

St. John the Merciful Outreach Ministry Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

January 2009

*“He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.”
- Proverbs 14:21*

Teach me to feel another’s woe

To hide the fault I see;

That mercy I to others show

That mercy show to me.

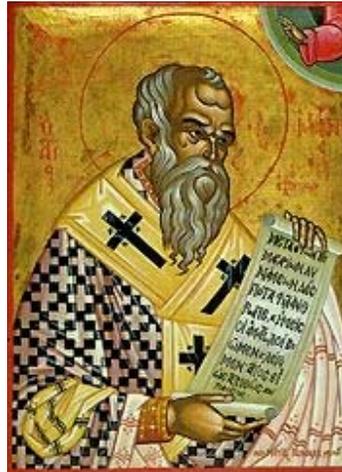
- Alexander Pope

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St. John Patriarch of Alexandria November 12th.

Saint John was born in 555 on the island of Cyprus in the city of Amathus; his father, Epiphanius, was a ruler of Cyprus. The Saint was consecrated Archbishop of Alexandria in 608. A man of exemplary uprightness, in his zeal for Orthodoxy he strove mightily to fight the many heresies among the Christians in Egypt; but above all, he was famous for his singular generosity, humility, and sympathy towards all, especially the poor.

His mercy was so great that the report of it reached the Persian invaders of Jerusalem, who desired to see him because of it. Saint John reposed in 619, at the age of sixty-four.



Apoltikion and Kontakion for St. John the Merciful

Apolytikion in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

In patiently enduring, you obtained your reward, O venerable father. You persevered in your prayers without ceasing; and you loved the impoverished and you satisfied them. We entreat you, intercede with Christ God, O blessed John the Merciful, for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion in the Second Tone

Thy riches and wealth didst thou disperse unto the poor; thou now hast received the Heavens' riches in return. For this cause, O all-wise John, we all honor thee with our songs of praise as we keep thy memorial, O namesake of almsgiving and of mercy.

Mission Statement : “..with God all things are possible.” (Matt. 19:26)

This newsletter is not to espouse all the things our ministry has done, only to show just how much more is possible with God! Networking: a technical term but we can use this to our advantage. Maybe you don’t have money, time, or the ability, but you can talk! Just talking to others about the Outreach Ministry makes others aware and we never know where the next help will come from. If someone you spoke to about this helps the Ministry then you too have done your part to help someone else! We will share a few examples inside!

Thanksgiving & Christmas at the Men's Shelter

For many, the holidays can be a lonely time but even more so for those who do not have a home or friends and family to celebrate. This past Thanksgiving and Christmas season, Holy Trinity reached out to the Men's Shelter in several ways. For Thanksgiving, a parishioner donated 50 turkeys and the church donated deserts to the shelter for their Thanksgiving meal. Over 500 people were served a Thanksgiving meal.

For a second year, Holy Trinity donated a Christmas tree to the shelter to brighten the men's holiday. GOYA decorated the tree with ornaments made by several Sunday School classes. After the decorating of the tree, the clergy blessed the kitchen at the shelter and GOYA served dinner.



Top two pictures: Sunday School students making ornaments for the Christmas tree at the Men's Shelter. Far left: Clergy blessing the kitchen at the Men's Shelter. Above: GOYANS serving dinner at the Men's Shelter. Below left: GOYANS, clergy, and advisors gather around the Christmas tree that they decorated with ornaments made by Sunday School students.

Men's Shelter 2009 Schedule

AHEPA—2nd Wed of each month

OCM—3rd Sunday of each month

GOYA—last Saturday of each month

Panera Bread Day-End Dough-Nation

Through Panera Bread's Day-End Dough-Nation program, unsold bakery products are packaged at the end of each day and donated to local charities. In 2007, Panera Bread bakery-cafes collectively donated a retail value of more than 40 million dollars worth of bread and baked goods to charitable organizations helping to address the need for food distribution in our local communities. Since each Panera Bread can only donate their items to one charity a day, organizations need to sign up with their local Panera Bread Company. Currently, Holy Trinity picks up unsold bakery items from a local Panera Bread on Monday nights and takes them to the men's shelter the next morning. If you are interested in volunteering in this ministry, contact Deacon Gavrillo.

** Fall/Winter Projects **

Through our Fall drive we acquired two new resources of help. Go the Extra Mile Ministry in Zebulon and Plant A Seed Ministries. A portion of our fall drive went to these two ministries which included men's, women's, and children's clothing totaling 65 bags of clothing in all. Plus, 7 large bags of toys for children were collected in time for their Christmas giveaway. The balance of our Fall clothing project is being worked on as a community service project by two of our parish families. We will be donating our toys, and children's clothing from this portion to the NC Children's Hospital. This drive has also provided several television sets, 11 bicycles and miscellaneous furniture items to families in need. We also received 15 cell phones which were donated to Interact.

In October we participated in feeding over 200 veterans lunch at the Raleigh Annual Veteran Standown at Cornerstone.

GOYA raised \$700 for the Crop Walk for Hunger and several participated in the walk.

Our ministry participated in the Raleigh 10 year plan at Moore Square to end homelessness; over 500 people were fed.

Push Up-A-Thon raised \$4,281.00 for the Wehbie Wehbie Fund.

We helped to disperse 20 rooms of furniture and bedding to the needy from a hotel renovation



Maria Tsikerdanos and Domenica Pusic pose with donations they helped organize for a community service project.

Philoptochos Local Outreach Committee

Did you know that Philoptochos has developed an Outreach Committee to seek out and help serve the needs of various local charities? This committee was created this past fall and has already been very active. This past fall, Philoptochos donated 48 giant print King James Bibles to the **North Carolina Correctional Institute for Women**. In November, Philoptochos collected new toy items from the parish which were donated to **Interact's annual Holiday Bazaar**. Rather than a traditional "adopt a family" program, Interact turns their agency into a store where mothers and their children are invited to "shop" for one another among the donated gifts. Interact typically serves over 100 families each year through their annual Holiday Bazaar. This year, our local Philoptochos chapter, along with many other chapters nationwide, participated in the **Pajama Program** by collecting new pajamas and books from the parish to donate to Interact and to the Women's Center of Wake County. 100 pairs of pajamas and books were collected from the Holy Trinity parish. Philoptochos wishes to thank the parish for all of their generous donations this past holiday season. We couldn't have supported these wonderful organizations without your help!



Members of the Philoptochos Outreach Committee preparing the pajama and books for delivery.

Upcoming Philoptochos Outreach Project

March/April 2009 Lenten Project—Philoptochos will be collecting non-perishable food items and monetary donations to benefit North Raleigh Ministries which strives to meet the needs of North Raleigh families in emergency situations. North Raleigh Ministries operates a Food Pantry which is experiencing critical food shortages. Non-perishable food items and monetary donations will be collected during Lent each Sunday after Liturgy and during each Wednesday night's Presanctified Liturgy.



the Ubuntu way

The Ubuntu Way is a Non-Profit Organization with a mission to provide educational and medical aide to those who need it the most, who are unable to provide for themselves, regardless of race, sex, age, ethnicity, culture or religion. Last year, The Ubuntu Way created and set it's focus on Project Gulu. Gulu is an area in Northern Uganda, Africa that has been persecuted by the Lords Resistance Army for over 20 years. During this time, children were taken from their homes and forced to fight and kill in this army. Many people have had to leave their homes during this period to live near government protection in IDP (internally displaced persons) camps. They have since then began to make their lives in this area but are in desperate need for education and health care. Our first project is to build a nursery school in order to provide the basic level of education for these children. To donate or find out more information, please contact Allie Russos or visit our website at www.theubuntuway.org.

Hygiene Kit Project

Our 2nd Annual Hygiene Kit Project for Interact Domestic Violence for Women was a huge success. Our GOYANs teamed up with the SOYANs from All Saints Antiochene Orthodox Church and their Ministry Leader, Deacon David Keim (see picture below). The groups met together on February 8th for dinner, fellowship and to assemble the kits. A total of 60 kits, each one containing two bath towels and wash clothes, soap, shampoo and conditioner, toothbrushes and paste, hairbrush, coloring book and crayons were assembled.. These kits will be distributed by Interact to their incoming and outgoing clients and children.



A Networking Story

A member of our parish has a relative who is employed at a hygiene products company who made a generous donation to our Outreach just because of their conversations. The donations included eight pallets of body wash and lotions for ladies totaling 5,700 bottles. Following is a partial list of agencies who benefited all because someone took the time to speak about our Outreach Ministry.

Appalachian Service Project
 Medical Mission trip to Mexico
 WIHN (Wake Interfaith Hospitality Network)
 Helen Wright Center for Women
 Urban Ministries
 Cornerstone
 Interact

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

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We wish to thank all those who have given of themselves unselfishly in His Name to all that is in this newsletter. Without your time, talents and stewardship, none of this would have been possible. In Christ—Deacon Gavriilo