

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

VOL. 24 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On February 8th in the Orthodox Church, we commemorate St. Theodore Stratelates, my patron. St. Theodore was a commander (Stratelates) in the Roman military and a secret Christian, who was distinguished for his bravery and generosity. He was beheaded by the Emperor Licinius in the year 319, because he refused to worship the Emperor's gold and silver idols, and instead smashed them and distributed their pieces to the poor.

The Roman authorities did not persecute Christians because of who they worshipped. Why would Caesar care if some of his people prayed to Jesus? Plenty of Roman subjects worshipped Ra, Ba'al, and a host of other foreign gods and goddesses. As long as they would *also* offer a sacrifice before a statue of Jupiter from time to time, there were no problems. The Romans persecuted Christians because of who they *didn't* worship: from the very beginning, Christians steadfastly refused to pray to or worship idols of the Roman gods and goddesses, especially of the Emperor. Many Roman Emperors, governors, and officials took great pleasure in punishing Christians for their nonconformity, subjecting them to vicious tortures and humiliating deaths. Martyrs are those saints who remained strong in their faith and refused to submit despite the terrible violence inflicted on them. Their courage and integrity in the face of danger and deep suffering distinguish them as examples of true Christian faith and virtue.

Stories of the martyrs who refused to bow before idols can inspire and fascinate us, but to many Christians living today they may seem archaic or irrelevant. Almost no modern Christians face pressure to sacrifice to idols or statues or false deities of any kind. Is idolatry, then, a relic of the distant past? Do the struggles of the martyrs bear any relation to the lives of Christians living in the 21st century?

I would venture to say that idol worship is as widespread in our current era as it was two thousand years ago. Christians rejected idolatry not only because it involved praying to false gods (although that was part of it), but because it involved believing something created by humans had the power of the Creator. No statue could hear our prayers, protect us, guide us, heal us, or give us eternal life, because it is an object. It is absurd to put one's trust in something that cannot do any of the things we want it to do. But very many people even today do exactly that.

If we understand that an idol is any *thing* that we wrongly elevate to the status of God, we see that there are many idols that are still worshipped in the modern era: money, health, beauty, prestige, entertainment, sex, and (especially) the self. Likewise, even though no one still offers

sacrifices to the Emperor of Rome, many of us still worship mere human beings, in the form of political leaders, celebrities, thinkers, and other famous or noteworthy people. Some people also make idols out of their own parents, spouses, or children. Anything that we attribute supreme importance to can act as an idol.

The problem with the modern-day idols is the same problem with ancient idols: they are not God, even though we treat them like Him. No object or human being could fulfill us, or stop us from dying. They are temporary, limited, and fallible, unlike God who is Eternal, Infinite, and Perfect. They can be good things, but if we put them at the center of our lives, if we live our lives in service to them, then we will inevitably be disappointed. Worse still, we will also have missed the opportunity to know the True God, because everything we put in the place of God is a barrier between us and Him. May St. Theodore and all the holy martyrs from every age bless us with the strength to smash the idols in our lives, so that we may worship the true Creator, who is Spirit (cf. John 4:24).

God bless you all!

Fr. Theodore Lyketsos

**VMI & Washington and Lee
Orthodox Christian Fellowship** 



**Orthodox Services
2025-2026**

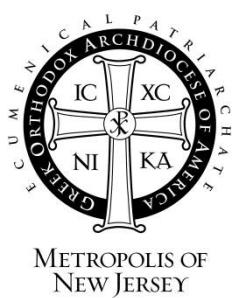
Thursday nights at 7pm:

**September 25th
October 30th
November 13th
January 22nd
February 19th
March 12th
April 23rd**

**Confession available before/after services!
Contact: frtheoHTROA@gmail.com**

Location:
**VMI Museum
415 Letcher Avenue
Virginia Military Institute
Lexington, VA 24450**





Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

30 Huntington Boulevard, N.E.
Roanoke, Virginia 24012
PHONE: (540) 362-3601
FAX: (540) 362-3638
www.holytrinityroanoke.com

Priest: Fr. Theodore Lyketsos
Church Administrator: Diane Simmons

E-MAIL: frtheohtra@gmail.com
E-MAIL: htrinityroa@verizon.net

2025-2026 PARISH COUNCIL

Matt Mandros	President
Frances Simopoulos	Vice President
Carol Royal	Secretary
Maria Apostolou	Assistant Secretary
Van Kakouras	Treasurer
Angela Flegas	Assistant Treasurer

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Voula Dallas	Dr. Maria Hatzios
Beth Gianakouros	Juan Martinez
Mike Greenwood	Nada Melki

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Philoptochos President – Danna Owen

Religious Education – Beth Gianakouros
Youth Director – Mike Greenwood
Greek School – Tom Contos, Rea Dania,
Georgia Liagki
Chanters – Dr. Paul Dallas, Fred Gianakouros,
& Demos Tsiakos
Dance Troupe – Dina Martinez
Bookstore – Voula Dallas
Megdova President – Dr. Paul Dallas
Webmaster – Chris Tomasello

COMMITTEES

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Caitlin DeMarco
Finance – Mike Greenwood, Jack White,
Greg Apostolou
Grounds, Planning, & Projects – Juan
Martinez, Dr. Charles Tarasidis, Dr.
Paul Dallas, Terry Tomaras, Jack
White, Pete Simopoulos, Chris Flegas

Roanoke Greek Festival – Pete Simopoulos
Stewardship – Nada Melki
Ushering & Welcome – Maria Apostolou,
Naji Karim, Irene Karageorge

The deadline for notices to be placed in the bulletin is the 15th of each month. Please email them to htrinityroa@verizon.net on or before this date. Thank you.

SERVICE SCHEDULE

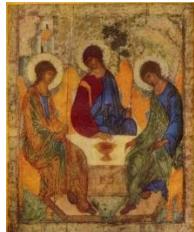
FEBRUARY 2026

Sun. 02/01/2026	Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 8:28-39</i>	Gospel: Luke 18:10-14
Usher(s):	Maria Hatzios, Voula Dallas, Naji Karim	
Mon. 02/02/2026	Presentation of Our Lord	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy
Fri. 02/06/2026	St. Photios	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy + Great Blessing of Waters Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17
Sat. 02/07/2026	No Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 02/08/2026	Sunday of the Prodigal Son	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 6:12-20</i>	Gospel: Luke 15:11-32
Usher(s):	Nada Melki, Larry Owen, Frances Simopoulos	
Sat. 02/14/2026	Saturday of Souls	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy
	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 02/15/2026	Judgment (Meatfare) Sunday	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2</i>	Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46
Usher(s):	Beth Gianakouros, Irene Karageorge, Lampros Panogeorgos	
Tues. 02/17/2026	St. Theodore Tyro	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy
Sat. 02/21/2026	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 02/22/2026	Forgiveness (Cheesefare) Sunday	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4</i>	Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21
Usher(s):	Matt Mandros, Georgia Liagki, Jon Mandros	
Mon. 02/23/2026	Compline	6:00 PM
Wed. 02/25/2026	Presanctified Liturgy	6:00 PM
Fri. 02/28/2026	Salutations	6:00 PM
Sat. 02/28/2026	Vespers	5:00 PM

USHERS ARE REQUIRED TO ARRIVE FIFTEEN MINUTES PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF LITURGY! THE USHER LEADER IS TO ARRIVE FOR THE BEGINNING OF ORTHROS. IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO USHER AS SCHEDULED, PLEASE CONTACT ANOTHER USHER FROM YOUR LIST TO REPLACE YOU.

HOLY TRINITY BOOKSTORE

OPEN EVERY SUNDAY AFTER CHURCH



WE HAVE BOOKS FOR ALL AGES, ICONS, PRAYER ROPES, PRAYER BOOKS,
CHARCOAL, INCENSE, CENSORS, AND OTHER ITEMS.
PLEASE VISIT US AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY ON SUNDAYS. THANK YOU!

Weekly Classes & Worship

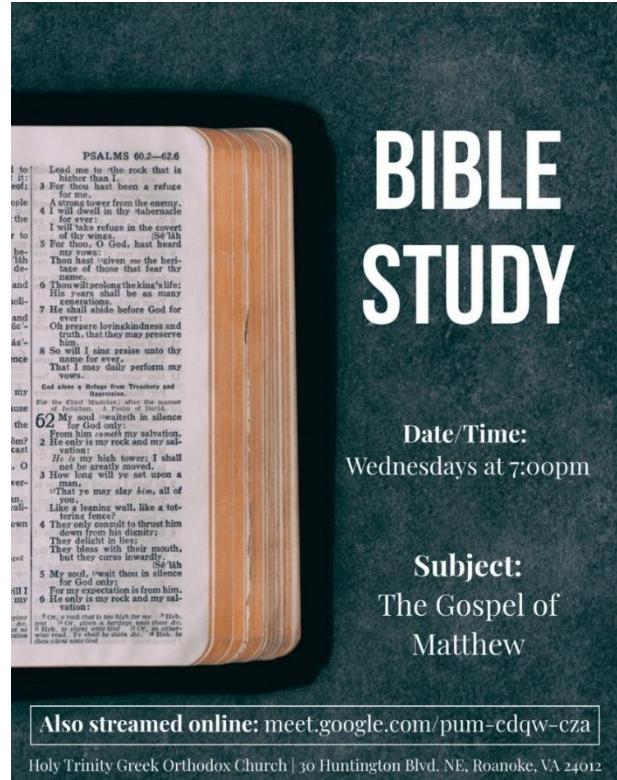
The image shows the interior of a Greek Orthodox church. The ceiling and walls are covered in vibrant, traditional Orthodox iconography, including depictions of the Virgin Mary, Jesus, and various saints. The church is built with high ceilings and arched windows. In the center, there is an altar area with a large iconostasis (a screen of icons) and a golden crown resting on it. The floor is made of light-colored tiles. Rows of wooden pews are arranged on either side of a central aisle. The overall atmosphere is one of reverence and historical richness.

Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 7pm



Path to Eternity with Fr. Theodore:

Everyone is welcome to join, whether they are just curious about Orthodoxy, or they have been part of the Church their whole life! You do not need to have attended a previous class in order to come.



THE ORTHOCHAT EPISODE 70: FR. THEODORE LYKETSOS

Holy Trinity Roanoke is on YouTube! God willing, we will soon have the capability to broadcast services as well.

Check it out: <https://www.youtube.com/@HolyTrinityRoanoke>

CATECHUMEN ROUNDUP!



WE NEED HELP ROUNDING UP ALL OF THE
INQUIRERS AND CATECHUMENS AT HOLY TRINITY!

If you are hoping to be baptized or chrismated
into the Orthodox Church, please register
your information at the link or QR code, to
help Fr. Theodore keep track of your progress.



<https://bit.ly/49vIn3S>



The 2026 calendar is posted in the church hall; please show your hospitality by signing up to be a host.

If there is no sponsor, we will designate every

1st Sunday of the month *Pot Luck Sunday*. Any parishioner may bring a dish. Check your Friday email to see if the 1st Sunday is Pot Luck.

If you have questions reach out to Danna Owen at Philoptochosroanoke@gmail.com

Announcements

Welcome To Holy Trinity!

Welcome to all visitors and newcomers. Please feel free to introduce yourself to Father Theodore or any parishioner. We're eager to answer your questions.

Congratulations and a "second welcome" to all that were baptized/christmated in 2025. Continue the "good fight".



from the Ushering and Welcome Committee
(Maria Apostolou, Naji Karim & Irene Karageorge)

Ladies' Liturgical Year Literary Club

We have a new book club for the women of Holy Trinity, the Ladies' Liturgical Year Literary Club. The first meeting was in January. If you have any questions, email Caitlin DeMarco at crdema@gmail.com.

Religious Education

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Our students are preparing their presentations for the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival. The elementary students will present on child saints. And the middle and high school students will choose and work on their topics this month.

Please contact Father Theodore, Diane Simmons, or Fred Gianakouros if you are able to volunteer to be a helper or a teacher. We also still need a Director.



The poster features a purple background with a yellow campfire illustration. The text "CGS LENTEN RETREAT" is curved along the top. Below the campfire, there are three boxes: "3 days", "\$100/camper", and "2 nights". The date "March 6-8, 2026" is prominently displayed. Below the date, the location is given as "Camp Piankatank, 1586 Stampers Bay Rd Box 435, Hartfield, VA 23071". The "Retreat Theme: Coming Home" is listed, along with a biblical quote: "'Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.' Joel 2:13". To the right, there is a QR code with the text "bit.ly/4qRZ94q" and a "Register Here:" button with a star icon.

CGS LENTEN RETREAT

3 days \$100/camper 2 nights

March 6-8, 2026

Camp Piankatank
1586 Stampers Bay Rd Box 435
Hartfield, VA 23071

Retreat Theme: Coming Home

"Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love." Joel 2:13

Register Here:

bit.ly/4qRZ94q

Greek School

The Greek School, in coordination with the Sunday School of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Roanoke, hosted the Celebration of the Three Hierarchs. A short presentation was given following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 1, 2026.

Feast of the Three Hierarchs

Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom

Sunday, February 1st
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
After the Divine Liturgy



The Feast of the Three Hierarchs was established in the 11th century to honor three great teachers of the Orthodox Church.

United in faith, wisdom, education, charity, and love for the people, their writings continue to express the unity and conscience of the Church.



Katerina Apostolou Received her Master of Science Degree

Katerina Apostolou received her Master of Science degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Radford University on December 12th. Having recently passed her national boards, she is excited to start her new position with inpatient cardiology at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital this spring.

Parish Council News

Dear Holy Trinity Family and Friends,

As we settle into the new year and the short, quiet days of February, we give thanks to our Lord for His steadfast love and for the many ways He has sustained and blessed our parish family.

Here is a brief update on the projects authorized by the general assembly in November:

- ◎ Exterior Lighting: The fixtures have been ordered and received, and an electrical contractor has been selected. Unfortunately, recent inclement weather has delayed the start of installation. Work is expected to begin as soon as weather conditions allow.
- ◎ Camera System: Quotations were received in January, but installation has likewise been postponed due to the same weather-related delays. We anticipate moving forward with installation as conditions improve.
- ◎ Doors and Locks: We are still reviewing and entertaining quotations for installing electronic locks on three of the main doors. In addition, we are continuing to work with contractors on options to replace the locking mechanism on the main sanctuary doors, which can no longer be repaired. As part of this effort, all doors will be re-keyed to ensure consistency and improved security.

While weather has slowed some aspects of the work, we remain dedicated to seeing these enhancements through and will share further updates as progress resumes. Looking forward, please note that our next General Assembly is scheduled for March

15th. Keep an eye out for the agenda, which will be shared soon so that all members can prepare.

In these unusually cold days, let us take care to stay warm and look out for one another.

In Christ,
Matthew Mandros
Parish Council President

Philoptochos News

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

OPA with Love Greek Valentine Dinner

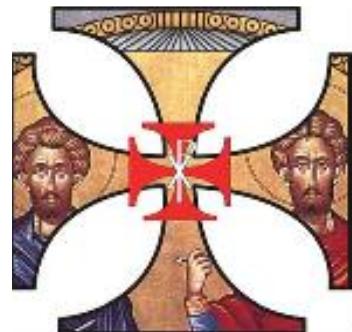
Thank you to everyone who has purchased tickets, sponsored items to defray cost and volunteered to help before during and after the event. If you haven't officially let me know that you'd like to help, please attend the volunteer meeting. A brief volunteer meeting will be held on Sunday February 8th after the Soup-er Bowl to show the set-up schedule and to assign specific responsibilities.

What Souper-Bowl you say? February 8th, Super Bowl Sunday, you'll enjoy specialty soups, chowders and chili along with submarine sandwiches all for a donation to send our kids to Camp Good Shepherd! Special thanks to Coach Irene Karageorge for putting this event together for our children!

The February Philoptochos meeting cancelled due to the snowstorm will be rescheduled after OPA with Love. In the meantime, if you have questions, concerns or would like more info about joining Philoptochos, give me a call.

If you haven't paid your Philoptochos dues, please do so as soon as possible. Dues were expected before January 31st.

Pray for Peace,
Danna



**Greek Orthodox Ladies'
Philoptochos Society
of Holy Trinity Church**

Become a Member of PHILOPTOHOS

(Greek for “friends of the poor”)



Mission: Empowering Community Through Our Orthodox Faith and Philanthropy

Your membership contributes to
AIDING THE NEEDY, SUPPORTING CHURCH
MINISTRIES, COMMUNITY BUILDING, AND
PRESERVING THE FAITH
as it has been done since 1931.

We are primarily a women's organization, but men are welcome to join along with our other male members

Coach Irene's 3rd Annual SOUP-ER BOWL



OPA WITH LOVE

A GREEK VALENTINE DINNER

FEBRUARY 14, 2026

6:00 PM

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
30 HUNTINGTON BLVD, ROANOKE

Pastitsio, Moussaka, Greek Salad, Rice
Pilaf, Grecian Green Beans, Spanakopita,
Tiropita, Galaktoboureko

Beer, wine, and signature cocktail for purchase

\$40 PER PERSON | \$200 TABLE OF 6

Singles Welcome!

All proceeds benefit
Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society

Tickets available at
HOLYTRINITYROANOKE.COM

Roanoke



What a wonderful way to kick off the new year by sharing a great evening with an amazing group of parishioners at Coach & Four on January 13th. A heartfelt thank you to Vickie Tsakos for her delicious vasilopita! Congratulations to Pam Moysakis for finding the lucky coin. A perfect start to the year ahead.

Our February outing will be the **OPA WITH LOVE** Dinner on February 14, and we hope to see everyone there. It will be a fun and festive evening you will not want to miss. Ticket sales end **Sunday, February 1, 2026**, so secure yours today.

The Hellenic Club will take a break during Lent and will reconvene after Easter.

If you have any questions or suggestions for our Club, please contact me at francesimopoulos@gmail.com or 434.851.6830.

Frances Simopoulos



The Roanoke Greek Festival is proud to share the nonprofit organizations that received donations from the 2025 Big Fat Greek Drive-Thru and the Greek Street Pastry & Market. Through these events, we were honored to support local organizations that make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals throughout the Roanoke community.

We are pleased to announce that the Bradley Free Clinic, Family Service of Roanoke Valley, and Roanoke Valley Speech and Hearing Center, Inc. each received a donation of \$2,700. We are grateful for the opportunity to help these organizations continue their important work.

A big thank you to everyone in our parish who generously shared their time and talents to make both events such a success. Your dedication and support make this outreach possible, and we look forward to continuing this tradition of giving in the year ahead.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (434) 851-6835 or via email at info@roanokegreekfestival.com.

Peter Simopoulos
Chairman, Fundraising Committee

Information

NAME _____

NAME OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____

MOBILE PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED) _____

Dependent Children's names and birthdates:

May we include your contact information
in the parish directory?

yes no *If yes, please indicate any
information you would like excluded:*

May we add you to our parish email list?

yes no



treasure

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/We commit
to Christ and His Church the following amount:

\$ _____ each week

online giving

Use our convenient online giving option to
make a convenient one-time or periodic gift to
the church to fulfill your stewardship
commitment. Please visit our online giving site
here: onlinegiving.org, or scan the QR code
below.



gift of appreciated stock

I would like to speak with someone about
making a gift of appreciated stock to the church.

planned giving

I would like to speak with someone about
how to remember the church in my will, trust, or
estate plan.

time & talent

Individual stewards should indicate areas of
interest with a check (✓).

Families should mark "H" for husband, "W" for
wife or "C" for children.

EDUCATION

- Bible Study
- Adult Religious Education
- Intro to Orthodoxy
- Publications
- Speakers
- Bookstore
- Library

LITURGICAL

- Sanctuary & Altar Care
- Altar boys / Acolytes
- Baking Prosfora
- Choir
- Reader
- Greeter/Usher

MINISTRIES & PROGRAMS

- Campus Ministry
- Welcome Team
- New Member Events
- Outreach
- Stewardship
- Sunday Fellowship / Coffee
- Visitation - Hospital
- Visitation - Shut-ins
- Feed the Hungry
- Prison Ministry
- Grief Bereavement Group
- Disaster Relief Projects
- Blood Drives
- Project Mexico
- Int'l Orth Christian Charities
- OCMC Mission Center
- Seniors Ministry
- Couples Ministry
- Singles Ministry
- Military Ministry

ADMINISTRATION

- Fiscal Mgt / Review
- By-Laws
- Development / Fundraising
- Office help
- Computer / Technical
- Data Entry

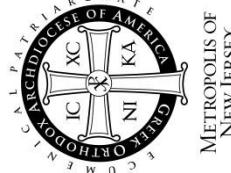
COMMUNICATIONS

- Web site & E-mail
- Bulletin & Newsletter
- Public Relations

Any other talents or information on items listed above:

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

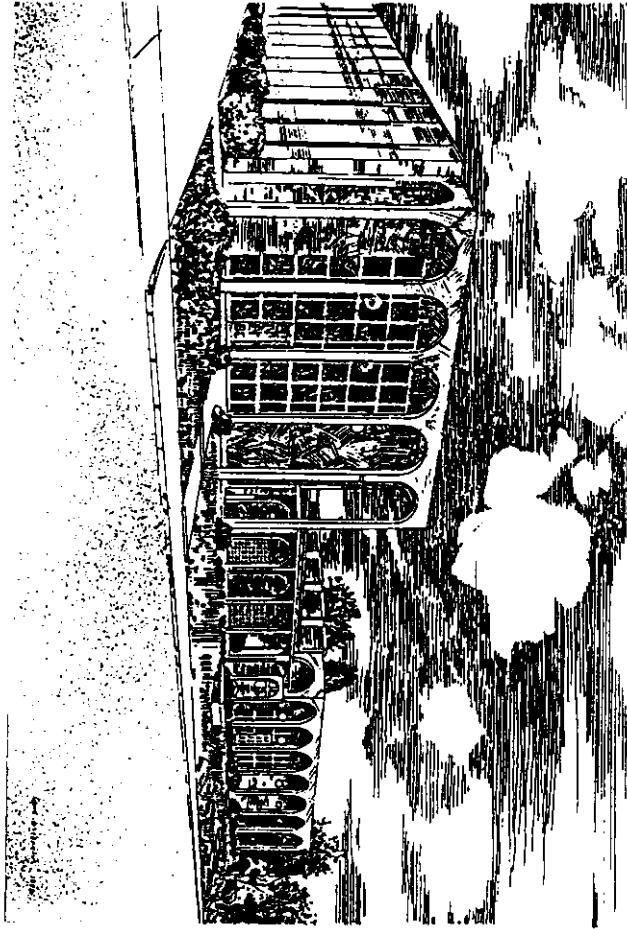
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Roanoke, VA 24012



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HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH