

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

"THE THREE GREATEST LUMINARIES OF THE THREE-SUN DIVINITY"



THE LUMINATOR

VOLUME I NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 2011

FEAST DAY CELEBRATION

Our parish was blessed with the presence of his Grace Bishop Demetrios, the Chancellor of our Metropolis of Chicago, for the celebration of our Feast Day. He was joined by Father David Eynon of Annunciation, Decatur; Father Joseph Strzelecki of Assumption, Town and Country, MO; and Father James of St. Nicholas, Urbana, for the Vespers service on Saturday evening. A large number of students from the OCF and members of St. Nicholas parish were also in attendance. Father David preached the sermon based on the teachings of the Three Hierarchs. A wonderful dinner sponsored by Lou and Toni Laros (and prepared by Mary Laros) followed the Vespers. A breakfast, also sponsored by the Laros family, followed the Liturgy on Sunday morning.



Elizabeth Kutil and Dina Kosmopoulos, respectively, provided the Five Loaves for the Artoclasia celebrated at the Vespers and at the Liturgy. Father Michael and Presbyteria Nancy offered the Festal Icon flowers and prospophora for the Liturgy. The ladies of our Philoptochos Society prepared dessert for the dinner and fruit salad for the breakfast.

PARISH TO HOST CLERGY/LAITY CONFERENCE

His Grace Bishop Demetrios announced that our parish has been chosen to host the 2011 Clergy/Laity Conference of our Metropolis of Chicago. The Philoptochos of the Metropolis will also have their conference here at the same time. Up to 400 delegates are expected. The conference will be held on October 5th-7th. Meetings will take place at a conference center in Champaign. Because of the close proximity to the our church worship services will be held at Three Hierarchs.

Our parish will have the following responsibilities: to take care of all the registrations before the conference; to prepare the conference folders; to welcome delegates to the conference; and to hand out folders and badges. The ladies of the parish will be in charge of hospitality, providing Greek pastries for the coffee breaks during the conference. The parish will host the Grand Banquet on Thursday evening, providing the flower centerpieces and wine for the tables.

Delegates to the conference will take a field trip to the Orthodox Christian Student Living Center (OCF house) and other sites of interest on the campus.

STAFF

Fr. Michael Condos,
Presbyter

Lou Laros, *Parish Council
President*

Maria Laros, *Philoptochos
President*

Aidan Roseberry, *Church
School Director*

Katerina Polychronopoulos,
Greek School Director

COMING EVENTS

- *First Saturday of the Souls
Liturgy*, 9:00 a.m.,
February 26th
- *Apokriatiko Glendi*,
6:30 p.m., Saturday,
February 26th
- *Second Saturday of the Souls
Liturgy*, 9:00 a.m.,
March 5th
- *Cheese-Fare Luncheon*
following the Liturgy on
Sunday, March 6th

Go to www.threehierarchs.org
for the complete February and
March calendars.

Parish Web Site Improvements

Our parish is blessed with a Web site that is filled with up-to-date information regarding all the activities, programs, and liturgical services of Three Hierarchs. The following are some of the valuable information posted on our Web site:

- Parish calendar through the month of May
- Sunday bulletins
- Recordings of the Sunday sermons, Book Study Club, and the Ecumenical Dialogues
- Photo Gallery with photos from events in the life of the Parish
- Contact information for the Parish Council
- Links to other Web sites

www.threehierarchs.org

Stewardship Report

Thanks to all those members who have returned their commitment cards. So far 45 families have sub-mitted their pledge cards with a total of \$81,380 committed to date. The average pledge is \$1,800 per family. If you have not yet made your pledge, please do so. Commitment cards are available in the narthex.

Apokriatiko Glendi Mardi Gras Dance

6:30–10:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 26th

Join us for the Greek version of
Fat Tuesday—

a dinner featuring a delicious
selection of meat dishes and
other fast-free food
+ music and dancing

Only \$15.00 per person/\$35.00
per family.

FROM THE PRESIDENT LOU LAROS

Come and See

2011—A new year! The New Testament's motivation for giving is grace; giving is an act of worship in response to the generosity of God. You are to give, St. Paul says, "as God has prospered you." 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 teaches clearly: "He who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. God blesses those who give with generosity." Giving is a way to thank God for His grace and generosity. The question is not, "How much do I give to stay in the club?" but "How can I thank God for my many blessings?" We are called to apply our gifts, training, abilities, education, and skills to the tasks that God places before us. If we do this humbly and prayerfully, the body of Christ will function to its full potential. "Now you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it" 1Cor 12:27.

With our 2011 calendar almost completely filled, there are many different ways in giving thanks to God for His grace and generosity. One of the simplest ways is to make a financial pledge to the Three Hierarchs Parish. Another way is to volunteer to be on a church committee. You could have an interest in being involved on Parish Council or Philoptochos, serving on our Spring Fling committee, supporting our youth programs, helping out our of summer food festival or assisting our Parish as we host the Metropolis Clergy/Laity Conference. Finally, *the most important way you can show your thanks is by attending church.* Make sure that coming to church becomes a family priority this year. Whether it is a Sunday, a weekday service, Sunday dinner program, or a special event like the Apokriatiko (Αποκριάτικο) Mardi Gras Dance on Saturday, February 26th. Your attendance is important to the parish and the easiest way to truly express your thankfulness.

PHILOPTOCHOS CREATE OUTREACH PROGRAM

The 2011 officers of our Philoptochos chapter are Maria Laros, *President*, Connie Gyorr, *Vice President*, and Toni Laros, *Treasurer*.

The Philoptochos at their January meeting decided to form a committee that would seek out and provide assistance to those in our parish who are shut-in or in nursing homes. The ladies will host the *Cheese-Fare Luncheon on Sunday, March 6th*, following the Liturgy. The menu includes: Greek spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, and dessert.

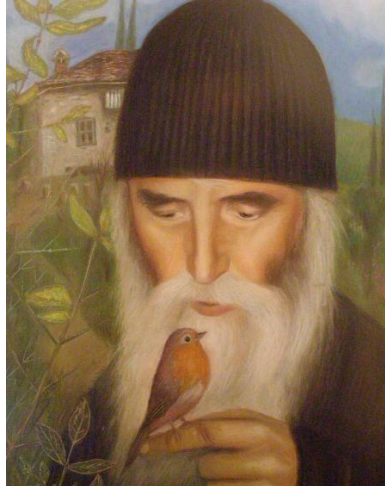
YOUTH PROGRAMS TO START

There is a new program beginning in March for the youth of Three Hierarchs and St. Nicholas. Meetings will be held every other week, twice a month, for fun activities, spiritual discussions, community service, food, and prayer. The exact days and places are TBA, and will depend on who is signed up. The Youth Ministry is for those in grades 6th to 12th, and the JOY is for those in Kindergarten to 5th grade. There will be a sign up sheet after Liturgy on February 27th. If you are interested in volunteering, having your kids join us, or have any other questions please contact Elizabeth Sahady at elizabethsahady@gmail.com for the Youth Ministry, and Sara Pessimisis at sara.pessimisis@gmail.com for JOY.

ORTHODOX BOOKCLUB

Our Orthodox Bookclub meets on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., led by Father Michael. The group is now reading the book by Elder Paisios “Spiritual Awakening.” The Elder was a monk on Mt. Athos and was well-known for his spiritual guidance to fellow monks and pilgrims to the Holy Mountain.

Twelve members are now participating. The third session will be held on Wednesday, February 23rd.



A Christian must not be fanatic; he must have love for and be sensitive towards all people. Those who inconsiderately toss out comments, even if they are true, can cause harm.

I once met a theologian who was extremely pious, but who had the habit of speaking to the (secular) people around him in a very blunt manner; his method penetrated so deeply that it shook them very severely. He told me once: “During a gathering, I said such and such a thing to a lady.” But the way that he said it, crushed her. “Look,” I said to him, “you may be tossing golden crowns studded with diamonds to other people, but the way that you throw them can smash heads, not only the sensitive ones, but the sound ones also.”

Let’s not stone our fellow-man in a so-called “Christian manner.” The person who—in the presence of others—checks someone for having sinned (or speaks in an impassioned manner about a certain person), is not moved by the Spirit of God; he is moved by another spirit.

The way of the Church is LOVE; it differs from the way of the legalists. The Church sees everything with tolerance and seeks to help each person, whatever he may have done, however sinful he may be.

I have observed a peculiar kind of logic in certain pious people. Their piety is a good thing, and their predisposition for good is also a good thing; however, a certain spiritual discernment and amplitude is required so that their piety is not accompanied by narrow-mindedness or strong-headedness. Someone who is truly in a spiritual state must possess and exemplify spiritual discernment; otherwise he will forever remain attached to the “letter of the Law,” and the letter of the Law can be quite deadly.

A truly humble person never behaves like a teacher; he will listen, and, whenever his opinion is requested, he responds humbly. In other words, he replies like a student. He who believes that he is capable of correcting others is filled with egotism. A person that begins to do something with a good intention and eventually reaches an extreme point, lacks true discernment. His actions exemplify a latent type of egotism that is hidden beneath this behavior; he is unaware of it, because he does not know himself that well, which is why he goes to extremes.

Elder Paisios

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS CHOSEN

The Parish Council at its regular meeting last month chose its officers for 2011: *President*, Lou Laros; *Vice-President*, Foti Kutil; *Treasurer*, Traian Serbanuta; *Income Treasurer*, Georgine Paulus; and *Secretary*, Andreas Polycarpou. The Council also welcomed its newest member, Katrina Polychronopoulos. In its meeting this month the Council appointed Kostas Galaras to fill one of two vacancies remaining. Ryan Kutil, Stacy Pomonis, and Taso Valkanos make up the rest of the membership of the board. If you would like to serve on the Parish Council please speak to Father Michael or Lou Laros.

We thank Jan Galaras and Michael Comet for their past service on the Parish Council; Jan for her excellent job as treasurer and Mike for his great cooking for a number of events of the parish. God bless you for your service.

FIELD OF DREAMS FOR HAITI



The mother-daughter team of Jan Galaras and Elizabeth will join a medical mission team to Haiti next month. *Field of Dreams* is a non-profit group of surgeons, nurses, and other healthcare professionals that will be participating in a medical/surgical mission in Port au Prince, Haiti, March 25–April 2. The team will deliver care to children and families in Haiti’s ONLY critical care hospital. If you wish to donate online please visit www.carle.org/give/donate/index.aspx and specify “donate to Haiti” or you can send donations to Carle Foundation Development, Attn: Team Haiti 611 W. Park, Urbana, IL 61801.

Prayer of St. Ephraim

**O Lord and Master of My life,
Take away from me the spirit of
laziness, idle curiosity, love of
power, and vain talk.**

**But grant me your servant,
the spirit of chastity, humility,
patience, and love.**

**Yes, O Lord and King, Grant
that I might see mine own faults
and not to judge my brothers
and sisters.**

**For you are blessed forever
more. Amen.**

NEWS IN BRIEF

- *Thanks to Paul Anastasiadis, who generously donated his labor and the cost of the paint to repaint our church interior. It now is clean and bright! Many thanks!*
- *It was necessary to replace both the heating/ac units and the water heater at the parsonage.*
- *Congratulations to Marty Burke and Christina White, whose son was baptized in our church last month.*
- *Our condolences to the Pianfetti family. Brian's mother and father both passed away last week after long illnesses.*
- *Congratulations to Angela Glaros, who successfully defended for her doctorate in Anthropology. She now has a temporary teaching position at EIU that hopefully may become permanent.*

NEW TO THREE HIERARCHS BOOKSTORE

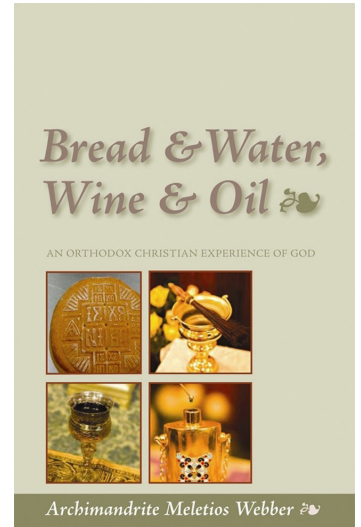
Worry, despair, insecurity, fear of death . . . these are our daily companions, and even though we attempt to ignore them or try to crowd them out, they are there, waiting for us in our quieter moments.

It is precisely where we hurt most that the experience of the Orthodox Church has much to offer. The remedy is not a pep talk, or any simple admonitions to fight the good fight, cheer up, or think positively. Rather, the Orthodox method is to change the way we look at the human person (starting with ourselves).

According to two thousand years of experience, Orthodoxy shows us how to "be transformed by the renewing of our mind"—a process that is aided by participation in the traditional ascetic practices and Mysteries of the Church.

In this unique and accessible book, Archimandrite Meletios Webber first explores the role of mystery in the Christian life, then walks the reader through the seven major Mysteries of the Orthodox Church, showing the way to a richer, fuller life in Christ.

Also added to the Bookstore: A classic of Orthodox spirituality *The Way of the Pilgrim*; a must read for Orthodox Christians *The Orthodox Way*; two books on *Father Arseny* and his beautiful testimony of faith in the Soviet Gulag; and for those in our Book Study Club *The Gurus, the Young Man, and Elder Paisios*.



SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTS NEW LENTEN SERIES

Our Sunday School will begin using the newest "zine" produced by our Archdiocese's Department of Education. This nine-week unit spans the Great Fast with clear, vivid introductions to the season's Scriptures, Traditions, saints, and services. The brief readings in the zine are a focal point in classroom lessons that include not only personal reflection and thoughtful discussion, but also interactive activities and projects to help students refuel. Journal assignments keep students focused all week long on the disciplines of the Great Fast: fasting, prayer, giving, and learning.

Incidentally, Aimee Ehrs, (the husband of seminarian Jan-Henrik, former members of our parish), is one of the authors of this course.

FINAL ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE AT THREE HIERARCHS

We will meet with parishoners of St. Matthew Catholic Church here at Three Hierarchs at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 16th, for the last dialogue until next Fall. The topic of discussion will be *Spiritual Practices of Prayer*. The February meeting was very-well attended at St. Matthew's; the topic of discussion was the Mysteries of Confession and Holy Unction. These dialogues afford us a wonderful opportunity to refresh our knowledge of the basic truths and practices of our Orthodox Faith.