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September Newsletter

A Word from our Council President, George Yurchak

Now that summer is over, we look forward to many things that will be happening with Holy Trinity. In this issue, Holy Trinity's "Parishioner in the Spotlight" is Betelhem Seifu. Helena Docherty was confirmed into the Orthodox faith by Fr Dean. Members of Holy Trinity traveled to Mobile to attend the Russian sponsored Yarmarka 2019 Festival. Then there will be a special commentary on "Compassion of Animals in the Orthodox Church." Preparations for Holy Trinity's International Christmas Festival is well underway so please plan to be there to help out.

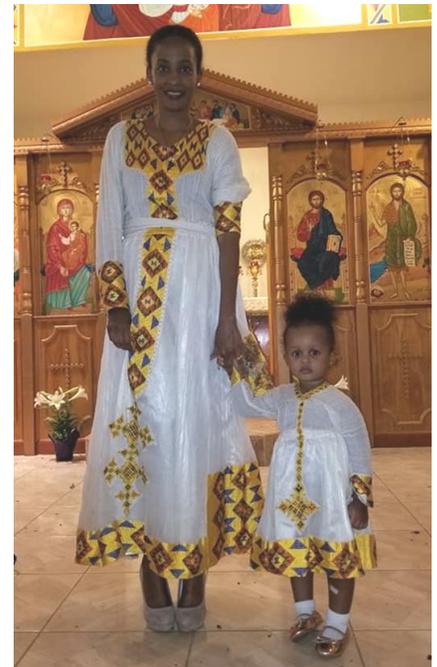
Parishioner in the Spotlight: Betelhem Seifu

I am Betelhem Seifu. Originally, I am an Ethiopian, born and raised in Ethiopia in a big family circle, with 8 siblings (4 sisters and 4 brothers). I was raised and baptized as an Orthodox Christian since my parents are Orthodox Christians. As a growing girl, I was involved in the church's Sunday school services, where I was actively participating in chorus.

I met my husband, Abiy Eyakem, in the teaching hospital he was working as a faculty while I was on my rotations during my nursing school practice in the year 2009. I graduated from the nursing school in the following year (2010) and after which I had been working as a clinical nurse in hospitals and clinic in Ethiopia. While, I continued working, my husband and I were married in 2012.

In July 2014, I resigned from my job and accompanied my husband to come to USA. We both arrived and lived in Jackson, Tennessee for a little over 3 years. During this period, I was also preparing myself for life in USA as I was spending most of my time at home; sometimes I also did part-time jobs. On Sundays, we used to attend the Divine Liturgy at the Orthodox Church (St. Niclas Orthodox Church) in Jackson, Tennessee.

It was the will of God that our daughter, Yohanna Eyakem, was born in October 2017, a month before we as a family moved here to the Gulf Coast in Biloxi. We first came to the Holy Trinity Orthodox Church on the day the church community was holding the annual international food festival during Christmas time in 2017. Then, a couple of weeks later we started attending the church service.



Confirmation of Helena into the Orthodox Faith

Helena Docherty was chrismated into the Orthodox Faith by Fr Dean Gigicos. Soula Kiessling stood up for Helena as her Godmother.

Mobile “Yarmarka” Festival

Sheila and George Yurchak were invited to perform Ukrainian and German dances at the Russian sponsored Yarmarka Festival in Mobile at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church. Several parishioners travelled to our sister church to attend and support this festival. It was great seeing friends, and then eating the delicious ethnic foods that we will be serving at our International Christmas Festival this coming December.



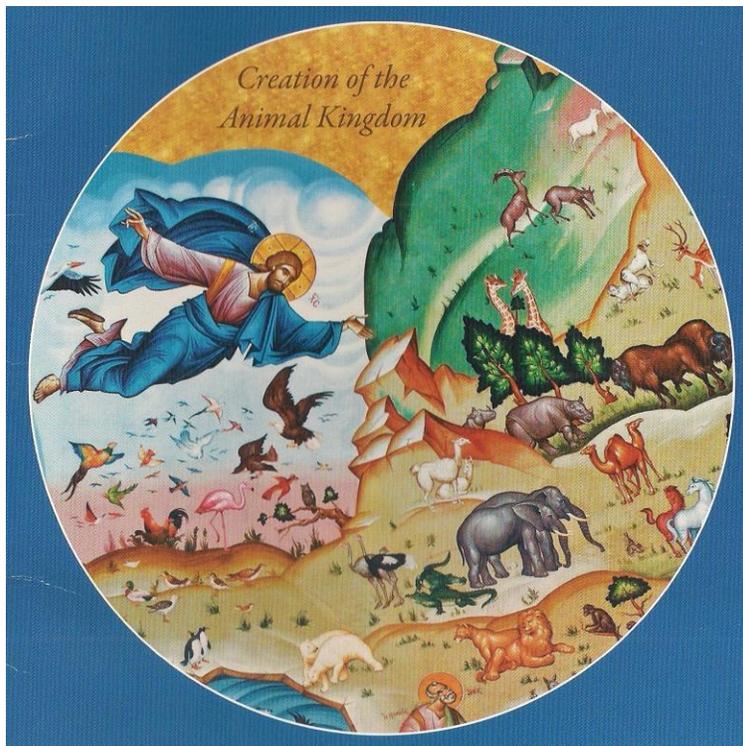
Compassion of Animals in the Orthodox Church by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

Part of the foundation of the Christ's Holy Church is predicated upon the bold vision which asks for God's People to uphold the Golden Rule as spelled out in the Beatitudes. Yet this sense of mission should not be constrained, but should include the care for all of God's Creation and not just human beings. Animals, birds, reptiles, and all forms of life – as well as the Earth itself – are under our care and stewardship!

Therefore, it behooves us, as Orthodox Christians, to do our utmost to show love and respect toward all living things and to treat them as the true gifts that God has given us.

*“Love all God’s Creation,
both the whole and every grain of sand.
Love every leaf, every ray of light.
Love the animals, love the plants,
love each separate thing.
If thou love each thing
thou wilt perceive the
mystery of God in all;
and when once thou perceive this,
thou wilt thenceforward grow every day
to a fuller understanding of it:
until thou come at last to
love the whole world
with a love that will then be
all-embracing and universal.”*

Fyodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov



Cover photo taken from St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church, Greenland, NY by Michael Mindata