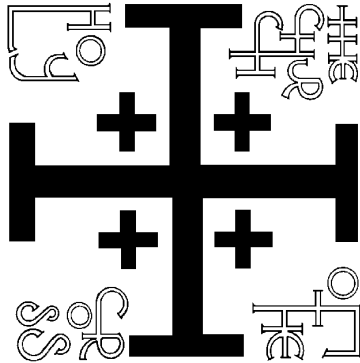


TIME VALUE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

900 Alameda
BELMONT CA 94002-1604



CROSS CURRENTS

Monthly Newsletter
November 2001

Church of the Holy Cross
900 Alameda / Belmont, CA 94002-1604
(650) 591-4447 / fax (650) 508-9846
office@goholycross.org / http://www.goholycross.org

INSIDE

Stewardship	3	News from ORA	5
Holiday Events	6	Youth Currents	8
Church Directory excerpts .center		Church Calendar	center
Family to Family 2001	insert	House Blessings	insert
New Year's Eve	insert		

Articles and ads for the JANUARY 2002 *Cross Currents* are due on **Wednesday, December 26.**

THE FULL RICHNESS OF THANKSGIVING

by *Father Peter Salmas, Pastor*

I am sure that this year, your Thanksgiving was spent with a greater awareness of the many blessings which we all have taken for granted in recent years. The truly important things in our lives were put into perspective, perhaps given their proper due. Have we not become acutely aware of the many blessings that we enjoy? These blessings are not just the bounty on our tables, but are, more importantly, the bounty *around* our tables. Families throughout this great country have



awakened to the serious nature of life and how quickly our fragile world can change; we are thereby given all the more reason to develop our relationships with one another and, according to His commands, with the Lord, our God. Perhaps this is an opportunity to look carefully at the basics too often ignored or taken for granted; this is an opportunity to look carefully at ourselves and state with a certainty who we are.

If we identify ourselves as Orthodox Christians, then understanding who we are as Orthodox Christians will give us the guidance necessary to live meaningfully in a world constantly challenged by evil and deception. I believe that discerning good and evil has become more difficult and we find ourselves in crisis more often. This is ample reason to cultivate our relationship with the Church and to develop relationships with others within the framework of the Church, even as we seek to make changes in the world around us. Thus the greater need to look carefully at who we are in the context of the larger body of which we are an integral part for, as Orthodox Christians, we are members of the Body of Christ.

Saint Paul reminds us that we belong to the “body of Christ” and are “temples of the Holy Spirit”. These glorious yet challenging realities describe both our physical as well as spiritual reality. For as members of the “body of Christ” it is essential that our actions reflect the reality that we are sacred temples in which the Holy Spirit resides.

To think good thoughts is noble but we must act in accordance with them. All too often our good intentions, when tested, belie a weakness to allow evil to prevail. We want to believe in God’s power over evil; we just do not have the staying power to see it through. That is why it is important to rely on God’s instruction and recognize Him as the strength in our convictions and the victor in our fight of good over evil, for is this not our intended functions as members of His Body?

As we now move from Thanksgiving to Christmas and Theophany, let us give greater attention to how we live our life and how much time is given to God and the things of God.

This year, a week before Thanksgiving, our youth families gathered at our annual Piece Meal to share in offering thanks to God for the “fruited plains” and the spiritual abundance that distinguishes our fellowship here at Holy Cross. The first Thanksgiving was a time to give

lives to protect our freedom and safety. Every day our politicians make decisions that affect our lives, our children’s lives, and our children’s children. Every day there are people who are starving, homeless, sick, suffering, and destitute. Finally, America took notice.

The police were risking their lives, protecting us from dangerous criminals even before September 11th. The only thanks society has given them is to criticize their “use of force,” and having them fired. Firefighters were risking their lives to fight fires before September 11th, but no one pulls over anymore when they hear the sirens blaring behind them. Now, things have changed. People are honoring those men in uniform all across the country. Lots of money has been collected by various charities to support the NY Firefighters and the NY Police Department. Finally they have become heroes.

President Bush and the people he has appointed are leading the war against terrorism. Everyone across America is scrutinizing their decisions. However so many other decisions are being made and laws are being passed that the public never even find out about, or show interest in, which equally affect us. The leaders we elect make important decisions every day, and our interest in them should reflect that.

Christmastime is always the greatest for charity and almsgiving. This year, people are feeling especially generous because of what has happened in the past few months. We will never completely rid society of poverty, for even Christ said “You have the poor with you always.” (Matt. 26:11) I do not see that as a negative statement, one that makes us feel that our time and money makes no difference. I see it as a challenge, a reminder that we must always remember to give to the poor, widows and orphans. Giving to the poor, and supporting them only one part of the year does not fulfill the needs of these people. Almsgiving should be an everyday and every season concern.

In the theology of the Church, it is emphasized that Sunday is not a mini-Easter, but that Easter is a great Sunday. The meaning behind this is that we shouldn’t make going to and participating in the life of the Church a once-a-year thing, revolving around Easter. Rather, we should be involved in the life of the Church every week, from day to day, and that Easter is a great celebration during the year. Thanksgiving should be thought of in the same manner. Instead of the mindset in this nation that once a year we come together to give thanks to God, every day we should give thanks to God, and when Thanksgiving comes around, it is a great celebration of that thanks.

YOUTH CURRENTS

November 2001 edition

Grow in the Grace and knowledge
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:18



EVERY DAY SHOULD BE THANKSGIVING

by *Simon Thomas, Lay Assistant*

I love Thanksgiving! Wake up early, play 18 holes of golf, watch a couple of football games, spend the day with family and extended family, and stuff yourself with lots of good food. I don't think it gets any better than that.

Before everyone sits down to eat, traditionally a prayer of thanks is offered. I have been asked by my family to say the prayer ever since I first went to the seminary. The first couple of years I was always nervous, not knowing what to say. As the years went by, it became less difficult. This year however, it was easy. I think we all know what we have to be thankful for.

I am thankful for my health and my family's health. I have a roof over my head, clothes to keep me warm, and a comfortable bed to sleep in. I have enough food in my cupboard and fridge to keep me satisfied. I have a dependable car that gets me around, a job to go to, and money in my pocket. The leaders of our country are making decisions to protect me from madmen and terrorists so that I can get on with my life without being overwhelmed by fear. Soldiers are halfway around the world, away from their families during the holidays, defending my freedom.

On September 11, the world, even more so Americans, and especially New York, was reminded of what we should all be thankful for. Unfortunately, we needed a tragedy of such a great magnitude to remind us of something that we should remember every day. Every day there are firefighters, policemen and women, soldiers and many others risking their

thanks to God for His love and kindness, recognizing also the fellowship and challenge that marked the struggles of surviving the first year in America. The year was 1622 and fewer than fifty pilgrims survived, these giving thanks in large measure to the friendship and unselfish offering of the Indians of the regions.

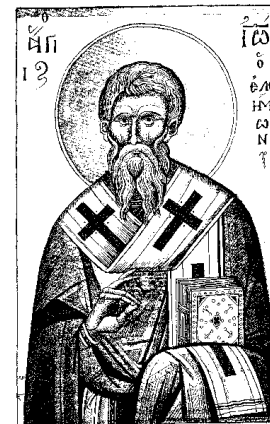
Sharing and concern for others is a distinguishing element of Thanksgiving. Yet the greatest example of these virtuous characteristics is our Lord's Nativity, God becoming man so that we may become more like Him. Let us give more time reflecting upon this great mystery and, and, based upon our recognition of His sacrificial Love for us, let us renew our commitment to Him. May Advent be for us a time of renewal both in words and deeds. May the bounty of our Lord's gifts to us be also reflected in the bounty of our giving back to Him and to others in His name. Be generous towards God as He has been generous towards you, sharing in your bounty. This is the full richness of Thanksgiving.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF ST. JOHN THE MERCIFUL - NOVEMBER 12

This article is a part of a continuing series on Stewardship sent to us by the Archdiocese' Stewardship Ministry office. Additional articles may be found at their website - www.goarch.org.

We will soon see, Lord, which of us two will win the contest: You, Who ever gives me good gifts, or I, who will never cease distributing them to the poor. For I know well there is nothing of mine that is not owing to Your mercy, which upholds my life.
(Prayer of St. John the Merciful)

Born in the year 555 on the island of Cyprus, the saint we remember on November 12 is a beautiful example of Christian Orthodox Stewardship. Known to us as St. John the Merciful, he was the son of devout Christian parents who were affluent and able to provide a comfortable living for their family. His father served as governor of Cyprus and was involved in the politics and business of the island. As John grew



older' he married and had children. When his father died, he took over the family's business interests, but this did not last long. Soon after the death of his parents, his wife and children also died from a rare disease. John's faith in the Risen Lord gave him great comfort in dealing with the physical loss of his family. In thanksgiving to God, he surrendered his life to Christ and the Church. He was instrumental in the establishment of hospitals, orphanages, and gave his entire estate to the poor and needy so that he could pursue a life of prayer. His reputation as a philanthropist spread throughout the Byzantine Empire and he was soon asked to become the Patriarch of Alexandria.

Among his first actions as Patriarch was to call together all the clergy and trustees of the Diocese of Egypt. He sent them out to register all the poor and needy people in the area regardless of whether or not they Christian. Over 7,500 people in need were found. The Patriarch ordered that they were to be fed every day and given the clothing they needed. He called the indigent his "Masters" and recognized that by serving them, God was providing an excellent opportunity to express faith in Him! As Patriarch John depleted the treasury of the Church in Alexandria, concern arose as to how future expenses would be met. Through his trust in the words of our Savior, the people soon experienced the promise of the Lord: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; nor about your body, what you will put on...But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you..." (Matt. 6:25, 33).

There is a story about a poor man who thought he could beat the system. He would receive his alms from John and then disguise himself to receive more. This happened three times when it was finally pointed out to the Patriarch. Without hesitation the Patriarch ordered that the man be given twice as much, saying: "Maybe he is Jesus my Savior who has come on purpose to put me to the test."

St. John, Patriarch of Alexandria, was recognized by his flock for being generous and kind to all people but especially to the poor and needy; for this reason, he was called "the Merciful." In being merciful to others, St. John knew that it was the Lord Himself Who grants mercy and that he was simply His humble servant.

We can learn much about Christian Stewardship from the example of St. John the Merciful. He recognized that his stewardship was both to serve people less fortunate and to teach the wealthy that contributing to the sacred work of the Church was an opportunity and a privilege. He encouraged the wealthy to realize this opportunity as an expression of their faith in Jesus Christ. Once, when some wished to thank John for his kindness and generosity he replied: "No more of that, brother! I haven't shed my blood for you yet, which is what the Savior asks." With this in mind, let us reconsider our understanding of Christian Orthodox Stewardship and learn from the life of St. John the Merciful.

*A gentle reminder from our Stewardship Committee to please return your 2002 Stewardship pledge cards before **December 15** - this will help us greatly in planning for the new year!*

Saturday, December 22

- o *The Stories and Songs of Christmas* are traditional means of expressing our faith at the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone in the Holy Cross community, family and friends are invited to join us for a gathering to share the stories and songs of this holy season. Hot apple cider, hot chocolate, and Christmas cookies will be offered as we gather around the Christmas tree. Even though it is one more thing to do in a week already beset with way too much to do, we will find it uplifting to come together for this evening as we commemorate the true significance of this sacred feast. Please call the church office if you are willing to offer a helping hand with desserts, story telling or songs. (in The Oaks following Great Vespers which start at 5 PM.)

Monday, December 31

- o *New Year's Dinner-Dance*. (following Liturgy of Saint Basil in the Gym and The Oaks). Please see flyer in this issue.

January 6 through January 31

- o *House Blessings*. Please see form in this issue.

Sunday, January 13

- o *Annual Vasilopeta - a fine luncheon - a beautiful tradition not to be missed*. (following Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall)

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS HOLIDAY EVENTS

Sunday, December 16

- o ***Philoptochos Christmas Tea and Coffee Reception.*** All proceeds from the tea and bake sale will benefit 2000 Holy Cross Family-to-Family Sharing. Greek pastries, especially made for the Tea and packaged for Christmas, will also be available for purchase. Philoptochos Charity Drawing, too! \$500 cash Grand Prize & five \$100 prizes. Need NOT be present to win. Proceeds to benefit the Holy Cross Benevolence Fund and other Philoptochos charities. (following Divine Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall)
- o ***Family-to-Family Sharing Sorting and Packaging.*** Join us following the Tea, as we sort the packages for the families and prepare the gifts for the “angels”. (afternoon, following the Tea in the Fellowship Hall). Please see flyer in this issue.
- o ***Annual Christmas Program*** - A delightful play, Nativity scene, music and songs, and holiday refreshments. (6 PM in The Oaks)

Monday, December 17

- o ***Family-to-Family Sharing Distribution night.*** Join us for a light dinner before we drive off with food and toys galore for our “adopted” families . Drivers needed too - look for the sign-up sheet posted in the Fellowship Hall. (meet at 6 PM in The Oaks)

NEWS FROM ORA

by *Arick Mathios, ORA President*

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

It has been several years since a report has been given on ORA and our activities. For those of you who may not be familiar with ORA, we are the “Order of Respected Adults”. Yes - WE are the seniors of Holy Cross! Our members range in age from 55 to 99. and our membership of approximately 185 members is increasing each month.

A few of the activities ORA members enjoyed this past year were the annual Mothers Day/Fathers Day luncheon at the Villa, an overnight trip to Reno, a day trip to Roseville & Sacramento, a Christmas party complete with Santa Claus, as well as delicious luncheons each month in The Oaks. In August. our group wrapped more than 12,000 dinnerware for the Festival.

Under the leadership of Vice President **Angie Stambollis**, we have wonderful monthly raffles, featuring surprise packages, baskets, wine, See’s candy, and \$50 gift certificates, just to mention a few! ORA makes cash donations, and donates all of the sugar and flour, to the Family to Family Sharing Program at Christmas.

We are planning a busy and fun 2002 with interesting meetings, day trips, a Reno trip. movies, bingo, luncheons, and a few surprises! ORA is an active and enjoyable social group - why not come join us?! We meet at 11 AM on the first **Tuesday** of each month in The Oaks. And the dues are \$10 per year.

On behalf of myself and the ORA board : Vice President, Angie Stambollis; Secretary, **Desi Evangel**; Treasurer, **Lula Karedis**; Monthly Bulletin, **Bernice Dadaos**; Refreshments, **Mary Zongus**; and, Advisor/Membership Chairperson, **Virginia Coppock**.

We wish all at Holy Cross a joyous Christmas and a happy new year. Good health to all. peace on earth, and love in our hearts. May God bless.

DID YOU KNOW?

If you’re a regular “Word of the Day” reader, you’re already familiar with etymologies — that is, word histories.

The etymology of “etymology” itself is relatively straightforward : “Ety- mon” means “origin of a word” in Latin, and comes from the Greek word “etymon,” meaning “literal meaning of a word according to its origin.” Greek “etymon” in turn comes from “etymos,” which means “true.” Be careful not to confuse “etymology” with the similar sounding “entomology” — “entomon” means “insect” in Greek, and “entomology” is the study of bugs.

<p>December 2, 2001</p> <p>14TH SUNDAY OF LUKE</p> <p>Following Liturgy, PC Elections</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10 AM, Playgroup (N-2) 1-5 PM, ND (Gym) 6:45-8:30 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 7:00 PM, Study Class (Library)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>SAINT BARBARA 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 11 AM, ORA Christmas Party (Oaks) 3:30-6:30 PM, IHM Vball (Gym) 6:30-9 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 7-9 PM, Iconography Comm. (N-2) 7:30 PM, Philop Board (Library) 8-9:30 PM, OCF (Stanford)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>SAINT SAVAS 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 4:30 PM, Grk Schil (Class) 7 PM, AHEPA/DTRS (N-2) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym) 7:30-9 PM, Choir (Oaks)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>SAINT NICHOLAS 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 11 AM, Staff (office) 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>4-5 PM, Youth Chof (Lof)</p>	<p>8</p> <p>5:30 PM, Great Vespers 10-2 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 11 AM, baptism evening, FELIA Christmas Party (Oaks)</p>
<p>9</p> <p>10TH SUNDAY OF LUKE</p>	<p>10</p> <p>10 AM, Playgroup (N-2) 1-5 PM, ND (Gym) 6:45-8:30 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 7:30 PM, Exec (Library) 7:00 PM, Study Class (Library)</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fresno) 3:30-6:30 PM, IHM Vball (Gym) 7 PM, GOYA & Receiving Home (Oaks) 7:30 PM, JOY (rms N-2)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>SAINT SPYRIDON 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 4:30 PM, Grk Schil (Class) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym) 7:30-9 PM, Choir (Oaks)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>11 AM, Staff (office) 3:30-6:30 PM, IHM V'BALL (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym) 7 PM, Bible Study (Library) FAM TO FAM (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>FAM TO FAM (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>15</p> <p>5:30 PM, Great Vespers no JV Bball morning, Christmas Program rehearsal (Oaks) FAM TO FAM (Gym/Oaks)</p>
<p>16</p> <p>11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE</p> <p>Following Liturgy, Christmas Tea (Gym) 6 PM, Christmas Program (Oaks) FAM TO FAM (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10 AM, Playgroup (N-2) no ND 6 PM, FAM TO FAM Distribution (Gym/Oaks) 7:00 PM, Study Class (Library)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fresno) 2-5 PM, Confession (Church) 3:30-6:30 PM, IHM Vball (Gym) 6 PM, Parish Council (Fresno/Library) 6:30-9 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 8 PM, Parish Council (Library) 8-9:30 PM, OCF (Stanford)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>2-5 PM, Confession (Church) 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym) 7-9 PM, Confession (Church) no GS</p>	<p>20</p> <p>11 AM, Staff (office) 2-5 PM, Confession (Church) 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7-9 PM, Contes sion (Church) First Day of Winter</p>	<p>22</p> <p>5:00 PM, Great Vespers 10-2 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 6 PM, Songs and Stories of Christmas (Oaks)</p>
<p>23</p> <p>SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST</p> <p>No Religious Ed</p>	<p>24</p> <p>CHRISTMAS EVE 7 AM, Royal Hrs 8 AM, Divine Liturgy CHRISTMAS DIVINE SERVICES 7 PM, Matins 8 PM, Divine Liturgy no Preschool no playgroup no ND</p>	<p>25</p> <p>THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST No services today office Closed no Preschool no IHM</p>	<p>26</p> <p>3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 4 PM, Cross Currents due 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym) no GS no Preschool</p>	<p>27</p> <p>SAINT STEPHEN 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 11 AM, Staff (office) 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym) no Preschool</p>	<p>28</p> <p>no Pre school</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5:30 PM, Great Vespers</p>
<p>30</p> <p>SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS</p> <p>No Religious Ed New Year's Eve Party setup (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7 pm, Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil following, New Year's Eve Party (Gym/Oaks) no Preschool no playgroup no ND</p>	<p>January 1, 2002</p> <p>NEW YEARS DAY office closed No IHM no Preschool no OCF</p>	<p>2</p> <p>4:30 PM, Grk Schil (Class) 7 PM, AHEPA/DTRS (N-2) 7:30 PM, Choir (Lof) no Preschool no ND no JVBall no Ad Vball</p>	<p>3</p> <p>11 AM, Staff (office) 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JVBall, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym) 7:30 PM, Parish Council (Library) no Preschool</p>	<p>4</p> <p>no Pre school</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5:30 PM, Great Vespers 10-2 PM, JV Bball (Gym)</p>

they wish assistance to find suitable help. *If all items are not properly completed, the organization or group will be billed for any expenditures incurred to complete the work required.*

Cleanliness : The Hall Facilities, Kitchen, and classrooms should be left in the same condition in which they were found :

- o All decorations, leftover food, and garbage, must be removed.
- o All refuse should be placed in the plastic liners, secured, and deposited in the BFI bin at the rear of the building. The bags should *not* be left on top of, or in front of the bin as a precaution against foraging animals. All garbage secured in this manner must be emptied into the BFI three-yard bin at the rear of the building. Cardboard and paper goods must be broken down. All trashcans should be relined with new trash bags. Garbage should not be piled on the lid of the bin, or in front of the bin to allow complete access for the refuse truck. In following these simple directions, we will all be alleviated of any potential sanitation or rodent hazard.
- o All pots, pans, utensils and appliances used in the Kitchen must be washed, dried and put away.
- o All stoves, ovens and coffee makers must be cleaned and turned off.
- o The Kitchen floor must be swept and mopped clean of debris.
- o Any food left over must be left in the refrigerator and its disposal arranged for and completed within two days. If not, it will be treated as garbage.
- o The sound system must be turned off.
- o The Hall Facilities must be swept (Gym) or vacuumed (The Oaks)

Security : Before leaving, check to see that :

- o All windows are closed and locked.
- o All lights (including restrooms) are off.
- o All doors are closed and locked.

It is incumbent upon the users of the Hall Facilities and classrooms to assure they leave the facilities as they found them. These are simple rules, but not always observed. Each organization must assume their rightful responsibility. This is *our* church. We should care for it as we do our own homes.

Also, please remember, Kitchen and maintenance equipment are not to be removed from the Church premises for personal use.

SCHEDULING HALL & ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

FOR CHURCH FUNCTIONS :

As always, church organizations have priority over community organizations *unless* the community organization has already made arrangements for use of our facilities. We sometimes allow community organizations to use our facilities in a reciprocal arrangement for using their facilities (i.e., with the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Notre Dame High School, etc.). Please be understanding of this.

All assignments are made on a first come-first served basis with some exceptions. You must call ahead *at least 3 weeks in advance* to book a meeting area. All regularly scheduled meetings that are published in the *Cross Currents* calendar or the *Sunday Bulletin* (i.e., youth groups, ORA, etc.) are given the highest priority and are guaranteed room assignments *but are not* guaranteed use of the Gym, Fireside Room, etc.

Also, whether your event is taking place on church grounds or off, please leave details of your event with the church office.

FOR PRIVATE / COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS :

Reservations for the Hall Facilities will be taken by the church office, checked against possible conflicts in dates, entered on the master calendar on a first-come/priority level basis and confirmed in writing to the user when the engagement agreement is signed and the security deposit (\$500) has been brought in to the office.

After you call the church office, an approved caterers list will be sent to you. Parishioners in good standing may, however, use any caterer of their choice as long as the caterer is licensed and insured (proof is required before your event will be confirmed). After making your choice of a caterer for your event, contact our Hall Manager, Espie Cobos, at 650-591-4447 to confirm the date and time of your event. All Hall Facilities and classroom bookings will be reviewed and approved by the Hall Management Committee, which consists of the Parish Priest, the Parish Council President, or his designated appointee, and the Hall Manager.