



**Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
Metropolis of Atlanta**

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
255 Beauvoir Rd., Biloxi, MS 39531  
P.O. Box 8534, Biloxi, MS 39535  
(228) 388-6138  
[www.holytrinitybiloxi.org](http://www.holytrinitybiloxi.org)



**May 2018 Newsletter**

**Attached is Holy Trinity's May 2018 Newsletter dedicated to motherhood.  
Please enjoy.**



## **A Word from our Council Vice-President, George Yurchak**

We had plenty happening during the month of May at Holy Trinity. We will have a special dedication to Mother's Day and the mother's of Holy Trinity. Some of our parishioners took the time to write a special tribute to their mother. Parishioner in the Spotlight this month is James Edwards, newly converted to Orthodox. Fr Dean presented two of our young adults, Joseph Lawson and Korina Bodisch with the Young Adult Prayer Book "Hear Ye" for graduating and moving on to the next grade. Korina Bodisch was accepted into the Mississippi Governor's Program for the article she wrote "On Women's Rights." Several of our parishioners went to the New Orleans Greek Festival to support our Sister Parish. Nikolai Konstantinov received his Degree from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College at Jeff Davis. Congratulations to John Collins who put his heart and soul into the North Bay Elementary School garden. George and Sheila Yurchak attended St George Greek Orthodox Church Greek Festival in Bethesda Maryland.

## **Parishioner in the Spotlight, James Edwards**

I was born in Slidell, Louisiana, lived in San Antonio, Texas for 10 years and now live in Pass Christian, Mississippi. I was interested in Orthodoxy for several years but never went to an Orthodox church until I lived here. I was Chrismated at Holy Trinity on April 7. I love reptiles and have had all kinds of pet reptiles and Amphibians. I worked in retail for years. I love my church and church family. I feel so blessed to have met everyone. James is pictures with his mother at Greek Fest.



*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***

**"Mom and apple pie"** was the cozy memory most often quoted by American soldiers stationed overseas, when asked what they missed most being away from home. If there is one constant throughout history, it's the close relationship between mothers and their children. Although the traditional role of mothers has changed in modern times, she still represents comfort, protection, and love. History is filled with stories of famous mothers who risked their lives protecting their children. During the Nazi occupation of Austria, Maria von Trapp's love for the von Trapp children was the reason she agreed to Georg von Trapp's marriage proposal because in it he asked her to become his children's second mother – she later admitted, "If he had only asked me to marry him I might not have said yes. She became a positive force in the von Trapp family, protecting the children as they escaped from Austria.

In this month's newsletter, Holy Trinity reached out to our parishioners asking for memories or stories of their mothers. We received numerous responses and we would like to share them with you, gentle reader.

## 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. *NOTE: Alexandra really touched my wife Sheila and my life with her kindness and attitude toward Holy Trinity.*

### **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.



### **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.

### **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.

### **Sheila Hemenway Yurchak to her mother Mary Hildebrand Hemenway**

My mother was a beautiful, talented woman, and a gifted, creative thinker. 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.

*The real religion of the world comes from women  
much more than from men —  
from mothers most of all,  
who carry the key of our souls in their bosoms.  
- **Alexandru Tulburi** -*

### **Mother's Day Celebration**

Holy Trinity honored all the mothers on their day, this special day. The most senior mother, Nicki Arnold was presented ½ dozen roses. This year we presented the two youngest mothers, Shelby McLeod and Betelhem Eyakem ½ dozen roses each. All other women were presented a single rose. Holy Trinity also honored them with a special luncheon. It was a great Mother's Day for all who attended.





**I'm giving a pure, sweet rose,  
Gathered in the early morn,  
This rose you planted in my heart,  
The day that I was born.  
The rose I give you today  
Is the love that's in my heart.  
- Anonymous -**



**Nikolai Konstantinov Graduates**

One of our young adults, Nikolai Konstantinov, son of Natalya Percy graduated from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College earning his GED.

**Our Young Adults Graduate**

Fr Dean presented Korina Bodisch and Joseph Lawson Young Adult Prayer Books "Hear Ye" for graduating their respective grades.

**Korina Bodisch Selected for Mississippi Governor's Program**



Korina Bodisch was selected for the Mississippi Governor's Program for the paper she wrote on Women's Rights. Congratulations Korina.



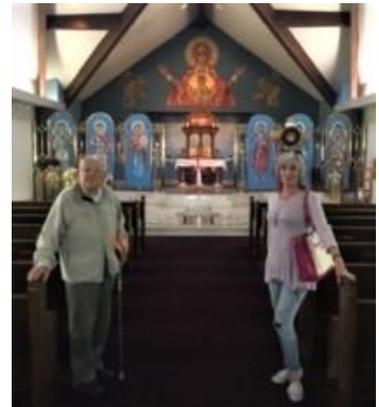
## **New Orleans Greek Festival**

Several of our parishioners joined in the festivities at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral's annual Greek Festival during Memorial Day Weekend in New Orleans. It was great to see James Edward's (our newest convert to Orthodoxy) and his mother attend their first Greek Festival. Fr George enjoyed meeting them. George & Sheila Yurchak and their granddaughter Olivia Wisniewski, Callie and Bernie DeSantis, Tania Shanti Banes and her husband Tom, CoCo & Steve Collins, Dina Craig and more all supported our sister church. George Yurchak's granddaughter Olivia Wisniewski attended her first Greek Festival. Everyone had an OPA great time. It is always good to see Fr George Wilson at his GreekFest.



## **Bethesda GreekFest**

George & Sheila Yurchak attended the St George Greek Orthodox Church Greek Festival in Bethesda Maryland along with his father. Their priest Fr George Antokas lived on the same block with Angelo Hagicostas and they played together as kids.



## **John Collins – Educator, Master Gardener and Giver**

Congratulations to John Collins who put his heart and soul into the North Bay Elementary School garden. This has been over a year of planning, applying for

grants, building boxes, buying all the plants & citrus trees; as well as getting it all planted. It also has a state of the art irrigation system. All of this while teaching and working on his Master's Degree. Way to go John.



## 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."

