

CROSS CURRENTS

Monthly Newsletter
January 2002



Church of the Holy Cross
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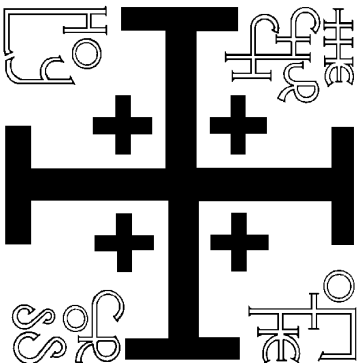
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Articles and ads for the FEBRUARY 2002 *Cross Currents* are due on **Wednesday, January 26.**

BULLS AND EGOS

by *Father Peter Salmas, Pastor*

I begin this month with a thank you...a BIG THANK YOU...for the very unexpected surprise that awaited me at the conclusion of the Christmas Divine Liturgy. I was summoned to the narthex by our Parish Council President, **Nick Peros**, to find a number of Parish Council members gathered with my family and a few other parishioners. Nick proceeded to give a speech about Christmas and its spirit and a few other insights that I do not remember and then handed me a box, a small box, a very small box. As I looked at it I thought it may be a new Palm Pilot with internet access but then as I received the box from his hand, it was extremely light. Perhaps the box contained a cash gift or tickets to some vacation spot in the South Pacific? My imagination got the best of me. Realizing that guessing was frustrating to all, I opened the small box to find a set of keys...to a car. I was speechless and dumb-



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founded. I mumbled as Parish Council members took pride in leading me, in my stunned state, out the front doors of the Church and towards the small parking lot along the Safeway property line, repeating something like, “What have you done?” or “I can’t believe you have done this.”

Lo and behold, in the first stall was parked a new Taurus sedan, similar to the color of the blue/silver Oldsmobile I drove a few years ago. I continued to mumble in sincere surprise, kissing and thanking everyone present for the completely wonderful and totally awesome gift...a car on Christmas. What a beautifully thoughtful gesture. Thank you...each and everyone.

Surprises are good and make apparent how we all love thoughtful and genuinely special gifts. On the other hand, some surprises can be devastating and totally debilitating. We need look no further that the tragic events of 9/11 and the ensuing conflict in Afghanistan and the ongoing terrorist attacks throughout the world. Man’s ability to place himself in conflict with others of his own kind in the created world around him is unique. Saint Athanasios of Jerusalem writes:

“No single creature has been in error in the eyes of God save man alone; neither the sun nor the moon nor the sky, the stars nor water nor space has been unfaithful to its state, but, on the contrary, knowing their Creator and their King - the Word - they all live as they were created. Only human beings have turned themselves from good and changed that truth which belongs to God into deceit, as they transferred the knowledge of Him to devils and idols.”

Every generation, in every century, in every millennium, has experienced the results of this never-ending struggle between man and his ego. Now you may feel that ego is a good thing and I would agree with you in part. Self respect and the feeling we experience when we have accomplished a great task is good. It is when our uncontrollable urges thrust us into the position of being first at all cost that we travel down a path of falsehood and deception, eventually leading to our own destruction. The ancient struggle with evil we experienced in the Garden of Eden is still the root of our struggle, the pivotal struggle between our Creator and ourselves.

Herein lies our fight, at once an ancient and contemporary fight. It is with the enemy thousands of miles away and with the evil enemy within our own mind and soul. Conflict is within and around us. It marks our every moment and yet is so guised by our own blindness that the root of the conflict is not always recognized or confronted. It may be the ego within us, the ego

good life here in this world, while a Spiritual Father seeks what is best for the child in the life to come. It is through a Spiritual Father that we grow from spiritual children to mature Christians.

AN EVENING WITH THE RECEIVING HOME

by *Greg Bangs*

This past month, GOYA had the pleasure of welcoming the children of the Receiving Home - a place where children stay while they wait for foster parents - to a night of Christmas spirit. There were snacks, mini Christmas trees, and even a visit from Santa Claus.

We introduced ourselves to the children, and then each person helped out a specific child. There were children of all ages, from little babies to young teenagers. I was partnered with a young boy named Wesley. Together, Wesley and I made Christmas ornaments out of beads and wire, and made candy canes out of green and red string. We spent most of the evening talking and decorating, pausing only to snack on chocolates and cookies.

When finally Santa appeared, all of the children ran up to where he was sitting and started the long process of asking him for what they wanted. When they were done, Santa began handing out presents, greeted with a squeal of excitement each time he called a name off a tag.

When Wesley was handed his present, he rushed over to me and started unwrapping it. He was very excited as he opened it and triumphantly held it in both hands when he was through. It was a fire-fighter play set, complete with trucks, a helicopter and even a station.

I was both surprised and touched when Wesley asked me if I wanted to play with him. Here he was, with a brand new toy set, something he might not be given very often, offering to share it with me. So, together, we opened the package and brought out the many assorted pieces.

I went home feeling as though we had done something good for the children. The gifts we gave them to unwrap were special, but I think that the most important gift of them all was that of the time and attention we shared with them.

The first Spiritual Father was Moses to the people of Israel. His father-in-law Jothor tells him, “Now then listen to me, and I will advise you, and God shall be with you: be to the people in the things pertaining to God, and you shall bring their matters to God. And you shall testify to them the ordinances of God and His law, and you shall show to them the ways in which they shall walk, and the works they shall do.” (Ex. 18:19-20) The Spiritual Father follows the example set forth by men such as Moses and Joseph, in order to bring us closer to God, and to lead us in the ways of the Lord.

The Spiritual Father provides all that is necessary for a Christian soul, much as a natural father provides all that is necessary for a child. The Spiritual Father guides us by his sermons, Bible studies, and other teaching resources. It is through the Spiritual Father that we celebrate all the services of the Church and receive the Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, Marriage, Unction and Confession). Through each of these Sacraments, the Spiritual Father counsels the spiritual child and directs him or her personally.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian says this concerning Spiritual Fathers: “Listen only to the advice of your Spiritual Father, answer him with humility and, as to God, tell him your thoughts, even to a simple temptation, without hiding anything, do nothing without his advice.” (*Hymn 4*) Saint Symeon is speaking to monks in this passage, but his explanation of the importance of a Spiritual Father is valid for ALL Christians. It is through humility and obedience to our Spiritual Father that we come to truly understand and know God.

In order to have a relationship with a Spiritual Father, a person must first seek one out, and the parish priest is the obvious option. Most people have a working relationship with their parish priest when they attend the Divine Liturgy and other services of the Church. However, it is important to personalize the relationship through the Sacrament of Confession. In Confession, a person can bring their struggles and temptations before God, and receive guidance from their Spiritual Father. This relationship can be, and ideally should be, initialized from youth. A young child can go to Confession, not necessarily because he or she has done something wrong, but in order to receive guidance, to be properly led down the path of God.

A Spiritual Father is just that, a father. As a child receives discipline and guidance from its natural father, so too a Spiritual Father will discipline and guide a spiritual child. In both cases, the father wants what is best for the child. A natural father teaches what is best for the child so that it may have a

down the block or at the end of the pew. What is important is the recognition of what it is and how we can best respond. Our daily time with God, in prayer, meditation, or study of the Holy Scriptures and the lives of the saints develops our sense of what is good and evil. Our involvement within the liturgical calendar of our Orthodox faith sharpens our senses even more.

The good fruits that are borne upon following our Christian discipline assure us that our religious instruction and practice is based upon real and quantitative results. Even though faith dictates that this will be the case, our response is often one of surprise. We do not remain mindful of the fact that, “faith IS the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The alternative to a life of faith could be devastating and tragic... The choice is ours and assurances lay in our own ability to discern right from wrong, good from evil, the Creator from the creature. May this New Year bring with it a renewed commitment to our Lord and all aspects of His Church. May we be strong enough to make those changes necessary for the spiritual fulfillment that we seek, for we are first and foremost spiritual creatures, in need of spiritual nourishment that has only one source. May we become more familiar with this source and the living water that flows from it, purifying our bodies and refreshing our souls.

FROM THE JANITOR'S CLOSET

Merry Christmas! I trust everyone had a great Holiday. We did. We spent time with family, went to Church Christmas Eve and overall had a wonderful Christmas.

For those of you who don't know, and to bring everyone up to date, I have been hired as the new Facilities Manager of Holy Cross. I will be writing a monthly column on our cleaning and maintenance programs.

My goals are to improve our cleaning processes, increase our Maintenance Programs and to catch up on needed repairs all within our approved budget. I believe we can do this by working smarter and getting to work.

I would like everyone to think of the Facilities Department as a service department, we are here to serve our customers, you the Parishioners. Please feel free to make suggestions and point out areas that need fixing. My office is between The Oaks and the Kitchen. There will be a box on my door where you can leave your suggestions.

I want to thank everyone for your compliments and good wishes. I will try to live up to your expectations and fulfill your trust in me.

Heard from the Closet: "Tyke, I don't know what you're doing but you're doing a Great Job!" Thanks Dan.

'Til next month . . . *TYKE STAMATES*

HOLY CROSS PRESCHOOL

"'B' is for 'ball' and 'C' is for 'cake'" ring out from our class as the children prepare themselves for kindergarten.

March 1 is the day to sign up for next Fall's preschool program. Don't miss this chance to have your child join our fun-filled learning program. Come by anytime to get information. We're busy but always have time to meet new people.

HOLY CROSS PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS TEA AND RAFFLE

by *Christine Hopkins and Kathy Craighead,*

Philoptochos Christmas Tea Chairpersons

On behalf of the Holy Cross Philoptochos Board we would like to thank all of the women who helped with the annual Christmas Tea fundraiser held on December 16. As in years past it was a successful fundraiser—its purpose to raise monies for the Holy Cross Family-to-Family sharing program and Benevolence Fund. This was made possible by those who gave generously of their time by providing the tasty baked goods and fingertip sandwiches which were all wonderfully displayed. Special thanks to **Theodora Kounalakis** who chaired the Greek Pastry Bake Sales including organizing a group of amazing ladies who helped to bake those delightful treats. I also want to thank all of the board members who helped to set up and transform the gymnasium into a banquet hall fit for a king. And last but not least thanks to **Desi Evangel** and the youth choir led by **Khara Salmas** who filled the room with the sounds of Christmas music. How thankful and blessed we are to display and to partake of such a bountiful table of goods. Again, on behalf of the board thank you to one and all (too numerous to name individually), for once again making this event successful. We wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

YOUTH CURRENTS

January 2002 edition

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

2 Peter 3:18



THE ROLE OF THE SPIRITUAL FATHER

by *Simon Thomas, Lay-Assistant*

On December 30 we commemorated Joseph, the betrothed of Mary the Theotokos. Saint Joseph is not spoken of as much as Mary, yet his role as guardian and protector of Mary, and the baby Jesus, are of vital importance. Mary needed someone to care and provide for her when she left the Temple, and Joseph, who was well respected in the community, was given the responsibility of caring for the young virgin. Not knowing exactly what he was getting himself into, Joseph took Mary into his care, and then showed great faith through all that took place.

As tradition tells us, Joseph was a widower, with children of his own from a previous marriage. He was advanced in years when he received the thirteen year old Mary into his care. Yet, in a short time, he finds that this girl, who is young enough to be his daughter, is pregnant and it is not his child. In Jewish society, this would be a disgrace upon the girl, and a crime punishable by death. When an angel appears to him in a dream explaining that the child is from God, he accepts this revelation, and in faith becomes an earthly father to Jesus, as well as a guardian of Mary. He is responsible for the development of Jesus as a child, just as if he were His father.

The role of Joseph is similar to that of the Spiritual Father in an Orthodox Christian community. A Spiritual Father is responsible for the spiritual development of all of his spiritual children. Just as God the Father is the Father of Jesus, yet He entrusted His Son into the hands of Joseph, so too does God entrust all of His children into the hands of a Spiritual Father. Just as we look up to our natural father and seek his guidance and care, as spiritual children, we should seek out the care of a Spiritual Father. It is in his care that we develop as Christians in an effort to reach theosis (becoming like God).

(continued)

Congratulations to running back **Easton Thodos** who had a great season carrying the ball for Hillsdale High School. Despite the team's mediocre season, Easton excelled and was named "All-League" in the PAL Ocean Division. Easton was also named "Player of the Week" earlier in the season.

Congrats to **Vanessa Craighead** who scored a hat trick of hat tricks in ONE week last month (that's three games with three goals each! AND scads of assists, too)! Vanessa and her Mercy-Burlingame team remain undefeated in the PSAL.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

We missed listing some names in this year's Community Christmas Card, so we include them here with our hopes that you had a wonderful holiday season and that your new year be happy, healthy and prosperous.

Mrs. Vicki B. Boyd
Harry & Elaine Breeze
Chris, Julie & Andreas Christoforidis
Christo, Olga & Evangelia Daskalakis
Mrs. Pearl Delis
Denton Family
Michael & Nancy Fadis
The Haddad Family
David & Laure Kastanis & Family
Ted & Zoy Kyriakis
Pat Lagiss
Evdokia Melas
Litsa & Kia Melas
Konstantin, Mary, Effie & George Milionis
Tillie M. Modonas
Ted & Mary Pappas
The Peros Family
John & Demi Raptis
Mr. & Mrs. Evangelos Tonas
James C. Triggas
Triant & Violetta Varelas

HOLY CROSS OUTREACH

Thanks to the parishioners who helped serve food to the needy at the Samaritan House Dining Room in **January** : **Edie Christoforidis, Daisy Fernando, and John and Vivi Sarantitis**. Holy Cross servers offer their time on the third Friday of each month and there is no food preparation (see below) involved. Please call Vivi at 697-3739 if you can lend a hand.

Thanks to the ladies who participated in the Samaritan House Kitchen Food preparation in **January** : **Helen Valavanis, Yvonne Gavros, Daisy Fernando & Edie Christoforidis**. The next preparation dates are **February 13 and 19** (the second Wednesday and third Tuesday of each month) Please join us if you can. Interested parishioners should call **Edie Christoforidis** at 345-8981.

SPOTLIGHT

Both **Alexandra** and **Gabrielle Nemchik** have leading roles in their school plays. All those many years of experience acting in the Festival Mythology Plays have paid off. Alexandra, a senior at San Mateo High school, will play the part of Golde, Tevye's wife in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Her show will be the first two weekends in **February**. Gabrielle, an eighth grader at Bowditch Middle School, also gets to play the part of a mother -- she is "Mrs. Paroo" in *The Music Man*, Marian the Librarian's mom. Her show will be the first weekend in **March**. Don't miss these two great shows. Way to go Nemchik girls!!

You can order tickets from **Helene**.



◀ Alexandra and fellow San Mateo High School students rehearse for "Fiddler" which opens next month.

Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

January / February 2002

<p>January 27, 2002 Sunday of Zaccheus 15th Sunday of Luke</p>	<p>28 10 AM, Playgroup (N-2) 1-5 PM, ND (Gym) 6:45-8:30 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym)</p>	<p>29 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside) 3:30-6 PM, IHM Vball (Gym) 6:30-9 PM, Dance-Efstro (Gym)</p>	<p>30 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 8:30 AM - 2 PM, ND Retreat (Oaks) 4:30 PM, Gik Schi (Class) & Open House 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym)</p>	<p>31 11 AM, Staff (office) 3:30-6 PM, IHM VBALL (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym) 7 PM, Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 1, 2002</p>	<p>2 Presentation of the Lord 8 AM, Orthros 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 5:30 PM, Great Vespers 10:30-2:30 PM, OYAA (Gym) 3 PM + Godparents Sunday set-up (Gym) 4 PM, baptism</p>
<p>10-10:45 AM, Religious Ed/Three Hierarchs following Liturgy, Greek School Luncheon 1-3PM, Dance-Melt (Oaks) 3-7 PM, OYAA (Gym)</p>	<p>6:30-7:30, Dance-Angel (N-2) 6:30-7:30, Dance-To Kamari (Oaks) 7 PM, Study Class (Library)</p>	<p>6:30-7:30, Dance-Angel (N-2) 6:30-7:30, Dance-To Kamari (Oaks) 7 PM, Study Class (Library)</p>	<p>6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym)</p>	<p>7 8:30AM - 1:30PM Serra HS Retreat (Oaks) 3:30-6 PM, IHM VBALL (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym) 7 PM, Youth Council (Library)</p>	<p>8 Clergy-Laily (Ranch) Holy Cross Crab Feed set-up (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>9 5:30 PM, Great Vespers No JV Bball Holy Cross Crab Feed (Gym/Oaks)</p>
<p>15th Sunday of Matthew following Liturgy Godparents Sunday Reception (Gym) No OYAA</p>	<p>4 10 AM, Playgroup (N-2) 1-5 PM, ND (Gym) 6:45-8:30 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 6:30-7:30, Dance-Angel (N-2) 6:30-7:30, Dance-To Kamari (Oaks) 7 PM, Study Class (Library)</p>	<p>5 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside) 3:30-6 PM, IHM Vball (Gym) 6:30-9 PM, Dance-Efstro (Gym) 7:30 PM, Philop Board (Library) 8-9:30 PM, OCF (Stanford)</p>	<p>6c 8:30AM - 1:30PM Serra HS Retreat (Oaks) 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 4:30 PM, Gik Schi (Class) 7 PM, AHEPA/DTRS (N-2) 7:30 PM, Choir (Loft) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym)</p>	<p>7 8:30AM - 1:30PM Serra HS Retreat (Oaks) 3:30-6 PM, IHM VBALL (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym) 7 PM, Youth Council (Library)</p>	<p>8 Clergy-Laily (Ranch) Holy Cross Crab Feed set-up (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>9 5:30 PM, Great Vespers No JV Bball Holy Cross Crab Feed (Gym/Oaks)</p>
<p>10 16TH Sunday of Matthew (of the Talents) Kids N Cancer reception (Oaks) 1-3PM, Dance-Melt (Oaks) No OYAA</p>	<p>11 10 AM, Playgroup (N-2) 1-5 PM, ND (Gym) 6:45-8:30 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 6:30-7:30, Dance-Angel (N-2) 6:30-7:30, Dance-To Kamari (Oaks) 7:30 PM, Exec Council (Office)</p>	<p>12 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside) 3:30-6 PM, IHM VBALL(Gym) 6:15-7:15PM, Dance-Efstro (Gym) 7 PM, HOPE & JOY (rms N-2), 7 - 8:30PM, 2nd Harvest Food Bank / Jr. GOYA and GOYA (Oaks)</p>	<p>13 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 4:30 PM, Gik Schi (Class) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym) 7:30 PM, Choir (Loft)</p>	<p>14 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>15 FDF (Spokane)</p>	<p>16 5:30 PM, Great Vespers 10-2 PM, JV Bball (Gym) FDF (Spokane)</p>
<p>17 17th Sunday of Matthew (of the Canaanite Woman) ORA hosts coffee hour FDF (Spokane) No OYAA 1-3PM, Dance-Melt (Oaks)</p>	<p>18 Presidents Day <i>Church office closed</i> FDF (Spokane) 6:45-8:30 PM, Dance-Aster (Gym) 6:30-7:30, Dance-Angel (N-2) 6:30-7:30, Dance-To Kamari (Oaks) No Preschool No playgroup No ND</p>	<p>19 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside) 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 8-9:30 PM, OCF (Stanford) 6:30-9 PM, Dance-Efstro (Gym) 7:30 PM, Parish Council (Library)</p>	<p>20 3:30-5 PM, ND (Gym) 4:30 PM, Gik Schi (Class) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Vball (Gym) 7:30 PM, Choir (Loft)</p>	<p>21 3:30-6 PM, IHM vball (Gym) 6:30-8 PM, JV/Bball, 7:30 PM, Ad Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 5:30 PM, Great Vespers 10-2 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 2-7 PM, OYAA (Gym)</p>



It's Time! It's Now!
2002 Membership
PHILOPTOCHOS

Church of the Holy Cross
900 Alameda
Belmont, CA 94002

Membership Calendar year is January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002

“Philoptochos” literally means “friend of the poor” and is the largest organization of Greek Orthodox women. Membership is open to all women over eighteen years of age. Whether an active member or a supporting member, women are a vital force and a source of strength for the church. Give a gift of membership to a daughter, a mother, a niece, a special friend! Join us and help keep a worthy philanthropic organization growing.

Membership donations must include a minimum of \$14.50 for San Francisco Diocese and National dues.

-----2002 Membership Pledge-----

Enclosed is my 2002 Philoptochos Membership donation (Jan to Dec). For each paid member, I allocate the remaining contributions after \$14.50 to the charities supported by Philoptochos through the Church of the Holy Cross.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Pledge amount per member: _____

Mail to:

Arleen Pasvanis Brenner
1523 Altura Way
Belmont, CA 94002

HURRY! MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS TODAY!

HOLY CROSS CRAB FEED

Saturday, February 9
Belmont Church of the Holy Cross

6:30 PM - No-host cocktails / Hors d'oeuvres
7:30 PM - Dinner

salad ♦ makaronada ♦ garlic bread
fruit ♦ dessert
wine & refreshments

\$35.00 adults
\$17.50 children 12 & under

For reservations, *e-mail* perosm@pacbell.net or *call* 650-347-6910

Make checks payable to : **Church of the Holy Cross**
and mail to **900 Alameda / BELMONT CA 94002-1604**

Names of adults attending (*use back of form if necessary*) :

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____

TOTAL _____ x \$35.00 = _____

Names of children attending :

1 _____
2 _____

TOTAL _____ x \$17.50 = _____

If possible, seat with : _____ Your phone : _____

please do not write below this line

check # _____ / _____ res # _____ by _____