

The Martyr

July 12, 2009

Volume 20

A parish bulletin ~ deadline Thursday Evening @ 6 PM <StGeorgeTrumbull@aol.com>

By a vote of 4 to 1, the Planning and Zoning Committee of Trumbull passed the re-use bill on Monday night. This should make it easier to sell the Rectory. Only homes on a state highway will be eligible.

Don Jordan

Up-coming Events/Services

Today 9:30 Liturgy
July 19 9:30 Liturgy
July 26 9:30 Liturgy

Prayers for Blessings

Christy Adams; Joyce Athanas; John Balga; Paul Betts; Thomas Buzi; Monica Demetri; Charles Dougiello, Sr.; Richard Hirst; Nicholas Hotova; Diane Hoffmeyer; the child Aisalyn Hurd; William Kohlbacker; Meni Kyriacou; Katherine LaBache; Christy Lambert; Elizabeth Lambro; Dhimitra Leka; Pauline Longo; John Louis, Sr.; Karen Masek; Barbara Evans Maynard Louise Moran; Theodore Morrison; James Pando; Minnie Phostole; Pandora Plasa; Eleanor Polena; Mark Sabatino; David Schutte; Gloria Simo; Tessie Sotir; Helen, Joanne Tallcouch; Peter Thanas; Mary, Peter Themel; Christy, Stephen & Leonora Thomas; Vincent J. Torre; Mitchell Trotta; Aphrodita (Rita) Vangel.

As a community of Faith our prime responsibility is to support one another – in both faith and action. Prayer combines both. Please submit the name of the person for whom you wish to pray – and remember that when the prayers have been answered, to take that name off the list as well

In Memoriam

13 *Christine Toraya (1994)*
14 *Theodora Bedgio (1962)*
16 *Victoria Ganci (1969)*
Theodore M. Boria (2002)
17 *Alexandra G. Polena (1953)*

Coffee Hour: Building Community

Today: ????
July 19 ????
July 26 ????

Call Laura Chadwick 268-2865 to sponsor a coffee hour

Parish Phones

Fr. Sergei can be reach using the traditional
203.268.1968 or **203.301.0516**
For your convenience there will be an answering machine 24/7

Vacation Bible School

CHILDREN AGES 6 – 12
PRESENTED BY THE HOLY TRINITY
GREEK ORTHODOX SUNDAY SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT
4070 Park Ave. Bridgeport, Connecticut
Eva Vaniotis, Director

Monday, August 10 through Saturday, August 15, 2009

Time: 9:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

August 15 -Dormition of the Theotokos –
VBS will attend Liturgy as a group



THEME: "HOLY BIBLE"

Activities include: Hymns, Prayers, Games Arts & Crafts

Just bring a sandwich -

We'll give you the Goodies –

Beverages - Snacks

For information, please call **374-0013**, if no answer; call Church Office **374-5561**

\$30.00– PER EACH CHILD

Our former pastor: A Philadelphia Inquirer Feature Piece

For priest and son, helping teens a family affair

By Monica Yant Kinney

Inquirer Columnist

When other sons follow their fathers into the family business, they wind up in nice offices having lunch with clients.

After Alex Siniari took his dad's lead, he found himself in the middle of a homeless-shelter cafeteria fight, getting stabbed in the arm with a serrated knife.



This month's Collection is to provide financial support for the Church Planting Grants Supporting the Orthodox Missions of the Orthodox Church in America

<http://www.oca.org/news/1842>

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Together, Alex and Steve Siniari dodge bullets, prowl abandoned buildings, and crawl under the Atlantic City Boardwalk - all in a day's work trying to reach troubled teens.

Alex calls his dad *Padre*, but everyone else refers to him as Father Steve, since he's an Albanian Orthodox priest. He has moonlighted for years at Covenant House, which describes itself as the largest privately funded agency in the Americas dedicated to runaway and throwaway youths. Last year, more than 70,000 kids were helped at 20 Covenant Houses from Anchorage to Managua. This year, the New Jersey operation (www.covenanthousenj.org) celebrates its 20th anniversary.

Father Steve's cell phone rings, conservatively, every three minutes. Every lost soul in Atlantic City must have him on speed dial.

Troy is about to be evicted. Eric wanders the Monopoly streets sick with the flu. Danielle has three kids and nothing to feed them.

"It's one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread," says Father Steve, 59, describing how he serves the needy on the fringes of America's playground.

"I try not to take credit when kids succeed or blame when they fail," adds Alex, 29 and pony tailed, with his employer's dove logo tattooed on his right wrist. "It's not about how the work makes us feel. It's about being there for these kids."

House calls

Eric needs lunch and medicine, lacking both after being kicked out of Covenant House for breaking shelter rules.

"You made some mistakes," Alex tells him when they meet in the street. "So did we."

While Father Steve fetches food, Eric, a 21-year-old New Yorker who's been homeless since 16, praises his friendship with Father Steve.

"If I didn't have him, I'd be locked up or dead." Alex is pleased to hear Eric say he has applied for several retail jobs. "I'm amazed," Alex replies, "since your focus is on where you're going to stay, what you're going to eat, how you're going to survive."

Jenn Elms and Jared Drogos, also 21, are a step up that shaky ladder. After a stay in a shelter and transitional housing, the couple found a subsidized apartment.

Father Steve and Alex drop by offering support as the young lovers cope with health woes (Elms, from Burlington County, has diabetes; Drogos, from Hammonton, Atlantic County, suffers from mental illness) and meager finances (she's on medical leave from Wawa; both applied for Social Security disability).

The apartment is decorated with smiley-face pillows and Smurf figurines. Tropical-fruit-scented candles warm the tiny living room. Visitors must remove their shoes at the door, the better to keep the place clean. The Siniaris happily oblige.

"When nobody took us in, they did," Elms says, beaming. "Now look. This is home."

Like father, like son

For years, Father Steve, who lives in Haddonfield, took his kids to work with him. "I told my wife I was in the chapel," he says. "She never knew I was taking them into housing projects and hanging around prostitutes."

Mike, the oldest, became a history professor. Alex never finished college, drifting between bartending and selling cars. "Nothing I was doing had any meaning or value."

In 2005, Alex applied for a job at Covenant House secretly, not sure he wanted it or how his father would react. Since then, the younger Siniari married a coworker and landed a promotion. Today, as outreach coordinator, Alex is technically his dad's boss.

"Father Steve knows the streets, the kids, the issues," explains site director Brian Nelson. "I see him mentoring Alex to take over."

For now, showing scared kids someone cares is a shared mission.

"Instead of giving out of a sense of benevolence, I give out of thankfulness," explains Father Steve, gesturing to Alex. "I'm thankful he's here, doing this work."

Philadelphia Inquirer, June 21, 2009



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