

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

VOL. 24 ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2026

Dear Holy Trinity family,

In his spiritual masterpiece *On Faith*, St. Symeon the New Theologian tells us, “Search diligently, if you will, and find out whether anyone keeps [Jesus’s] commandments. Among thousands and myriads you will scarcely find one who is a Christian both in word and in act.” He was lamenting what he saw as the spiritual poverty of the society in which he lived. But St. Symeon was not writing about the religious wasteland of modern-day America—he was writing about Constantinople, the capital of the Christian East, during the tenth century, which was a period of remarkable growth and flourishing for Eastern Orthodoxy often called the Byzantine Apogee. Orthodox emperors ruled the most prestigious and wealthy state in Europe, the Church was expanding rapidly throughout the Balkans and Eastern Europe, and monasteries such as Stoudion served as great centers of intellectual and cultural life that would help shape the Old World for centuries to come. Yet amid this great flourishing of Orthodox Christianity across a vast territory and at every level of society, St. Symeon says it was difficult to find even one true Christian.

This is not a unique phenomenon in the history of the Church. In virtually every century over the last two thousand years, one can find a great saint bemoaning the spiritual poverty and moral decline of the Christian world. One gains the impression that nearly every great Christian figure, apart perhaps from some of the Fathers of the Apostolic age, believed that the Christians of their own generation had fallen far below the standard set by their spiritual forebears.

Some have taken this to mean that the Saints were simply implacable moral scolds—that perhaps they set their standards unrealistically high because they delighted in criticizing the shortcomings of others. But this is not the case. Rather, they were making a simple observation about the world around them: in every age there are very few true Christians in the fullest sense of the word. Most people, most of the time, are not deeply concerned with God, Heaven, or virtue. We tend to spend much more of our time and energy on earthly matters: food and drink, money, our reputation, relationships, politics, and countless other concerns. Our primary focus is usually on maximizing our comfort and social standing in this world while minimizing discomfort and suffering. None of these things is evil in itself, but more often than not we allow them to distract us from our higher purpose. Most people know they ought to be more patient, kind, and humble. Most Christians readily admit that they ought to pray more, attend church more faithfully, and serve others more generously. Yet only rarely are these convictions

translated into concrete action. It is much easier to prioritize this world and its countless cares and pleasures.

Christ warned us that this would be the case in the Sermon on the Mount: “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13–14). Our fallen nature inclines far more readily toward selfishness than toward virtue, and few in this life fully break free from the cycle of sin and corruption.

We especially need to keep this in mind at this historic turning point in the life of our Church, as many new members fill our pews. Many converts to Orthodoxy are disappointed by what they perceive as the lax and careless attitude many life-long Orthodox have towards the faith. Many of these “cradle” Orthodox Christians respond by accusing the converts of being judgmental and hypocritical, adopting the outward trappings of the Church without internalizing her deeper teaching. All of these accusations have some truth to them, but they lack spiritual discernment because they fail to understand human nature. We have always been this way, and our job is not as much to point out one another’s flaws as it is to bear them with patience and love.

But in the face of all of this, one could reasonably ask: what, then, is the point of our religion? Why do we preach and teach, build churches, write books, and baptize converts, knowing full well that the vast majority of people will fall well short of the standard Christ sets before us?

There are at least three reasons.

First, the Truth is worth knowing, even when it is difficult. All of us instinctively long to know who we are, who we are meant to become, and what our purpose in this world is, even if, in our weakness, we repeatedly fall short of it. No one is ultimately satisfied by falsehoods, even if they provide fleeting comfort for our egos.

Second, the teachings of Christ and His Church benefit us immensely, even if we are only able to live them to a very small degree. If even the most selfish, cruel, and wicked people on earth were to repent just a little, the world would immediately become a better place than it otherwise would be. Many who have endured poverty, war, and grave illness testify that even the smallest act of kindness possesses extraordinary power to transform another person’s life. The world may be filled with every kind of evil, but even the smallest measure of Christ’s mercy overcomes the world (John 16:33).

Third, recognizing how far we fall short gives birth to humility, and true humility is sufficient to obtain God’s mercy despite all our failings. When we take an honest look at ourselves and recognize how greatly we have failed to become the people God created us to be, this is not a cause for despair. On the contrary, the honest acknowledgment of our own sinfulness is a necessary precondition for truly loving God and our neighbor, because only when our ego has been laid aside can we love with genuine selflessness. Only humility enables us to refrain from judging our neighbor or exalting ourselves above anyone else. Many of the Fathers and saints of

the Church go so far as to say that even if we fail in every other respect, humility alone can save us:

“An angel fell from heaven without any other passion except pride. Therefore we may ask whether it is possible to ascend to heaven by humility alone, without any of the other virtues.”

— *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, Step 23

So, brothers and sisters, let us grieve for the world, for the Church, and for ourselves. Let us take to heart the sobering truth that there are, and have always been, very few true Christians, and let us never presume that we are among them. Yet let us also take heart, for the Lord loves us despite our sins, despite our daily failures, despite how little we do to let His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Let us be humble and refuse to judge our brothers and sisters, because our hope rests not in anything we have done, nor in any human being, but in the great mercy of Jesus Christ.

“For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:7–8)

In Christ,

Fr. Theodore Lyketsos





Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

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Church Administrator: Diane Simmons

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E-MAIL: htrinityroa@verizon.net

2025-2026 PARISH COUNCIL

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

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Youth Director – Mike Greenwood

Greek School – Tom Contos, Rea Dania,
Georgia Liagki

Chanters – Dr. Paul Dallas, Fred Gianakouros,
& Demos Tsiakos

Dance Troupe – Dina Martinez

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Greg Apostolou

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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.

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

AUGUST 2026		
Sat. 08/01/26	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 08/02/26	9th Sunday of Matthew	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 3:9-17</i>	Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34
Usher(s):	Van Kakouras, Georgia Liagki, Irene Karageorge	
Mon. 08/03/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Tues. 08/04/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Wed. 08/05/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Thurs. 08/06/26	Transfiguration	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy
	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Fri. 08/07/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Sat. 08/08/26	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 08/09/26	10th Sunday of Matthew	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16</i>	Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23
Usher(s):	Nada Melki, Naji Karim, Juan Martinez	
Mon. 08/10/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Tues. 08/11/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Wed. 08/12/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Thurs. 08/13/26	Paraklesis	6:00 PM
Fri. 08/14/26	Vespers of Dormition	6:00 PM
Sat. 08/15/26	Dormition of the Theotokos	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy
	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 08/16/26	11th Sunday of Matthew	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 9:2-12</i>	Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35
Usher(s):	Voula Dallas, Lampros Panogeorgos, Andres Perez	
Sat. 08/22/26	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 08/23/26	12th Sunday of Matthew	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 15:1-11</i>	Gospel: Matthew 19:16-26
Usher(s):	Maria Hatzios, Mike Greenwood, Carol Royal	
Sat. 08/29/26	Beheading of John the Baptist	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy
	Vespers	5:00 PM
Sun. 08/30/26	13th Sunday of Matthew	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy
Epistle:	<i>St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 16:13-24</i>	Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42
Usher(s):	Matt Mandros, Beth Gianakouros, Jon Mandros	

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

Weekly Classes & Worship

Holy Trinity invites you to our
Orthodox Catechism
A weekly class on Orthodox Christian faith and life



Time: Sundays after the 10am Divine Liturgy
Location: Conference Room
All are welcome/No commitment necessary
Questions? FrTheoHTROA@gmail.com

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church | Roanoke, Virginia

Path to Eternity with Fr. Theodore:

Begins Sept. 6th.

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.

Bible Study resumes August 26th at 6pm



THE ORTHOCHAT: 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>



Fellowship Hour Hosts for July & August 2026



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

If you have questions reach out to Danna Owen

July 5	Aragorn & Sunni, Ryder
July 12	Team 1
July 19	Team 2
July 26	Team 3
August 2	Team 1
August 9	Team 2
August 16	Odette Karim
August 23	Magnolia Jackson
August 30	Team 3

at Philoptochosroanoke@gmail.com

With so many wonderful new people joining us at fellowship hour after liturgy, we are finding that we need to change things up a little bit. Starting in July, if no one has claimed a day for a memorial/feast/special day/etc., we will be serving coffee and water, and perhaps cookies if enough have been donated (please donate cookies!). However, we still need people to set up the coffee and clean up after the fellowship hour. To do so, we are creating a few teams that will then sign up to take care of the days that do not have a sponsor. If you would be willing to help provide this simple service to the church, please sign up to join a team during the fellowship hour. The more people who sign up, the more teams we will have and the more the work will be shared (Many hands make light work!). If you have questions, please email Caitlin DeMarco at crdema@gmail.com.



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

Announcements

Welcome To Holy Trinity!

Welcome to all visitors and newcomers. We're happy to have you. Please feel free to introduce yourself to Father Theodore or any parishioner. We're eager to answer your questions. We hope everyone is enjoying the Summer.

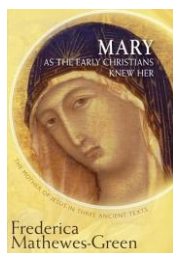
from the Ushering and Welcome Committee
(Maria Apostolou, Naji Karim & Irene Karageorge)

Community Garden

Christ is in our midst! The garlic was harvested, dried, and put out for anyone to take during coffee hour already. All of the other plants are doing well. The bell peppers have produced some large peppers and the tomatoes have just started to ripen over the past couple of weeks. Anyone is welcome to help and also go and pick what's ready.



Caitlin and Grace



Ladies' Liturgical Year Literary Club

The next meeting will be on August 8th @ 4pm. And the book that will be discussed is "Mary as the Early Christians Knew Her" by Frederica Mathewes-Green. Send questions to Caitlin DeMarco crdema@gmail.com

Sunday School Announcement—August 2026

Sunday School is about to begin for the 2026-2027 calendar year. As Holy Trinity grows, the number of students under the mature believers' care is expanding. As the Apostle Paul reminds Titus, mature believers are responsible for training-up the next generation(s) in the apostolic faith (Titus 2). As such, this announcement is a call to our parish for volunteers to serve as teachers so the young people under our care may know the ancient orthodox faith.

The groundwork for teaching is in place. The schedule and materials are ready and easy to access so preparing for lessons is unintimidating. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America recently published new Sunday School curriculum that is age appropriate, flexible, and accessible. All a teacher needs to engage students in the classroom is ready.

Ideally, the parish needs eight (8) teachers and eight (8) assistants to support the four (4) age groups. This number of volunteers will allow the teaching responsibility not only to be shared but also for the attention students need to learn. Join us and invest in the parish's Sunday School program as we worship to the Holy Trinity and point others toward God's kingdom. To learn more, please speak with Kent Warner, Holy Trinity's Education Director, or contact him at 804-334-2254 to volunteer for the Sunday School program.

Holy Trinity GOC Greek School

Holy Trinity GOC Greek School

While the 2026-27 Greek School year will officially begin the first week of October, summer revision classes for both adults and children are already underway. Special thanks to Tom Contos and Rea Dania for organizing these sessions.

If you are interested in learning Modern Greek, you can register via the church website at <https://www.holytrinityroanoke.com/greek-school/>. Please complete the editable PDF form and email it to Greek.Lessons.HTC@gmail.com by mid-September. Returning students can simply send an email to confirm their registration for the upcoming school year.

Classes will be finalized after mid-September, and lessons will start the week following the Roanoke Greek Drive-Thru (September 25-27).

Have a great summer!

Καλό καλοκαίρι!

Georgia Liagki on behalf of the Greek School Teachers:

Tom Contos, Rea Dania, Georgia Liagki

Parish Council News

August 2026 Edition

Dear Holy Trinity Family and Friends,

As we enter this new month, the Church reminds us that every day and every talent entrusted to us is a gift from God. Holy Trinity is strengthened when each of us offers what we can—through prayer, presence, service, stewardship, and love for one another.

Our Festival Drive Through is quickly approaching, and our parish family must come together. Please look for opportunities to volunteer, help prepare, serve, welcome guests, and support this effort. This is an opportunity to witness our Orthodox Christian faith through hospitality, hard work, and unity.

Stewardship Update

Thank you to everyone who has filled out a 2026 stewardship card. If you have not yet done so, please make this a priority. Stewardship is our commitment to support and participate in the life of the Church with our time, talents, and resources. Please remain current and consider where you can serve more actively.

Parish Council Elections

The Nominating Committee is accepting names for the upcoming Parish Council elections, and we need parishioners to step forward. Six current Council members will not be running again this fall. If you are interested, please call Van Kakouros at 540-761-0800 to put your name on the ballot. Serving on Parish Council is an important way to offer your time, talents, and leadership for Holy Trinity.

100th Anniversary Celebration Planning

We are two years from Holy Trinity's 100th anniversary, and planning is beginning now. Help is needed with anniversary books, banquet planning, a golf outing, and other possible events. To participate, please contact Matt Mandros or Van Kakouros.

In Christ,

Matthew Mandros

Parish Council President

Philoptochos News

AUGUST NEWSLETTER

Philoptochos is in need of donations of non-perishable snacks. Cookies, crackers, nuts, chips and kid drinks. All donations are appreciated.

The next Philoptochos meeting will be August 30th.

Wishing you peace,
Danna



Greek Orthodox Ladies'
Philoptochos Society
of Holy Trinity Church

Feeding The Hungry-TLOT

Our meals continue to hit!

Tuesday, August 4th we be preparing another delicious meal!

Thank you Charlie for being our primary transportation and server! And all the others people who helped prepare, and serve.

I greatly appreciate all that you do!

Special thanks to the Festival Community for their donations of food! Also, thank you Wendy for the bags of flour! We have used it to make bread and cookies!

There Will Be No Meat Prep in Sept. We will be starting back up in Oct.

We invite you to come and join us! There is plenty on work for everyone who would like to help!

In Faith and Love,

Della



Roanoke



As we observe the Dormition of the Theotokos fast and prepare for the Big Fat Greek Drive-Thru, please note that our next outing is scheduled for **Saturday, October 24**. We will meet for dinner at Luna Negra Mexican Restaurant, 3415 Williamson Road at 6:15 p.m. More information will be available in the October bulletin.

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Frances Simopoulos



Hellenic Club had great time in Don & Johanna Wilson's suite at Salem Ridge Yaks game last Sunday after a nice meal at Mac and Bob's. Join us on our next outing and meet other fun Holy Trinity members!"



Our largest fundraiser of the year is just around the corner, and we need **YOUR** help to make it a success! It is time to start thinking about volunteering and giving as much time as possible for preparations prior to the drive-thru and the days of the event.

Mark your calendars

- Set-up begins the week of September 21
- Drive-Thru Days: September 25, 26 & 27
- Tear-down: Monday, September 28
- Be sure to review the Baking Schedule below for other important dates

Why we need you?

- **Friday, September 26 is especially critical.** A smooth and strong start sets the tone for the entire weekend, so we are counting on many volunteers that day! **The official work schedule is posted online at <https://bit.ly/4oZyPW4> and in the Fellowship Hall.** Please take the time to review the work schedule and sign-up **TODAY!**

Help spread the word!

Billstuffers and posters are available in the Fellowship Hall. Take a few and share them with friends, neighbors, and local businesses. Word of mouth is one of the most powerful ways to promote our Drive-Thru! There are also car magnets that you can take one and put on your vehicle. **These will be returned at the end of the event.**

Thank you in advance for your time, talents, and willingness to help with our fundraiser. Let's come together to make this our best event yet! Please contact me with any questions!

I pray that God blesses us all with good health, strength, and beautiful weather.

Peter Simopoulos, Chairman
ptsims@gmail.com or 434-851-6835

Moussaka Preparations – BIG FAT GREEK DRIVE-THRU

On **Thursday, August 27, and Friday, August 28, beginning at 9:00 a.m.**, we will be peeling and frying eggplant for the moussaka. **It is IMPERATIVE that we have at least 10 volunteers to assist with frying each day.** Having enough volunteers will help distribute the workload and ensure that the same few people are not carrying all of the responsibility. **If you are available to help with frying on either of these days, please email francesimopoulos@gmail.com and let her know which day(s) and times you are available.** There is a job for everyone, so please feel free to stop by at any time each day. We will be working until 5:00 p.m. on both Thursday and Friday.

Baking Schedule – BIG FAT GREEK DRIVE-THRU

Mark your calendars! Below is the September baking schedule. If you have any questions, please contact Frances Simopoulos at 434.851.6830 or francesimopoulos@gmail.com. Please join us in our preparations.

Pastry	Date and Time
Baklava	Saturday, September 5 at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, September 6 after the Divine Liturgy
Kourambiethes	Saturday, September 12 at 9:30 a.m.
Packaging of Pastries	Saturday, September 19 at 9:30 a.m.

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 Prosphora
- ☐ 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:



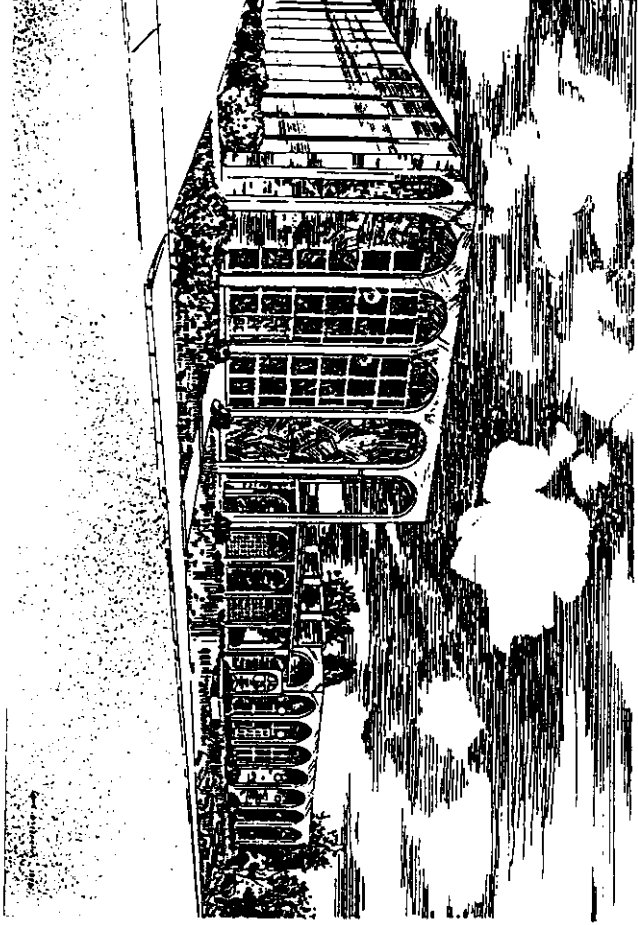
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