lay Service/Orthodox Study Group – August 10 . . . Nancy Malek will conduct a lay prayer service from 6:00 – 6:30 pm and an Orthodox study group from 6:30 – 7:30 pm to go over Chapter 6 in The Way of the Pilgrim book, on Wednesday August 10.

Decorating the Kovoulukion – August 13 . . . New this Year! We will be decorating the Kovoulukion for the Dormition of the Theotokos on Saturday August 13 at 10:00 am. Volunteers are needed. Special services will be conducted on Sunday August 14 and Monday August 15, 2016.

Church Luncheon in Honor of the Dormition of the Theotokos Sunday Aug. 14. . . A special luncheon honoring the Dormition of the Theotokos after Liturgy on August 14. The Church will provide the luncheon.

Lay Service/Orthodox Study Group – August 24 . . . Nancy Malek will conduct a lay prayer service from 6:00 – 6:30 pm and an Orthodox study group from 6:30 – 7:30 pm to go over Chapter 6 in The Way of the Pilgrim book, on Wednesday August 24.

Prosforo Baking Class – August 25 . . . Photine Hagicostas will conduct a Prosforo baking class for all those interested at 11:30 am on August 25 at the church. Several people has expressed interest in doing this.

Ladies of the Agape (Women's Group) Meeting – August 31 . . . Nancy Malek is President of the Ladies of the Agape and will be conducting a meeting on Wednesday, August 31 at 6:00 pm of all women interested in becoming part of this group. We will discuss activities for the women's group to focus on in the future; such as, visitations, flowers, Christmas cards, etc.

Church Calendars for 2017 . . . Church calendars will be ordered at the end of August for 2017. Anyone interested in donating for these calendars “in memory of” should contact Sheila Yurchak at sheilayurchak@yahoo.com.

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, but we still need volunteers in the future.

Happy Name day . . . Mary, August 15th.



Happy Birthday! Many Years . . . Tee Pappas - August 4th, Cristian Ionescu, & Jeannine Bodisch - August 6th, Christina Burkhart, Deborah Antonious, Janie Mavromihalis & Alexia Sturm - August 7th, Tamara Manley – August 8th, Nataliya Petrovska and Natalya Pearcy - August 11th. Rodney Bridges, August 14th, Alexis Zink, August 18th, Mihail Kastrinos, August 20th, Natalia Porsche - August 24th, Alexis Koskan - August 28th, Meri Ionescu, August 29th, Soula Kiesserling - August 31st. Apologies if we missed your birthday, it means we don't have your info. Let us know.

Congratulations. . . to Helen and George Yurchak, parents of George Yurchak, on their *69th wedding anniversary*. May God grant you many more years together. If we missed your anniversary, please let us know.

Chrismation in August . . . Donna Ricconi will be Chrismated into the Orthodox faith on Sunday August 14, 2016.

Religious Education

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

Religious Needs

Clergy are available for talk, confession, pastoral counseling, spiritual care, individual prayer, etc. 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.

Get Well . . . Prayers and blessings to Fr Jim Karagas, Karen Bridges, John Curticapian, Elizabeth Vamvakas, Irene Stevens, Alan Koskan, Photine and Angelo Hagicostas, George Vaporis, Lela Roberts, Melissa Swartz, Nikki Arnold, Nancy Malek, Virginia Freeman, and Dorothy Porter. 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 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 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)

STEWARDSHIP

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE FOR 2016

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 2016. 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. We will be mailing you a stewardship form in the event you are unable to come to 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 2016

Thank you to everyone who has filled out and returned their 2016 Stewardship Commitment Pledge Form. As of July 31, Holy Trinity has received pledges from 63 parishioners for a total of \$36,840.

Chrisanthi Beach	Cristian & Meri Ionescu	Donna Rocconi
Mike Bodisch	Mihail Kastrinos	Jerry Strickland
Rodney & Karen Bridges	Chrisie (Soula) Kiessling	Melissa & Giorgios Swartz
CoCo & Steve Collins	Karen Kohl	Lisa Taylor
John Collins	John & Cornelia Koniditsiotis	Angelos & Elizabeth Vamvakas
Nicoletta Conner	Al & Cathy Lawson	Akaterina Vamvakas
George Contas	Rena Lohrbach	Vasili & Maria Vamvakas
John Demetrakopoulos	Eva Magiros	George Vaporis
Cally & Bernie DeSantis	Mary Makris	Eleni Vganges
Hugh & Brandi Donohoe	Nancy & Karl Malek	Demetri Vlahos
Norman Foskey	Stratos Mandas	Vona & Creg Wawryszcuk
Terry & Julia Foskey	George & Janie Mavormihalits	Karen Weinberg
Virginia Freeman	Jessie Mavromihalits Martin	George & Sheila Yurchak
Nataliya Grey	Louis & Linda Peters	Yelena Zheletskaia
Angelo & Photine Hagicostas	Nataliya Petrovska	
Craig & Karen Henderson	Tom & Pat Portaritis	

Church Directory

Liturgical Services

Sundays – Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Church Clergy

Rev. Fr. Dean Gigicos

Rev. Fr. Ezekiel Vieages

Chanter – Angelos Vamvakas

2016 Parish Council

President – George Yurchak

Vice President – Craig Henderson

Treasurer – Rodney Bridges

Secretary – CoCo Collins

Member – Jerry Strickland

Librarian

Hugh Donohoe, Brandi Donohoe

Historian

Brandi Donohoe, Akaterina Vamvakas

Maintenance and Repair

Chair – Craig Henderson

50th Anniversary Celebration

Chair- George & Sheila Yurchak

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 Grey

Parish Ministries

Youth Ministries – George Yurchak

Youth Group Chair – Joseph Lawson, Korina Bodisch

Feed the Hungry Chair – Donna Ricconi, Virginia Freeman

Sunday School – Akaterina Vamvakas

Ladies of the Agape Chair – Nancy Malek

Stewardship Chair – Craig Henderson

Reader – Rodney Bridges, John Collins

Adult Education – George Yurchak

Prayer/Study Group – Nancy Malek

Outreach – Karen Komenko Weinberg, Akaterina Vamvakas

Technology – Karen Kohl, Spiro Vganges

Web Master – Steve Collins, Spiro Vganges

Pastoral Assistant – Craig Henderson, Spiro Vganges

Alter Boys – Joseph Lawson, Lefteri & Costas Vganges

Sunshiners – George Vaporis

Strategic Planning – Chair, CoCo Collins

Staff

Kiosk – George Yurchak

Office Administrator – Sheila Yurchak

Publications Editor – Sheila Yurchak

Cleaning – Chrisanthi Beach, Akaterina Vamvakas