



# The Herald

Newsletter of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Archangels • 1527 Bedford St., Stamford, CT 06905

May 2013

## *Resurrection Joy*

There have been plenty of reasons for sadness lately. Our parish lost a number of vibrant and key longtime members. We've had terror too close in Newtown and the Boston Marathon. Cyprus has now joined Greece in a financial meltdown. Civil war in Syria remains deadlocked, with more fleeing or dying every day. Stress over raising kids, meeting obligations, and satisfying family demands continues. There are disappointments everywhere we look – with ourselves, in our families, with extended relatives, at work, school, in our parish, neighborhoods, nation, globe, even with the weather (is spring here yet?).

Seems like good timing to enter into Holy Week and focus on the Passion of Christ: stories, passages, hymns and icons that tell us about misunderstanding, suffering, violence, betrayal, abandonment, injustice, and death. It would appear that misery loves company even in Church.

Whether we have been observing Great Lent through increased prayer, fasting, and works of mercy to the poor and suffering, or whether we have been oblivious, here is the opportunity to step outside our small worlds – including the wider one we fixate on in the daily news – and find ourselves surprisingly welcome into the most important world of all.

Jesus did not come to start a new religion. He came to start a new creation. Not someplace else – such as in “heaven” or somewhere invisibly “out there.” No. Oddly enough, he came to re-create the only one he shared in making – Planet Earth along with the entire universe.

The irony is that, precisely by carefully attending to the details of Christ's own suffering that are

elaborately presented in the Gospels and inspired worship of Holy Week, we discover something we could never have accomplished on our own. All our wounds, suffering, losses, and disappointments are somehow wrapped up in his. But because Resurrection is the last word – and we celebrate Easter for 40 days – an astonishing, unexpected, and indelible joy permeates even the saddest events and periods of our lives.

Can any joy compare to this? The birth of a child? Winning a game? Getting into an Ivy League college? Meeting our mate for life? Getting a good job? Investment profits? Great party?

Forgive me, but as much as what the world offers us brings real joy, I sincerely doubt it. Why? Well, consider that the Apostle Paul wrote many letters from prison, not infrequently noting how he rejoiced greatly on the Lord despite his suffering. Or the early martyrs who went to their (often gruesome) deaths with surreal hope. Or the great monks like Anthony the Great who exuded astonishing joy and compassion after decades of battling inner compulsions and fierce temptations.

This is not “pie in the sky” optimism. It's much more like down-to-earth grace that permeates the nitty-gritty of a daily grind that may seem overwhelming or just boring. Resurrection joy cannot be contained. It's infectious, spilling out of heart and mind, persons and parishes, into the air we breathe and the people we meet. Christ is not just risen; he is risen within and among us! Alleluia!

— Fr. Harry

## Pastoral Question & Answer

**Question:** Why is there such a let down after Holy Week and Easter?

**Answer:** This usually happens only to those who have taken Great Lent and Holy Week seriously. Because the build up is so long (7 weeks) and the climax so intense (another week), it seems to vanish only too quickly as life returns to “normal.” Part of the problem is that we have lost the glorious celebration of Easter for 40 days as we resume our usual routines. The week of Easter used to be filled with worshippers at Liturgy every day. But now, everyone vanishes from church! Another part is that we have failed to incorporate the Lord’s passion and resurrection into our own personal and family devotions and lifestyles. How many know – much less pray on their own – the magnificent hymns and prayers? Yet another part is that our observance is out of sync with most other Christians in America, so that we feel unsupported by the culture around us. It will take a lot of creative thinking, renewed commitment, and willingness to change before we can turn this around.

## Worship Schedule – Holy Week & Easter Week

Thu 5/2	6:30 am	Divine Liturgy – Last Supper
	7:00 pm	Orthros of the Holy Passion
Fri 5/3	9:00 am	Royal Hours of Passion
	10:00 am	Retreat for Children
	10:30 am	Preparation of Tomb & Church
	1:00 pm	Vespers – Descent from Cross
	7:00 pm	Orthros – Praises before Tomb
Sat 5/4	9:00 am	1st Resurrection Liturgy
	10:30 pm	Vigil for Pascha
	<b>11:00 pm</b>	<b>Resurrection Service</b>
	11:15 pm	Orthros of Pascha
	11:45 pm	Divine Liturgy of Pascha
Sun 5/5	1:00 am	Paschal Reception
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	11:00 am	Agape Vespers
	12:00 pm	Easter Egg Hunt
	7:00 pm	Vespers of St. George @ St. George Church, Norwalk
Mon 5/6	8:30 am	Orthros @ Norwalk
	10:00 am	Hierarchical Liturgy @ Norwalk (Archbishop Demetrios presiding)
	12:30 pm	Ground-breaking Ceremony @ Norwalk
	1:00 pm	Feast Day Luncheon @ Norwalk
Thu 5/9	7:00 pm	Vespers of Zoodochos Peghe @ Bronx
Fri 5/10	9:30 am	Liturgy (Feast of Life-Giving Spring)

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Treasurer

The 2012 financials have been completed and are being reviewed by the auditors in preparation for a General Assembly this spring.

### Stewardship

On Saturday March 27 (the day before Palm Sunday) a great deal of work was done to clean the Church for Easter. It was a wonderful opportunity to use your talents for the Church and yourself. This year as in the past many people volunteered and not only did

the work go smoothly but everyone seemed to have a good time. The end result was a Church that was cleaner, waxed and polished. So thanks for your effort to join the work.

Pledges continue to be well with 190 pledge cards received totaling \$256,162 pledged, representing \$70,000 more than the same period last year. Please continue the good effort and remember that the summer months are lean so give part of your pledge then.

## Additional 2013 Stewards

Mrs. Evangeline Adams  
Mr. & Mrs Michael Blanc  
Mrs Nafsika Chalekian  
Mr. Aleyamma Cherian  
Mr. & Mrs. James W. Cocolis  
Mrs Daphne Downer  
Mr. & Mrs. George Galuris  
Mrs. Katherine Glynn  
Mr. & Mrs. Themis Hios  
Mrs. Margot Kalaizes  
Mrs. Stavroula Kantzas

Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Karukas  
Toni Kokoros  
Mr. & Mrs. Pericles Kounavelis  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Kyriakos  
Mrs. Maria Laveris  
Demetre Levidiotis  
Mr. & Mrs. Elias Lolis  
Mrs. Effie Mariolis  
Roni Melikokis  
Mr. & Mrs. Demetre Mentavlos  
Mr. & Mrs. Perry Mihaleas

Mr. & Mrs. Radoslav Mintchev  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Moisiades  
Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Nanos  
Mr. & Mrs. Lambros  
Papaeconomou  
Dr. & Mrs. Peter P. Perimenis  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter G. Poulos  
Mrs. Marge Rubirosa  
Mr. & Mrs. Lee Sampanis  
Anthony Spetsaris  
Mr. & Mrs. Konstantinos  
Spetsaris

Mrs. Branka Shekhdar  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Sullivan  
George Triantafyllos  
Mr. & Mrs. Ilias Triantafyllos  
Katherine Tryforos  
Mr. & Mrs. Haralambos Valassis  
Soula Freda Valassis  
Mrs. Dena Vanech  
Mr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Vasquez  
Georgia Vouthounis

## Easter Lamb Dinner

Sponsored by Parish Council & Stewardship Committee

**Sunday, May 19** following Liturgy

Menu: Roast Lamb & Potatoes, Greek style beans, Salad, Cheese, Rolls, and Dessert

FREE, as a thank you for everyone's Stewardship!

Come to the Best meal of the Year & Celebrate!

Reservations 203-348-4216

### *Special Announcement*

The Stewardship Committee and the Parish Council will be hosting the third annual lamb luncheon on Sunday, May 19th, directly after liturgy. All parishioners are welcome. This is a "free lunch" and is intended to convey our thanks for your continuing stewardship. Contact: George Papparis or George Khouri

### *Master Planning Committee*

We arranged 18 more parishioner interviews recently. Jerry Minetos, our strategic planning advisor, has now conducted close to 70 confidential interviews of Archangels ministry leaders and parishioners. The data from these interviews will be invaluable to us as we look to gauge the community's interest in rejuvenating ministries, staff, and campus. We want to hear from more of you. If you were not interviewed, you will soon receive a survey questionnaire by email or hard mail. It too will be confidential. This is another means for you to voice your opinion. It is not a nuisance; it is critical to compiling the data needed for a proper strategic planning study. Please be a part of it. If you have any questions, contact Jason Konidaris.

## MINISTRIES

### *Seniors*

The April meeting of the Archangels Seniors we received many compliments with our Lenten luncheon, consisting of bean soup (φασολαδα) and a pasta salad. We celebrated April birthdays for Effie Gianos and Ann Ventsias; many years/χρονια πολλα! Our guest speaker was Father Harry, who showed selected portions of a DVD called "Where Jesus Walked," giving our seniors a sense of the geography, history, and culture of the Holy Land during his ministry. These portions concerned Jerusalem, the city of David, where the Temple was located in the capital of Jewish history, and where Jesus spent the last week of his life and endured his Passion, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Our speaker for our May 8 meeting will be Leni Scinto of "Designs by Lee," who will favor us with his knowledge on, "How Does Your Garden Grow." Looking forward to seeing you at this next meeting. Contact: Peter Licopantis

### *Tai Chi Classes for Seniors*

The Archangels Seniors would like to announce that the first Tai Chi class will be held on Tue, May 7, 10:30 am in the Gym at Stamford Athletic Club. We encourage all senior members of the parish to join us – not only those in our Senior Group or Philoptochos. The Archangels Seniors are hosting this first class.

Tai Chi is a very simple powerful way to maximize the health of your mind, body and spirit. Come get inspired. Contact: Peter Licopantis or Father Harry

### *Ladies Philoptochos Society*

The Ladies Philoptochos Society would like to thank parishioners for their support of the annual Palm Sunday Bake Sale and the ladies of the church for contributing delicious baked goods.

Special thanks to Marion Vanson for coordinating this event, to Kiki Verses and Niki Passios for managing the bread sale, to Christine Chivilly for organizing the dollar table, and to all the ladies who organized the baking sessions. For the Palm Sunday



Plaiting Palms on Lazarus Saturday (Apr. 27)

Bake Sale to be a success, it is a team effort. Proceeds from the sale benefit charity. Thanks also to Annie Konidaris for coordinating the dying of red eggs.

At our April meeting, we approved donations to St. Basil's Academy to meet the physical needs and graduation costs for children in their care and to the IOCC. Our next meeting is Tue, May 7, at which time there will be elections for the 2013/14 Board. The slate is as follows: Maryanne Kardaris, Pauline Galuris, Lara Paschalidis, Marion Vanson, Debbie Nanos, Diane Sierpina, Vicki Kyriakos, Christine Chivily, Penny Nanos, Mollie Sotire and Eugenia Zavras.

## Mother's Day Luncheon

Sponsored by Philoptochos

**Saturday, May 18, 12-3 pm**

at the Norwalk Inn

All are Welcome; \$45/person

50+ year members will be honored

Reservations: 203-348-4216

The Mothers' Day luncheon will take place on Sat, May 18 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Norwalk Inn. Ticket price is \$45 (half price for children 12 and under) and includes hors d'oeuvres, a champagne punch, chicken or prime rib dinner and dessert. A raffle is being organized by Donna Malitzis. We will be honoring 18 members who have served at least 50 years in Philoptochos. Reservation information was mailed to all members. Please contact Jane in the church office to make your reservation. All ladies of the parish are invited to attend, even if not a Philoptochos member. New members to Philoptochos are always welcome. Please join us! Contact: Maryanne Kardaris or Diane Sierpina



Procession of Cross on 3rd Sunday of Lent (April 7)

## Church School

The Church School faculty would like to congratulate Dina Haralabidis, a 7th grade student in our Church School program, who authored and delivered a speech on servant leadership at the district level Oratorical Festival last month (see below). Thank you



Participants of St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival (Apr. 6) Dina Haralabidis is front row, 3rd from right

for representing us and making us proud, Dina! The Teaching Liturgy and Good Friday Retreat offered intimate opportunities to grow in faith as faculty, students, and parents joined together to prepare for Holy Pascha. Thank you to Presbytera Kerry and the Church School program faculty for their assistance in planning a beautiful retreat. Our music ministry resumes Sunday, May 12, 2013. The faculty of the Church School would like to wish all families a Blessed Easter. May we all bask in the spirit of renewal and the promise that comes with the observance of the Resurrection of our Lord. Contact: Dr. Evelyn Bilius Lolis, [ebilius@aol.com](mailto:ebilius@aol.com)

## St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

On April 6, we had the honor of again hosting the District St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival for our area. Participants advancing from the parishes of St. George of Hartford, St. Barbara of Orange, Holy Trinity of Bridgeport, and our own Archangels of Stamford, competed to determine who would move on to the Metropolis level of competition. The youth spoke on various topics, including the relationship between service and leadership, the place of light in the Orthodox tradition, and the Lenten prayer of St. Ephraim. Dina Haralabidis represented our church for the first time in the competition. We hope that

others will be inspired by her example in future years! Judges Penelope Venetsanos, Tom Spiro, and Costas Cyprus evaluated the speeches, each offering unique perspectives on the talents of the speakers. They were assisted by Steven Valassis, our time-keeper and coordinator. We are thankful for their time and commitment to the event.

We are also grateful to Diane Sierpina and the ladies of the Philoptochos for organizing and hosting the beautiful reception. Archangels Church has distinguished itself for hospitality. Lastly, we thank Soulafreda Valassis, who stepped in that day to chair the event, which was directed with the utmost grace and care. It was a moving day, in which we marveled at the eloquence of these faithful young people who were confident enough to share their ideas with us. Certainly they helped to kindle a fire in our own hearts for the love of Christ.

Junior Division winners were Paul DeBassio (Orange) and Maria Karouris (Orange), and Senior Division winners were Christopher Augustinos (Hartford) and Anastasia Perry (Hartford); all advance to the Metropolis competition at St. Nicholas Church in Flushing, NY on May 18. May God bless them and all the Festival participants! Contact: Anastasia Valassis



Fr. Harry venerates the Cross on 3rd Sunday of Lent (Apr 7), with visiting Bishop Seraphim Sigrist looking on

### *Greek School*

Last month, Annie Konidaris spoke with the children about the symbolism of dyeing red eggs during Easter. Kalo Pascha to everyone! Mark your calendars - the last week of Greek school is **May 21**. Only three more classes left! The Greek School PTO is hosting an *End of the Year Pool Party* on May 28 at 4 pm at the Stamford Athletic Club. Make your own souvlakia with Kiria Nikki afterward in the church hall. RSVP required. The Greek School Graduation Ceremony will take place on Sunday, June 16 after the Divine Liturgy. Please plan on attending with your children so they can receive their Greek School certificates. Registration for the 2013/2014 **Greek school** year begins now; registration packets are available in the church office. Please return them by **June 30**. Thank you! AGS PTO Board. Contact: Rebecca Kelesidis



Children hold Icons during Great Entrance on Sunday of Orthodoxy (Mar 24)



Preschoolers learn how to make prostrations for Lent



Presvytera Kerry prompts children to wave Palms during Great Entrance on Palm Sunday (Apr. 28)

### **GOYA**

Fr. Harry led a discussion about Great Lent as the period of preparation for Holy Week through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving at the GOYA Lock-in on Mar. 29. The youth are looking forward to celebrating the Easter season with their new appreciation for the holiday. GOYA wishes all our fellow parishioners a Happy Easter. GOYA welcomes teens 7th to 12th grade. Contact Diane Skoparantzios, Advisor, at skoparantziosd@optonline.net or 203-550-6824.

### **Hope/Joy**

All children (preschool through grade 6) are encouraged to participate in the Good Friday Retreat on May 3, to attend either the 1st Resurrection Liturgy on May 4 or the Easter Vigil Holy Saturday night, and then the Agape Vespers on Easter Sunday at 11 am followed by the Easter Egg Hunt. In advance, I thank everyone for his or her participation! As I have



Fr. Harry sharing story of Noah and the Ark with Preschoolers

mentioned in the past, I will be stepping down as HOPE/JOY Advisor. I am looking for one or two people to take my place. If you are interested please let me know so we can set up a meeting. Contact: Melanie Jordanopoulos 203-505-3278 or jordotheGreek@hotmail.com.

### **Little Angels**

Contact Anastasia Valassis (avalassis@gmail.com, 203.594.1309) if you are interested in joining us; we are developing an email list to communicate about our meetings and other pertinent topics.



Preschool group hug!

### **Holy Land Pilgrimage**

Fr. Harry, accompanied by Presbytera Kerry, will lead 33 other pilgrims on a tour of the Holy Land and Constantinople on May 26 – June 6. In addition, many will stop off in Greece before returning home. Please pray for their safety and success.

### **Memorial Prayers at Cemeteries**

Because of the Pilgrimage, Fr. Harry will again visit Cemeteries the weekend before Memorial Day, on Sunday, May 19. Here is the tentative schedule:

- 1:30 pm – Norwalk
- 2:00 pm – St. John’s (Darien)
- 2:45 pm – Woodland
- 3:45 pm – Fairfield Memorial
- 5:30 pm – Queen of Peace
- 6:00 pm – Putnam (Greenwich)

Those who cannot join on May 19 can participate with Fr. Evan of Annunciation who will visit area cemeteries on Monday, May 27.

## ***Wish List***

Icons – Burial of Christ (\$25), Christ in Gethsemane (\$25), Road to Emmaus (\$25), Washing the Disciples' Feet (\$25), Taking Down Christ from the Cross (\$25), Enlarged Burial of Christ (\$60), Resurrection – Myrrhbearers (\$45)

Festival – Commercial grade Dual Convection Oven for Kitchen in Cultural Center (\$3,500)

Office – new fax machine; new cordless telephone; commercial grade vacuum cleaner (\$500)

Contact: Jane Vorvis 203-348-4216

## ***International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)***

Within hours of the deadly series of explosions that left three people dead and more than 100 injured at the Boston Marathon, His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston called upon International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) Frontliners – the emergency response network of IOCC – to be dispatched to several Boston crisis counseling centers set up overnight. Four Frontliners, Orthodox clergy experienced and trained in emergency response, will take on the task of assessing the needs of those affected by the tragedy and providing crisis counseling at local emergency care centers set up throughout the city. IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$438 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of more than 130 churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy. To learn more about IOCC, visit [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org). Contact: Christine or Nick Chivily



**Fr. Harry prepares Holy Gifts for Holy Communion during Teaching Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday (Apr. 27)**

## ***Ground-Breaking – Norwalk Parish Center***

On the occasion of the feast of St. George, patronal feast of our sister parish in Norwalk, Archbishop Demetrios will be present to lead worship and the special ground-breaking ceremony for a new Parish Center according to the following schedule:

- Easter Sunday, May 5: Great Vespers 7 pm, followed by Reception
- Renewal Monday, May 6: Orthros 8:30 am, Hierarchical Liturgy 10 am, Ground-breaking Ceremony 12:30 pm, Festive Luncheon to follow

The Center will be named for their former pastor, the late Fr. Germanos Stavropoulos, who was such a dynamic and inspiring leader. His remarkable career was cut short by a tragic car accident that claimed his life. Our parish has been warmly invited by Fr. Nicholas Dassouras to join in their feast and significant milestone. We congratulate them and pray all God's blessings!

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## PARISH REGISTRY

### ***Graduations***

Please submit names of all graduates from High School, Technical School, College, and Graduate School, along with degree earned, honors received, and future plans for more education or work.

Contact: Jane Vorvis 203-348-4216 or [archangels1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:archangels1@sbcglobal.net)

### ***Births***

- March 24 – Nabia Litra, 1st child of Alin and Carmen Litra
- April 8 – Demetrios Nicholaos Amanatidis, 2nd child of Lambros & Katie (Aivalis) Amanatidis

### ***40-Day Churching***

- April 28 – Madeleine (Stamatia) Anna Valassis, 2nd child of Dr. Steven and Stacy Valassis

### ***Baptisms***

- April 6 – Seraphim John Spetsaris, 1st child of Konstantinos & Bonnie Spetsaris; sponsor was Elpiniki Andreadou
- April 13 – Cameron George Sullivan, 1st child of Denise (Lines) and Daniel Sullivan; sponsor was Beth (Vasiliki) Boloukos
- April 20 – Leonidas Douglas Daniel Williams, 1st child of Bess (Speridakos) & Christopher Williams; sponsor was Roni (Ourania) Melikokis

### ***Engagement***

- April 6 – Ryan Hughes and Christine Riehl

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## AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

### ***AHEPA***

On Sat, May 11, at the Annunciation Church, Dr. John Grossomanides, Supreme President of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, will discuss his recent trip to Greece as leader of the 85th Annual AHEPA Family Excursion along with his visit to the White House on the occasion of Greek Independence Day. Doors open at 7:00 pm for pizza & refreshments, and the presentation will start at 7:30 pm. Admission is free and open to the public. Please let us know in advance if you will attend by contacting Nicholas Nikas, [niketes@yahoo.com](mailto:niketes@yahoo.com), 203-554-5570. In early April, Dr. Grossomanides met with Karolos Papoulias, President of the Hellenic Republic, Antonis Samaras, Prime Minister, and other key ministers. An AHEPA delegation was briefed on U.S.-Greece relations by American Ambassador to Greece Daniel B. Smith at his residence; and Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens hosted them at a dinner. Upon his return, Dr. Grossomanides and several other AHEPA family leaders celebrated the 192nd Anniversary of Greek Independence at a White House ceremony on April 18. President Barack Obama, Vice President Joseph Biden, Jr. and His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios provided remarks. Contact: Nicholas Nikas

### ***Ronald McDonald Greek Division***

The Ronald McDonald House Greek Division is hosting its annual walkathon on May 18. The RMH is a home-away-from-home for children battling pediatric cancer. The walk begins at 11:00 AM at the House, 405 East 73rd Street, New York, NY. Registration begins at 9:00 AM. Registration fee is \$15 per participant. If you are interested or have any questions, contact Soulafreda Valassis at [Soulafreda@yahoo.com](mailto:Soulafreda@yahoo.com) or contact the Greek Division directly at (212) 639-0218.



***Christ is Risen! Χριστος Ανεστη!***