



Getting Ready

A state of readiness is highly valued in the military and not just before combat operations, since it precisely in peaceful times that they must be ready for anything. Although most of us will never serve in the military, we are called to be ready for what life brings us every day. More parents are not just raising children at home, but are working for a living. Stay at home moms don't exactly have it easy: they have to plan the household around a slew of errands, responsibilities, and increasingly hectic schedules. Caretakers for the young and elderly meet the challenges that include normal routines, along with emergencies.

No surprise that, in addition to the usual readiness to which Christ calls us on a daily basis – “Keep vigilant, therefore, for you do not know the day or hour when your Lord is coming” (see Mark 13:33) – he has set aside a special tithing of the year, or 10% of our time – the 40 days of Great Lent – as a special period of preparation for encountering him ever anew during Holy Week.

For us in the Orthodox Church this year, April is the month of getting ready. We are not just greeting Spring – although it seems overdue right now, given our cooler than normal March. We are invited to recognize the unique opportunity that Lent presents, since it is so much more than a change of diet.

Recently, I met with 19 teenagers during a “Lock-in,” in which, under adult supervision, they spend an evening and night locked in our church facility for fellowship, prayer, conversation, and lots of fun. I began my presentation on the faith by asking, “What would you do if invited by the President to visit the White House?” After some responses related to

whether one likes the President or not, I made my point: who of us, in accepting the highest invitation in America today, would not spend a lot of time and care to prepare? And if this is true for the leader of our nation, what about an invitation from the leader of our faith – Jesus Christ – who is the Ruler of the Universe?

Holy Week is an engraved, formal invitation by the Lord to meet with him in the house where he lives – not the temple in which we worship but us as a community of believers gathered in prayer – and not just at any time of the year, but precisely when we remember his Entrance into Jerusalem, final teaching, and awesome Passion, Crucifixion, and bodily Resurrection! If the Liturgy in general is a sacred appointment on our weekly calendar to sit at the feet of Jesus, listen to him, praise him in prayer and song, see him in icons both fixed (on the icon screen) and moving (through each of us who are recreated in his image/icon by grace), smell him in incense, and taste him in holy bread and wine, then Holy Week is the supreme revelation of Christ in our midst.

Can we attend Holy Week worship without deliberate preparation? Of course. But we will be liable to miss the significance of who Jesus really is and what he has done for us. We may hear some hymns, prayer, and sermons, but these can simply be a pious distraction from the rush of “normal” life. The more time and effort we put into thoughtfully getting ready, the more we will receive during Holy Week. And if we are busy with work and school, why not plan ahead to take time off in Holy Week and spend it with Christ who spared nothing to show us his love?

– Fr. Harry

Pastoral Question & Answer

Question: Why is our Easter this year so late (May 5), compared to Catholics and Protestants (March 31)?

Answer: Although all Christians use the same formula for calculating the moveable date of Easter every year, the Orthodox Church uses the older Julian Calendar instead of the newer Gregorian Calendar that we follow in civil society. This formula, from the 1st Ecumenical Council in 325 A.D., specifies that Easter occurs on the 1st Sunday following the 1st full moon after the Vernal Equinox (the day in Spring when there is basically an equal amount of daylight and nighttime). The Vernal Equinox is a fixed point – March 21 according to the Church (even though technically it occurs on March 20). However, March 21 in the Julian Calendar is really April 3 on the Gregorian Calendar. Therefore, while Easter will always fall for Catholics & Protestants between March 22 and April 25, for the Orthodox it will occur between April 4 and May 8. Depending on the cycle of the moon (which varies from year to year), our Easter will fall either on the same date as that of other Christians or up to 5 weeks later, as happens this year.

Question: Why do we serve fish at a funeral meal (called “makaria” in Greek)?

Answer: Because it is the only food we know that Jesus ate with his followers after he rose from the dead with a new body – see Luke 24:42-43 and John 21:13. In general, our funeral practices derive from the Judeo-Christian heritage as this has been fulfilled and transformed in Christ – treating the deceased body with care and reverence, offering memorial prayer at different times (such as 40 days because that is when Christ ascended to heaven), and the funeral service itself. Therefore it is only natural that our customs would be influenced as well, such as how we grieve - not as those who have no hope, but as those who are filled with hope in the power of Christ’s victory over death - and what we eat – such as broiled fish like the Lord himself and his first followers.

Parish Council

The council approved a project to replace outdated lighting at the Cultural Center/Stamford Athletic Club (SAC) to achieve a cost savings from energy efficiency, pending further review by the Building and Grounds Committee. The total replacement cost is about \$64,000, but the out-of-pocket cost to the church is \$0. Around \$24,000 will be funded through a utility company rebate and the \$40,000 balance will be financed by the installation company at 0% interest to us and payable through our regularly monthly bill. The Center’s electricity bill is projected to decrease by \$410/month for 26 months, as the \$40,000 financing is repaid, and then will decrease by \$1,983/month after that. The council approved an expenditure of \$1,000 for 4 guest speakers for adult catechism classes during Great Lent on Wednesday evenings. The council approved an expenditure of up to \$2,000 for seminarians to assist during Holy Week to help with conducting services and chanting. A special General Assembly will be held on Sun,

Apr 7, after Liturgy to approve our first ever Parish By-Laws (digital copies were mailed last week to everyone with e-mail; printed copies are available in the office). Contact: George Papis

Treasurer

The 2012 financials have been prepared and will be reviewed by the auditors. We will publish the results after the auditor review. Contact: George Khouri

Stewardship

Lent is a great time to use your talents to assist both the Church and others. As we get closer to Holy Week, please contact the office if you are willing to help clean the Church. We have had a good turnout for this in the past and the more volunteers we have, the faster the work will go. Please remember to help others who can use your assistance. With respect to stewardship pledges, we are running about \$60,000 ahead of where we were last year. Thanks to all who have pledged. To those who haven’t pledged, please submit your card. Contact: George Khouri

Donations Needed for Palms, Flowers, and Easter Reception

We are accepting donations toward the purchase of palms, flowers – for icons, the Funeral Canopy, and church – along with meat, cheese, etc., (“finger food”) for the Reception Easter Night.

Please contact Jane Vorvis in the office (203-348-4216) or make a check out to Archangels Church and put “Flowers” or “Easter Reception” in the memo.

Additional 2013 Stewards

Alexander Amarilios	Peter Mihaleas
Mrs Thalia Cardel	Mr & Mrs Theodore Nanos
Mrs Helen Chochos	Nicholas Nikas
Mr & Mrs Demetrios Efkarpidis	Mr & Mrs Theofilos Nikolis
Mr & Mrs George Galuris	Mr & Mrs Mark Otis
Angelica Haralambidis	Harry Papatomas
Mrs Evangelia Hlebogiannis	Mr & Mrs Peter Poulos
Dr & Mrs Peter Hughes	Mr & Mrs Zacharias Rigos
Mr & Mrs George Kanelias	Mrs Barbara Varunes
Mr & Mrs George Lines	Mr & Mrs George Zangas
Mrs Ellie Massos	

MINISTRIES

Adult Education

Throughout this month, different guest theologians will address the following topics on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm, following the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts and the Lenten meal:

- April 3 – Dr. Peter Bouteneff (Professor at St. Vladimir’s Seminary): “Church & Culture: Connecting Television, Movies, and Books with our Life in Christ”
- April 10 – Dr. Tony Kireopoulos (Associate General Secretary for International Affairs & Peace at the National Council of Churches): “Violence: War, Genocide, Terrorism, Newtown & More”
- April 17 – Dr. Paul Meyendorff (Professor of Liturgical Theology at St. Vladimir’s Seminary): “The Sacrament of Confession”
- April 24 – Dr. Richard Schneider (Adjunct Professor at St. Vladimir’s Seminary): “Constantine the Great: Empire, Church, and Implications for Today”

Please join us for this outstanding series and let us know if you wish to share the dinner as well!

Contact: Fr. Harry or Jane Vorvis

Holy Week: April 28 – May 5

Our Holy Week schedule of worship and activity will be the same as last year – starting actually with Saturday Lazarus worship & preparation for Palm Sunday (April 27) and extending through Easter Sunday (May 5). This includes the following:

- Public Preparation of the Gifts on Sat, April 27, at 9 am, and Teaching Divine Liturgy at 9:30 am on the Solea for all children, parents, and adults. Afterwards, we clean, polish, plait palms and prepare for Palm Sunday, with lunch provided.
- Palm Sunday worship per the normal schedule
- Bridegroom Orthros at 7 pm on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday evenings
- Holy Wednesday – Holy Unction at 4 pm (especially for all school age children), and Orthros of the Last Supper at 7 pm (includes anointing of Holy Unction again)
- Holy Thursday – Liturgy of the Last Supper 6:30 am (before school and work); Orthros of the Passion 7 pm (with reading of 12 Gospels)
- Holy Friday – Royal Hours 9 am, with Good Friday Retreat for children starting at 10 am; Decoration of Funeral Canopy (Kouvouklion) and preparation of church 10:45 am; lunch 12 noon; Vespers of Descent from the Cross 1 pm (to accommodate children in the retreat); Orthros of Holy Saturday 7 pm (“Lamentations”)
- Holy Saturday – 1st Resurrection Liturgy 9 am; Vigil for Pascha 10:30 pm; Resurrection Service 11 pm; Orthros of Pascha 11:30 am; Liturgy of Pascha 12 midnight; Paschal Reception 1:30 am
- Pascha/Easter Sunday – Agape Vespers 11 am; Easter Egg Hunt for children 12 noon

Readings in Holy Week

For anyone interested in offering any of the readings during Holy Week services, a brief meeting will be held on Sunday, April 21st after the Divine Liturgy. Children age 11 and up and all interested adults are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions, please contact Presvytera Kerry at pappaskk@msn.com.



Preschool children make sign of cross and venerate icon of Christ

Seniors

Our Senior luncheon of March 13 followed its traditional pattern with catered lunch, raffle and celebration of March birthdays. A well-deserving tribute was paid to our beloved and dedicated Rina Grosso. Fr. Harry gave an informal video presentation on Tai Chi, a simple and powerful way to maximize the health of body, mind and spirit. We had numerous seniors showing a great deal of interest in the program.

Plans are underway to start such an exercise for all seniors at the Stamford Athletic Club. COME AND GET INSPIRED! Look for upcoming announcements. Father also showed a video on Conductorcise, an exercise set to classical music with each participant given a baton to move and flow with the music. Frank M. Fedeli, who is hopeful of being the next Stamford Mayor, was our formal speaker. He pointed out how the city budget is formed and the many contingencies that are included, but are rarely used.

Our next luncheon will be on April 10, with a Lenten meal. Father Harry will speak on the coming of Easter and present a video of the upcoming trip to the Holy Land. Hope you will join us! Contact: Peter Licopantis

Ladies Philoptochos Society

At the March 5 meeting, Philoptochos members celebrated the memory of our beloved member, Rina Grosso. We discussed plans for the Palm Sunday

Bake Sale on April 28 and the annual Mother's Day Luncheon on May 18 at the Norwalk Inn. Save the date. Fr. Harry asked the chapter for help in hosting the District St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival on April 6 at our parish. Diane Sierpina volunteered to coordinate food contributions and find hosts/ hostesses for this event from Philoptochos and other ministries. Please contact Diane if you can help.

Our chapter approved donations to the Orthodox Christian Mission Center and the Hellenic College/ Holy Cross Lenten event as part of our National Philoptochos obligations. On Heart Sunday, Feb. 10, parishioners donated \$260 in our collection jar at coffee hour for research at Stamford Hospital's Vascular and Heart Institute. We also collected \$322 in the trays passed for the benefit of St. Basil's Academy. Thank you to all who contributed.

Elections for new Philoptochos board members will take place in May. Niki Passios, Annie Konidaris and Kiki Verses are in charge of finding candidates. If interested, please let them know. We welcome new members to our chapter at any time. Please consider joining us! Contact: Maryanne Kardaris or Diane Sierpina

Philoptochos Bake Sale

Sunday, April 28

Palm Sunday After Liturgy

Pastries, Breads & Egg Dye

Donations of Cookies & Pastries Welcome

Reserve Easter Breads early

Contact Marion Vanson or Niki Passios

Master Planning

We hosted a town hall meeting on Sunday March 3rd, open to all parishioners. Jerry Minetos, Parish Development officer of the Archdiocese, was introduced as our strategic planning advisor. He and Jason Konidaris presented upcoming steps of the master planning process and invited Q & A from the audience. There were questions and comments in favor of revitalizing our campus and ministries. There were questions and comments against it. It was perfect. It helps us explore all sides of the discussion. That is the point of the exercise we have undertaken. To that end, if you would like to be interviewed confidentially by Jerry

and have not asked for an interview slot already, please do so by informing Jane in the office. Jerry will be back again April 19, 20, and 21 to conduct further interviews. In the meantime you will notice graphic renderings presented on easels in the fellowship hall. Their purpose is to stimulate thought and discussion. That discussion begins with, “What if...?” Questions? Contact Jason Konidaris

Church School

March was an eventful and impactful month for our Church School students and faculty! The Church School faculty joined the faculty of several New York and Connecticut parishes in a regional workshop that offered a critical examination of the current structures of Christian Education and looked to reimagine opportunities that enhance the growth and spiritual development of children. The Church School also joined the Greek School in hosting a reception on Clean Monday.

Thank you to Fr. Harry and Presvytera Kerry for leading parents and children in two separate workshops addressing preparation for Holy Lent. Thank you to Niko Giantomides for being an excellent reader during the Small Compline. Thank you to Dorie Poulos, Melanie Jordanopoulos, Angela Colorossi, members of the Greek School PTO & Greek School Committee for assisting with this event.



Presvytera Kerry teaching children about Lent on Clean Monday

For the first time, Church School also partnered with the Greek School in a joint celebration of the Great Feast of the Annunciation and Greek Independence Day on March 24. Congratulations to Matthew Poulos and James Pease in representing our school



Niko Giantomidis teaches students in a “Krypho Scholeio” (Secret School)

through their reading of “The Theotokos: Our Holy Protectress” and for the students of Grades 3-6 for creating beautiful poster presentations. We are proud of all students who participated in this program and for the supportive adults who helped make the celebration of our faith and heritage joyous! The Music Ministry resumes on Sunday, April 7, when Emily Scoutelis teaches our students the hymn “Christ is risen!/Christos Anesti”. May the season of Great Lent continue to bring us closer together in prayer, observance, worship, and faith. Contact: Dr. Evelyn Biliias Lolis (ebiliias@aol.com)

St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

Congratulations to our first ever participant in this 20 year old Archdiocesan ministry that is new to our parish! 12 year old Dina Haralabidis had the faith, commitment and poise to speak for about 3 minutes on “Servant Leader: the Example of Christ” to 3 required judges – Fr. Harry, Diane Skoparantzios, and Freda Stanton – on Friday, March 29. After her speech, each gave feedback in order to assist her in improving for the next round of competition: Sat, Apr 6, here at Archangels when we host another 11 winners from area CT and NY parishes, starting at 10 am, and including Lenten lunch and fellowship. The event is open to the public. The top two in each category – junior (grades 7-9) and senior (grades 10-12) will advance to the District festival in May. From there, the winners will go to the national event this summer that will award scholarships. Contact: Anastasia Valassis (avalassis@gmail.com) or Soulafreda Valassis.

Holy Week Permission for Children

Fr. Harry will sign a “Permission to be Absent” letter for all children who wish to be absent from school or after-school activities in order to participate in any of the following: Saturday of Lazarus Liturgy & Program (April 27, 9 am), Holy Unction (May 1, 4 pm), Liturgy of the Institution of Eucharist (May 2, 6:30 am), & Good Friday Retreat (May 3, 10 am – 2 pm). Contact: Evelyn Biliadis or Jane Vorvis

GOYA

Thank you to the supporters of the GOYA bake sale, the parents who baked and Nikki Pease and Lena Gianotomidis for organizing it. This month GOYA had a lock-in on Mar 29: yes, 19 teens were locked in the church for an overnight stay. At this event, our teens shared dinner and fellowship, prayed at the 2nd Salutations service (with 5 serving in the altar, and 2 reading prayers toward the end), had an open discussion led by Father Harry about preparing body, mind and soul for Lent, and enjoyed each other’s company throughout the night in relaxing, informal fun, with group activities led by Alex Fornaciari. Also the lock-in provided our teens with a setting for an open forum to discuss what’s on their minds and how God would want us to deal with important issues. Since then, every GOYAn was sent a copy of the Lenten prayer of St. Ephraim of Syria to memorize and pray at home. The very next day, 11 teens also joined the Archdiocese annual district Scavenger Hunt in New York City. GOYAnS from Connecticut, Long Island, the Five Boroughs and upstate New York were put into groups to search the City for the most clues. This is a fun way for kids to work together and really get to know one another. Kali Anastasi! Contact: Diane Skoparantzou



Fr. Harry teaches preschoolers about Lent

Greek School

The Annunciation/Greek Independence Day Performance was on Sun, Mar 24. The children performed their traditional poems/skits and dances very well and reminded us of all the battles the Hellenes fought for their freedom in 1812. Thank you to all the families that volunteered their time and helped put the event together. Our raffle winners were:

1st Prize: Toshiba TV – *Peter Jordanopoulos Family*

2nd Prize: Local Restaurant Gift Certificates – *Peter Vorvis & Sofia Iatrou*

3rd Prize: Sun Tanning Gift Certificate – *Peter Nikolis*

4th Prize: Wine Basket – *James Massos*

5th Prize: Stamford Museum Guest Passes – *Erika Sentementes*



Mia Konidaris Thalia Doundoulakis and Zoina Tzavaras



Presvytera Kerry leads children in making a prostration (penitential kneeling) during Clean Monday program

Easter Lambadhes (decorated candles) will be available for sale at the church. Candles with bows are \$15; candles without bows are \$10. All proceeds benefit the Archangels Greek School. In addition, AHEPA donated \$1000 and we thank them very much for endorsing our school year after year. Next PTO Meeting is Apr 9 at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. Contact: PTO Board or Rebecca Kelesidis at Rebecca@Kelesidis.com

Greek Independence Day Parade

This annual tri-state parade is scheduled for Sun, Apr 7, at 1 pm in New York City. Archbishop Demetrios will lead area parishes, ministries, church institutions, and affiliated organizations. Contact: Jane Vorvis



Father Harry instructs the preschool children on how to make a prostration during Lent

Hope/Joy

Now that we are in the Spring season and Lent is here, we must start thinking of our Annual Easter Egg Hunt on May 5. It will happen immediately following Agape Vespers on the front lawn. Please RSVP by April 30 to Melanie Jordanopoulos 203-505-3278 or jordothegreek@hotmail.com.

Little Angels

Our ministry to preschool children and their caregivers – either stay at home parents or grandparents – is a great way for the new crop of babies and families to connect through our parish. Contact: Anastasia Valassis at 203.594.1309 or avalassis@gmail.com.

Archangels Senior Men Win Basketball Championship

Congratulations to our Senior men’s basketball team who, for the first time, won the league championship on Mar 10, when they defeated the #1 seed, Holy Trinity of New Rochelle! With this victory, our parish has become one of the few churches to ever win a championship in every basketball division since the league started in the early 1970’s. Also: thanks to Sophie Tsiralidis for coaching our much improved girls volleyball team to a very successful season. And kudos to Nicholas Otis and Nick Laveris for participating in the league’s All-Star Youth basketball games. Congratulations to all athletes and coaches for a wonderful season. Stay tuned for future sport program announcements. Contact: John Skoparantzios



Top Row left to right - Christopher Lessard, Brian Demetros, Bobby Tournas, George Ziboulis, Evan Philippopoulos, John Makrides
Bottom Row left to right - Stephen Aivalis, Dean Aivalis, Dean Ziboulis

Stamford Athletic Club

The Stamford Athletic Club has been honored with a “Best of Stamford” Award as best health club by the readers of Stamford Plus magazine. Please come over for a tour and find out why! Spread this good news to all your friends about what a wonderful facility our parish has! Contact: Glenn Colarossi

**CHURCH OF THE ARCHANGELS
ANNUAL
GREEK FESTIVAL**

**THURSDAY, SEPT 26 –
SUNDAY, SEPT 29, 2013**

**GREAT FOOD,
DRINKS, DANCING...
GREAT FUN!**

CHAIRPERSONS:
STEVE & MARGARET FORNACIARI

PLAN AHEAD,
SPREAD THE
WORD, AND
OFFER TO HELP!



OPA!

AFFILIATED MINISTRIES

Parish News

Birth

March 22 – Madeleine (Stamatia) Anna Valassis, daughter of Dr. Steven & Stacy Valassis (2nd child).

Baptisms

March 3 – Nikoleta Valassis, daughter of Steven & Antonia Valassis. Godparent: Alexandra Lolis.

March 23 – Sophia Maria Pasvankias, daughter of John & Megan Pasvankias. Godparents: Perry & Allison Canaras.

AHEPA

On the occasion of March 25th, the Stamford AHEPA donated \$1,000 to the Archangels Greek School. We hope to give more if our annual fundraiser in October is successful. Our next meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17th, in the hall of the Church of the Annunciation. We will discuss our plans for several upcoming events, including: 1. A presentation by the Supreme



Stamford Assistant Fire Marshall Ted Panagiotopoulos, Parish Council member, presents about Safety & Our Children on March 31 during Coffee Hour