

Reflections

Holy Mother of God Greek Orthodox Church

May 2007 ♦ 1645 Phillips Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32308 ♦ (850) 878-0747 ♦ <http://www.hmog.org>

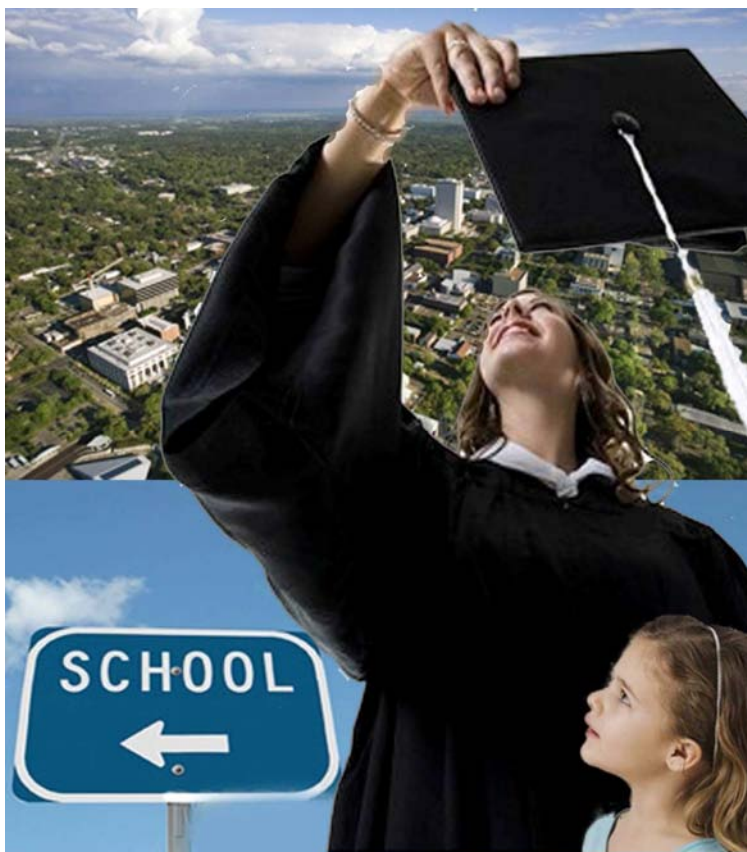
Imprints ~ Reflections from Fr. Alex

Christos Anesti! Christ is risen! As we continue to bask in the light of the Resurrection and our glorious Pascha, there are two very important days approaching. On April 22nd and May 6th, we'll be recognizing and wishing well (of course, we refuse to say "goodbye") to our college and high school graduates, respectively. Their achievements have been many--academic excellence and honors, athletic prowess, victory after victory in tournament after tournament, public service and important outreach projects, accomplishments on the stage and in prestigious chorales, just to name a few. The list goes on and on.

And what lies ahead is equally impressive: FSU, Law School, West Point, Harvard--not a bad list.

These kids--but they're not "kids" at all--are inspiring. They're smart, energized, creative and accomplished. There's no doubt our graduates have made deep and lasting imprints on their high schools, colleges, friends, instructors, guidance counselors and colleagues.

But there's no imprint like the one they've made on our hearts. Through the years, you've known many of them as babies. You've seen their baptisms, held their parents' hands in difficult times, watched them go from toddlers to Altar Boys and GOYA members ... you've been there with them and for them during the water-shed moments of their lives. You've seen the youthful wonder in their eyes as they gazed upon their first Paschal candles; you taught them to sing "Christos Anesti" and showed them how to fold a palm the "Patmos way." You can't believe that just a few years ago you were helping them zip up their coats--and now *they're* teaching Sunday School--they were children yesterday; and today, somehow, they're bright, shining adults.



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Upcoming Events!

GODPARENT'S SUNDAY & SUNDAY SCHOOL GRADUATION MAY 6TH: Burgers & Dogs, Games and lots of surprises in store for our youngsters!

SPAGHETTI DINNER FRIDAY MAY 4TH 11 AM – 7 PM: Join us to serve, or bring your family and friends to eat! Fr. Alex will give **Church Tours** from 5 pm – 7 pm.

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Our next ECHO Sundays are May 6th and June 3rd. Our parish's bond with ECHO continues to mature and take us in new and inspiring directions. Please join in this ministry to the "least of our brethren." Please drop off your loving gift of food and non-perishable items into the "Giving Boxes" located in the Hellenic Center and Patmos Hall.



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Some you met more recently, when they moved to Tallahassee for college. In a short period of time, you were moved by their smiling, cheerful attitudes, willingness to pitch in, their leadership with our youth, and their heart-warming commitment to our parish.

For all of these young adults, this is a time of transition. Transition is exciting and exhilarating, but like anything worthwhile, it is also scary. There is the unknown, the yet-to-be-realized. The challenges to come are new, more substantial and much more complicated than those in the past, and will be played out on unfamiliar territory. We've all been there.

So the bottom line is that they needed you then, and they need you now. They can zip up their own coats and wipe their own noses at this point--so what do they need from you? The answer is simple: your prayers, loving support, enthusiasm, some last-minute hand-holding ... encouraging phone calls, a care-package from time to time, a big hug and good conversation when they come home to visit. They don't need to be told "what to do" anymore, but they do need to be told exactly how much they mean to you--to know that they matter in your life. Your long-term interest in these beloved young people will represent to them a profound connection to our parish, to their faith, to their past and yours. This connection is one to be maintained, nurtured, and cherished. These imprints are forever!

We are proud of our graduates. But more than that, we love and respect them. They are our past, they play a vital role in our present, and they are the veritable future of our parish and Orthodox faith. May they be blessed with wonderful experiences and challenges, learning more about the world and themselves each day; may they be safe and always walk with our Lord. And may He bring them back home to us soon!

With love in our Risen Lord,
Fr. Alex

Weekday Services in May

- 8th: Apostle & Evangelist John. Orthros begins at 6:00 p.m.
- 17th: Ascension of our Lord. Orthros begins at 9:30 a.m.
- 21st: Sts. Constantine & Helen. Orthros begins 6:00 p.m.
- 26th: Great Vespers. Begins at 7:00 p.m.

Altar Service

Fr. Alex would like to thank all of our servers and their parents for all of the hard work and dedication during Holy Week. Going forward, parents are kindly reminded to take note of your Altar server's assigned Sunday: if we have too few boys, we cannot carry out the Divine Liturgy properly; if there are too many present, we cannot properly teach, mentor and manage them. Each week, our captains who have Orthros duty are asked to arrive at Orthros no later than 10:00 a.m.; all servers should be in the Altar by 10:20 a.m., so they can have time to get settled and vest before Liturgy begins. Parents are encouraged to contact David Purpura, our Altar leader, with questions, ideas and input: purpura@psy.fsu.edu.

Team 1 Captains:

Nick Griner
George Joanos
CJ Barkas
Chris Perrigan
James Perrigan
William Perrigan

Team 2 Captain:

Nic Gavalas
Jimmy Branch
Nicholas Gavalas
Thomas Geeker
Nicholas Koikos

- May 6th, Team 1 (Orthros Duty: George Joanos)
- May 13th, Team 2 (Orthros Duty: Nic Gavalas)
- May 20th, Team 1 (Orthros Duty: Nick Griner)
- May 27th, Team 2 (Orthros Duty: Nic Gavalas)

Checked our HMOG "Family Page" lately?

Parents, this is something that can really help you day by day, week by week, month by month in bringing the faith into your family's daily life. You'll find tips on building a healthy body and mind, upcoming events for our children and so much more. This is a great resource for our parish, and it takes a great deal of love, time and effort to continue its progress. Please take advantage of it today! Like to help out? Brandy welcomes your muscles: bhetsas@bankruptcydata.com.

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

Christos Anesti! This has been a most incredible month.

Palm Sunday

We had a great attendance in church and afterwards, at the luncheon. A special thank you to Andrew and Angie Poulos for chairing this, and for the wonderful and successful luncheon.

Holy Week

Good Friday was a beautiful service and the Kouvouklion was outstanding. The Resurrection and Pasha Service were as magnificent as ever. Thank you Richard Allen John Vlandis for making the delicious soup and Nick Joanos for serving it.

Easter Luncheon

Thank you Richard Allen for Co-chairing the luncheon with me. I have never seen an operation run so smoothly and still have a good time. I appreciate how everybody stepped up at either inside the church or in the hall today. By the way, I had many parishioners compliment us on the quality and taste of the food and I think the Sundaes were a hit with both the young and old.

Father Alex Chetsas

I am very appreciative of Father for his beautiful services and I am consistently amazed by his energy. Thank you Father and Presbytera Brandy for your efforts in making this year's Holy Week special.

Peter N. Stoumbelis

Parish Council President

Night-Lites

Coming in Sept 2007, Wed.
"Night-Lites"! A new offering to help us turn on to the faith and chase away the dark! Details are on the way this summer...
so keep reading!



A Desert Flower

"Abba Xanthios said, 'A dog is better than I am, for he has love and he does not judge.'"

(Each month, Father will select a saying or story from the Desert Fathers and Mothers of our faith—a *desert flower* for you to hold close to your heart)



Philoptochos News

Wow! How time flies! Congratulations to all of our graduating Seniors. We wish you many blessings of great college years or whatever may lie ahead. Your life has begun again - enjoy and may God continue to watch over each and every one of you.

It's now time for our graduating High School Senior Scholarships and St. Stephens Summer Scholarships.

To all High School Seniors - Philoptochos requires a paper from you on "What My Orthodox Faith Means to Me" and a copy of your admission letter from your college for your scholarship to be processed. Please address to Tina Joanos in care of Philoptochos, 1645 Phillips Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32308. We would like to receive your paper by April 30th so we can recognize you on May 6 with all our 2007 graduates.

To St. Stephens Camp Participants - Thanks for your dedication and devotion to your church and your participation with Philoptochos. We have presented scholarships to five GOYAns who will be attending St. Stephens Camp this summer. Continue to work for the Lord and his blessings shall be bestowed upon you always.

Another Great Fundraiser - our annual Chicken Dinner held on April 27th was a success. Special thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this event. We pulled together as a team, adding smiles with hard work. Way to go ladies and gents! Thanks so much.

On May 9, 2007, please join us for our end of the year dinner at Torreyia Grill beginning at 6:30 p.m. We will go over just a few last minute business items before we break for summer, but other than that it will be fun, good food and company for everyone - mark your calendar!

Thanks to all of my board and fellow members of Philoptochos for a great year - we have worked hard and in return we have given to those so less fortunate. Our ministry will continue to grow as it is indeed a reward, a challenge and a privilege to be part of Philoptochos to serve humankind to those that are so in need.

Tina Joanos, President

Important Parish Updates and Notices

Epiphany blessings: Fr. Alex had to put house blessings on hold a bit because of foot surgery last month but is ready to roll now. Please contact him to make a date. On the day of the blessing, please have the following ready: a designated table where the short blessing service can be read; icons or other holy items you would like blessed; a medium-sized bowl half-filled with water and fresh basil for sprinkling the water (if you should so choose—Father will also come prepared with a sprinkler if not); as many members of your family prayerfully assembled as possible. **Remember: this beautiful Epiphany blessing is not about the wood, stone and mortar of your house; it is about the people that live there.**

Fr. Alex's normal office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. If you would like to see Father, **please schedule an appointment**, so that he may plan an orderly weekly schedule and follow through with all of his commitments and deadlines. Sometimes, during office hours, Father may be in Liturgy, called away for emergencies, doing home visits, etc. **If an emergency arises, please call Fr. Alex directly on his cell phone: 850-491-7390, day or night.**



Feel like dumping on someone? Come to Holy Confession on Tuesdays from 3 - 5:00 p.m. Fr. Alex will be in the Church waiting for you to come and let God “take it all away.”

Fr. Alex on patrol! Father is currently undergoing training to be a chaplain for the Florida Highway Patrol—it will be an honor for him to offer our dedicated men and women the support of our Church. Our officers—our friends, neighbors, and classmates—risk their lives for us everyday: this is a profound reality that we all respect. Father looks forward to sharing the fruits of this ongoing experience with all of our parishioners throughout the coming months and years.

Driving for the faith. Fr. Alex is in contact with several senior parishioners who need a ride to Church each Sunday. Can you help? This is a rewarding ministry—please call him to offer yourself today.

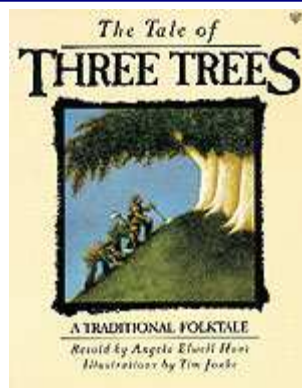
Fr. Stanley Harakas was a moving, informative and challenging presenter during his April 11th visit. Over 70 parishioners, students, professors and other “searchers” gathered at FSU’s magnificent Dodd Hall; with characteristic grace, love and clarity, Fr. Stanley discussed the major precepts of Orthodox ethical thinking and applied them to modern ethical dilemmas. It is a rare blessing to have such a remarkable Orthodox pastor and theologian visit our city. We are all thankful to Fr. Stanley for his effort and to our OCF for organizing the event. Thanks, as well, to all those who assembled and offered the excellent lasagna dinner (including David Purpura’s birthday cake!) to all attendees. It was a beautiful night, and a fitting conclusion to another fantastic year of OCF ministry. **To any parishioners who would like to further pursue Fr. Stanley’s work, Fr. Alex would be happy to recommend a book for you and help you obtain it. Just ask!**

“Close Encounters” Marriage Seminar on April 25th was a time to learn, share and grow. Thanks to all of our couples who came with open hearts to explore the Sacrament of Marriage—and our potluck dinner was a good, informal occasion to spend some time and get to know one another better. Thanks to Stephanie and Nicole Joanos for offering child-care for our precious young ones. **Please look out for a related multi-session offering next fall/winter: “Olive Trees Around Your Table: Approaching the Blessings and Challenges of Parenthood.”**

Voices of Faith will break for the summer months and will resume in September. If you or your child would like to read the Epistle this summer, please contact Joseph Sima and a date will be arranged.

Book of the Month

April & May’s “Book of the Month”: *The Tale of Three Trees*, by Angela E. Hunt. This popular Lenten picture-book tells the story of how three little trees saw their dreams of greatness come true in surprising ways. Look for it on the Homecoming table this Sunday!



Choir Needs YOU

Do you like to sing?
Do you sing in the pews on Sunday? Join us in the choir - it is a rewarding experience.

Rehearsals for May are scheduled for Tuesday evenings, May 1st, 15th and 22nd at 6:30 p.m. We need you! For more information, call JoAnn Myers @ 385-7223.





May 2007

Prosforo Schedule

May 6 – Catherine Mantzanas
 May 20 – Angie Poulos
 May 27 – Margarita Joanos

Calendar Symbol Key:

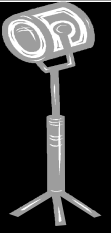
- = Strict Fast
- = Wine and Oil Allowed
- = Fish Allowed
- = Dairy, Eggs & Fish Allowed
- = Father Away

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>Please contact Fr. Alex for further guidelines on fasting, prayer life, Confession and weekly preparation for Holy Communion.</i></p>		1 Confessions 3-5 p.m. Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	2 	3	4 Spaghetti Dinner 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Church Tours 5-7:00 p.m.	5
6 <i>Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</i> Altar Team 1 ~ECHO Sunday~ Sunday School 11:45 a.m. Sunday School Graduation; Godparent's Sunday & Luncheon	7	8 <i>St. John the Theologion</i> <i>Orthros & Divine Liturgy 6:00 p.m..</i> Confessions 3-5 p.m.	9 <i>Philoptochos</i> <i>Dinner @ Torreya Grill</i> 6:30 p.m.	10	11 	12
13 <i>Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</i> Altar Team 2	14 <i>Parish Council Meeting</i> 6:00 pm	15 Confessions 3-5 p.m. Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	16 <i>Fast Free</i>	17 <i>Ascension of Our Lord</i> <i>Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</i>	18 	19
20 <i>Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</i> Altar Team 1 Youth Ministries Mtg. 12:30 p.m.	21 <i>Sts. Constantine & Helen</i> <i>Liturgy @ 6 p.m.</i>	22 Confessions 3-5 p.m. Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	23 	24	25 	26 <i>Saturday of Souls</i> <i>Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</i> <i>Great Vespers 7 p.m.</i>
28 Fast Free <i>Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</i> <i>Holy Pentecost</i> Altar Team 2	28 Fast Free	29 Fast Free Confessions 3-5 p.m.	30 Fast Free	31 Fast Free		

Pangari/Coffee(c) Schedule for May 2007
 05/06 Joanos/Manias/Stoumbelis
 05/13 Myers/Mixon/Geeker
 05/20 Perrigan/Manias/Vlandis
 05/27 Mixon/Joanos/Stoumbelis



Lights...Camera...YOUTH!



“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”

1 Timothy 4: 12

Holy Mother Of God Youth Director – Athena Gill

It truly has been a pleasure working with Father Alex and the dynamic group of Youth Leaders. I believe we have advanced the entire ministries program in the 2006-2007 year. Thanks to all of you for your hard work and dedication. With the foundation we built this year; I see only bigger and better things ahead. Congratulations to all of our Seniors on your future endeavors and remember, “Real Success is finding your lifework in the work that you love”. Best wishes and safe travels to all.

Sunday School Youth Director – Alex Penn Williams

It has been a blessing and a privilege to serve as Sunday School Director this year. I want to express my sincere thanks to the parents who have trusted the teachers and me with the spiritual growth of their children. It is so beautiful to watch our precious children and youth each Sunday receive the miraculous body and bread of Christ and then proceed to their assembly and respective Sunday school classes. I also truly appreciate the dedicated teachers who prepare rich lessons every Sunday so that their students may grow in their Orthodox faith. Over this year I have seen much progress in the students; they ask good questions, participate in the children's sermon and are engaged in their classes. My prayer is that the students will continue to learn and be strong in the Word, so much so that they will be able to live their faith - not only on Sundays but on each and every day of their lives.

JOY Year-End Thanks –Presbytera Brandy Chetsas

Thank you to all of our JOY friends and their families for participating in a wonderful year of spiritual enrichment, outreach and growing friendships! This year, we splashed in the beautiful water of Wakulla Springs; collected food, jackets, blankets and more for our neighbors in need; blessed our parish's beloved pets; learned about St. Basil and baked our own Vasilopita; wrote loving letters in recognition of His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios' Name Day--and more! All of these events and our time together each and every Sunday have been a true gift and are a stepping-stone from which we can always grow further in our friendships and understanding of the Church. Have a joy-filled, restful, safe summer.

Youth Choir Director – Victoria Landy

Thank you for your beautiful voices that the community has enjoyed this year. An outstanding job was done at both the Christmas pageant and the Greek Independence Day, you should all be very proud of yourselves as you sang for the praising of our lord. This year has been the beginning of a new and exciting adventure. I had a lot of fun working with and getting to know all of you this year. I am looking forward to growing with you next year. Have a great musical filled summer.

GOYA Director – Mrs. Debbie Wernke

Another great year with GOYA has quickly passed. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all our wonderful GOYAns. There is a large group of seniors graduating this year; we all wish them the best as they continue their journey through life. You will all be missed. I want to thank those who stepped up and took leadership positions; you are the future leaders of our church.

Fr. Alex added a wealth of ideas, motivating our GOYAns to undertake many new activities this year. I am proud of your work on the toy and warm clothes drive that benefited ECHO, the Pre-Sanctified dinner you prepared as tears flowed down many faces (those darn onions), and the increased number of GOYAns who volunteered for Epistle readings this year. Also, many of our young men served Father Alex in the Altar. I look forward to the continued growth of our program.

Though things slow down for the summer, GOYAns will get the opportunity to attend St. Stephens Camp, a standing favorite for all. Thank you once again to Philoptochos for offering a 50% scholarship to assist GOYAns in attending St. Stephens Camp. You help plant a seed of Orthodoxy that rapidly grows while at camp. The impact St. Stephens makes on our youth cannot be emphasized enough.

Youth Greek Dance Ministry Director – Carly Ramsey

Thank you, beautiful dancers, for your bright spirits, warm smiles, and brilliant feet! Congratulations to our grads – I admire your dedication and await your many successes. Opa!

Sunday School Graduation & God-Parents' Sunday

Please join us on Sunday, May 6, 2007 as we celebrate Godparent's Sunday - a special day for our children to reunite with their godparent(s) and to receive Holy Communion together. This will be the last day of Sunday School for our children. We will resume classes in September.

Recognition of our High School Seniors.

We have several students who are graduating from high school this year, and we would like to recognize them on this day.

Sunday School graduation and end-of -the year festivities! Everyone is invited to join us in the Hellenic Center for Hot Dogs/Hamburgers, games, and a whole lot of fun! Please remember to bring a change of clothes for some "wet" fun!

Pre-K and Kindergarten – Ms. Kristen & Ms. Dianne

It has been a great year for Miss Kristen and me. We both enjoyed teaching all of you. You are all so bright and enthusiastic and sooo smart! We wish good luck to those of you who are graduating to the First Grade and we look forward to seeing the rest of you next year!

1st and 2nd Grade Class – Manoli

I was extremely lucky to have such a fantastic class in my first year of teaching Sunday school. Every Sunday each of you helped me start my week off smiling because of the silly stories you told me or the beautiful arts and crafts you made! Have a great summer and hopefully I will see you all again next year! In God's Name, Manoli"

1st & 2nd Grade Class--Yianna

It has been such a blessing spending my Sunday mornings with you all! Your smiles and imaginations are an amazing way to start the week. I am so thankful for the time we have spent together this year, and look forward to the fall. Have a fun and safe summer!

3rd-5th Grade Class – Mrs. Frankeberger and Mrs. Drzewiecki

This year has been an enjoyable time. We have had fun teaching you and spending time with you. We have all learned so much from each other. We have enjoyed having you in our class and getting to know you. We are looking forward to seeing you again next year and hope to see you over the summer. Please remember the many lessons we discussed. With Love in Christ, and may God be with you all.

6th-8th Grade Class--Angie Kolovos

Since I am graduating this year from FSU I just wanted to say how much I've enjoyed my time with my students, as well as with the entire HMOG community. All of my students mean so much to me and not only have the past two years been fun and filled with great moments, but I will also remember each of you for what you have taught me. I will take this wonderful experience and carry it with me through my spiritual and worldly life. I have looked forward to spending each Sunday in our classroom together, so I will absolutely miss that next year, but I am so appreciative to you all for giving me your time to be able to learn together these two years. Our shared faith and love for Christ is a wonderful bond, and has aided me tremendously during my time here, as I hope it has meant as much to all of you. I will keep in touch with each of you, and I am looking forward to hearing about all of your achievements in and out of school. God bless each of you, I love you and will miss you all!

9-12 Grade Class—Janet Gavalas

To my fantastic class of 2007! It has been my privilege to share with you our beautiful Orthodox Faith. You are an awesome group: devoted to your faith, eager to learn and so much fun!!! To my beloved graduates: I will miss you; but I am confident that you will live your Orthodox principles wherever you may be. To my beloved undergrads: I look forward to continuing our journey together toward Theosis. There will always be a special place in my heart and my prayers for each one of you. *With Love in Christ*
- Mrs. Gavalas

Congratulations to Mr. Nic Gavalas!

On Saturday, April 14th, Mr. Nic was granted honorary membership to the Florida State University class of 1957 at their 50th class reunion with gratitude for his support and guidance of FSU students for more than 50 years.

College Graduates and goodbyes: **Chloe Spicer** (U. of Georgia), **Angie Kolovos** (Emory), **Angela Drzewiecki** (working world), and **Ashley Clampitt** (Harvard Divinity)

High School graduates: **Zach Joanos** (West Point), **Josh Sarkis** (TCC), **George Joanos** (TCC), **Alexandra Mixon** (TCC), **Janet Gavalas** (UNF), **Stephanie Wernke** (FSU), **Ely Mathes** (Appalachian State University), **Nicholas Sima** (FSU)

Be on the Look Out

Combined June/July Reflections will arrive next month. In consideration of the hiatus most of our youth and adult ministries experience in the summer months, and the high cost of printing, all parishioners will receive a combined *Reflections* (with inserted June and July calendars) next month to keep you informed and updated on all coming events.

Blessings in Our Lives . . .

On the Saturday of Lazarus (March 31st), Ogier Mathewes was welcomed into the Orthodox Christian Faith through the



Sacrament of Chrismation. He has taken the name of Christopher/ Christophoros; his nameday is May 9th—wish him well and keep him in your prayers, always!

Congratulations and blessings to Christine Athitakis and William Waters, who joined in the Sacrament of Marriage on April 22nd. We wish Christine and Bill many years of mutual growth, love and much happiness!

Youth Ministries wrap-up meeting on Sunday, May 20th, 12:30 p.m.

Fr. Alex and Athena Gill invite all of our ministry chairs to join them in the Patmos Hall Conference Room for a 30-minute wrap up session and some brainstorming for the fall of 2007/spring of 2008. Please contact Athena to confirm your attendance. Thanks to all of our leaders for an inspiring year!

Reminder to Parents that the Nursery Program's season will close with Sunday School on May 6th. Thanks to Nicole Josey and Stephanie Joanos for developing this vital ministry—and for their special efforts on Clean Monday, Holy Friday and during "Close Encounters" marriage seminar. The program will begin again next fall. During the summer months, though there will be no supervision, parents are welcome to use the nursery room and toys for their little ones. Fr. Alex asks that parents kindly clean up after their children and put the toys back where they were found. Thanks to all, and see you next fall!

Orthodox Christian Fellowship

OCF is breaking for May, June, and July. We have had a great year and we look forward to next year. Wishes for a great summer to all!

OCF officers:

President: Ashley Clampitt

Email: amc04h@fsu.edu

Phone: 321-271-5601

Vice President: Angie Kovolos

Treasurer: Angelica Zanetos

Secretary: Manoli Caros



Orthodox Christian Fellowship



Saintly Lives

Here is a picture of the Statue of St. Methodios on the Holy Trinity Column in Olomous, Czech Republic.

Saintly Lives

Sts. Cyril and Methodios

"Since ye were equal in character to the Apostles, and teachers of the Slavic lands, O divinely-wise Cyril and Methodios, pray to the Lord of all to strengthen all nations in Orthodoxy and unity of thought, to convert and reconcile the world to God, and to save our souls"

(Commemorated on May 11th)

Sts. Cyril and Methodios were born in Thessalonica in the 9th

century. Methodios was a military man before becoming a monk on Mount Olympus. Cyril (born "Constantine") was a brilliant theologian and scholar—and was librarian at the Church of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople; later, he became a monk. The Emperor Michael sent the brothers to the Khazars (north of the Black Sea) in response to their petition for Christian teachers—and later, they were called by Prince Rostislav of Moravia, also to instruct his people in the Orthodox Faith. In the midst of these energized missionary activities, the brothers devised an alphabet for the Slavs, and used it to translate the Liturgy and Holy Scripture into the language of the people (what we now refer to as "Church Slavonic"). Though some disagreed with their respect for the Slavic "vernacular," Pope Adrian II received their efforts with love and full approval. St. Cyril reposed in Rome on February 14 and was buried in the Church of Saint Clement. St. Methodios was made Bishop of Moravia, but was soon-after imprisoned, due to more controversy over the Slavic translations. In 874, through the defense of Pope John VIII, he was freed and made Archbishop of Moravia. Still more difficulties followed, and he was forbidden to celebrate the Liturgy in Slavonic. Summoned to Rome again in 879, he was completely exonerated and allowed once again to use the Slavonic tongue for the divine services. He reposed on April 6, 885.

Making it real: Sts. Cyril and Methodios had many accomplishments—one of the most remarkable was their courageous stance on the validity of Church Slavonic. The Orthodox Church has always encouraged newly converted peoples to worship in their own language; this is an expression, after all, of the true universality of the Gospel. Their respect for God's people is inspiring. This month, approach parishioners from all kinds of different backgrounds with your children—ask them how to say "Christ is risen" in their native tongue. You may hear responses in Arabic, Greek, Russian, German and Romanian for starters. It's a big world out there—take this opportunity to show your child just how big and rich it is!



Greek Food Festival UPDATE – Jimmy Kalfas, Festival Chairperson

The 2007 Greek Food Festival, scheduled for October 12th and 13th, is rapidly approaching. The Greek Food Festival sees our Church Community Come Together and exposes our traditions and beliefs to our neighbors in Tallahassee and its surrounding towns and cities. We utilize the Greek Food Festival to provide funds needed for the many activities of the Church. Our past festival chairpersons created a solid foundation upon which we can build future festivals, and there are still many hours of preparation required. I do realize we all have vacation plans and commitments outside of the Church, and I want to ask everyone to band together and help with the preparation. We will post the cooking schedule shortly, and we'll be calling on members of our community for help. When called, please volunteer. Even if it is only a couple of hours at a time, we need your help. Can't cook? This is a great opportunity to learn! We have many experienced hands who will be glad to teach you. Last year, for the first time in many years, we had a new crop of men join the cooking teams. We look forward to having them return this year, now as skilled hands.



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BODY BUILDERS Automobile Paint & Body Shop
Industrial Plaza Dr: 877-1669; West Tennessee St: 576-0319

BRANTLEY'S Seafood Restaurant, Thvl: 229/226-3937

EARL BACON AGENCY- Insurance & Bonds: 878-2121

GEORGE & LOUIE'S Rest., Thvl: 229-226-1218

IGLER & DOUGHERTY – Attorneys at Law: 878-2411

LEGACY TOYOTA OF TALLAHASSEE: 575-0168

NIC'S TOGGERY – The Gallery @ Market St: 893-9599
Downtown: 222-0687; Big & Tall: Northwood Blvd:385-6866

PAUL J. SMITH – Cosmetic & Family Dentistry
1535 Killlearn Center Boulevard: 893-9669

TALLAHASSEE SINGLE DAY SURGERY: 878-5165

TORREYA Grill – Seafood, Steaks & more: 877-3211

AMSOUTH BANK– Personal & Business Banking: 523-4630

CAPITAL EUROCARS BMW and Mercedes-Benz
Authorized Dealers: 374-3777

CHAPMAN PRODUCE – WHOLESALE CO: 877-1187

FARMERS AND MERCHANT BANK: 997-2591

GEORGIO'S Fine Food & Spirits: 893-4161

JEFFERSON COUNTY KENNEL CLUB: 997-2561

NEWFIELDS: 893-7277; Cell: 545-666

SALLY PAPAGEORGE, REALTOR – COLDWELL BANKER
HARTUNG & NOBLIN: 386-6160, Cell: 566-2815, H: 893-3376

TALLAHASSEE DIAMOND CENTER

Price Us and You'll Win – 1355 Market St.: 906-9213

TODD KING'S Cooling & Heating:562-6821 or 907-5772

WILLIAMS Orthotics and Prosthetics: 385-6655

www.hmog.org

This is YOUR WEBSITE! And Fr. Alex needs your help and input in building it, little by little. Do you have an idea you believe our parishioners would benefit from—something enriching that will bring us all closer to the Orthodox Faith? Please contact Fr. Alex and share your thoughts today.

The online version of *Reflections* is in **COLOR!** Send any suggestions or comments you have to us at hmog@comcast.net.

Vicky Gavalas email: hmog@comcast.net;

Father Alex's Email: hmogfather@comcast.net



Check out the www.hmog.org Family Page

If your child has done something special, our Holy Mother of God family wants to know! Please e-mail all of your special news or accomplishments for your family to Presbytera Brandy Chetsas @ bchetsas@bankruptcydata.com for inclusion on our really cool new website - www.HMOG.org family page.



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Fr. Alex Emergency Cell:
850-491-7390

**PREACHING THE WORD:
MAY SERMON SERIES**

May 6th

John 4:5-42: *No Homily.
Graduation Sunday. Special
recognition of our high school
seniors.*

May 13th

John 9:1-38: *"Seeing Christ in a
Mother's Love"*

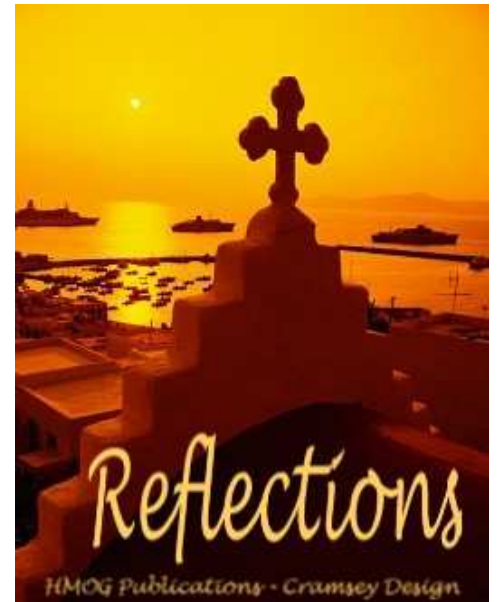
May 20th

John 17:1-13: *"Creeds and Deeds:
Embracing the Challenge of the 1st
Ecumenical Council"*

May 27th

John 7:37-52; 8:12: *"Upon the
Wings of Your Own Personal
Pentecost"*

New 2007 parish directories are
now available at the Church
office. Please come by after
Liturgy or stop by during our
secretary's office hours.



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Church Secretary:

hmog@comcast.net

Secretary Hours:

Mon./Wed./Fri. 9am-2pm

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