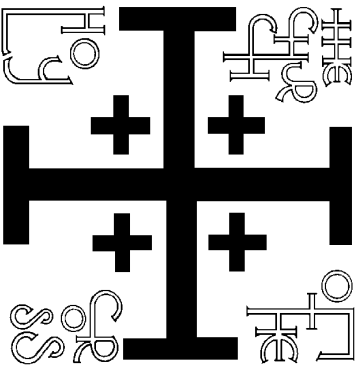
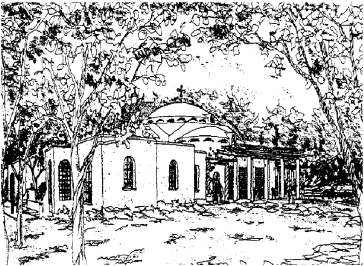


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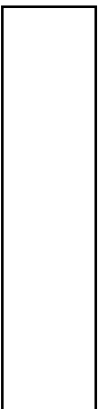
Monthly Newsletter
November 2002



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CROSS CURRENTs

The Monthly Newsletter of the Church of the Holy Cross
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office@goholycross.org / http://www.goholycross.org

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Articles and ads for *Cross Currents* are due on the **26th** of the month prior to the month of desired publication.

WHO ARE YOU?

by **Fr. Bohdan Hladio**, from Diocesan Observer, November 2002, #1168

An Orthodox priest holds no punches in saying how he feels about funerals and church membership.

I know your name, I know your family, but I don't know you. The phone call I got about you was the one I dread. "Father, *so-and-so* has passed away, and the family wants to know when you can serve the funeral."

What am I supposed to do? I've been in this parish long enough to have seen and met anyone who has even the slightest connection with our community. I've never seen you in Church. I've never spoken with you. I've never noticed you at a *Panakhyda* (*Parastos*), a wedding, a baptism, or a funeral. Where have you been?

Were you a believer? If you were a believer, you certainly didn't act like one. What I mean is that there has always been a clear set of expectations set before anyone who wishes to call themselves a Christian. Christians approach Holy Confession and Holy Communion at least once a year, for example. You didn't. Christians support the Church with their time, money,

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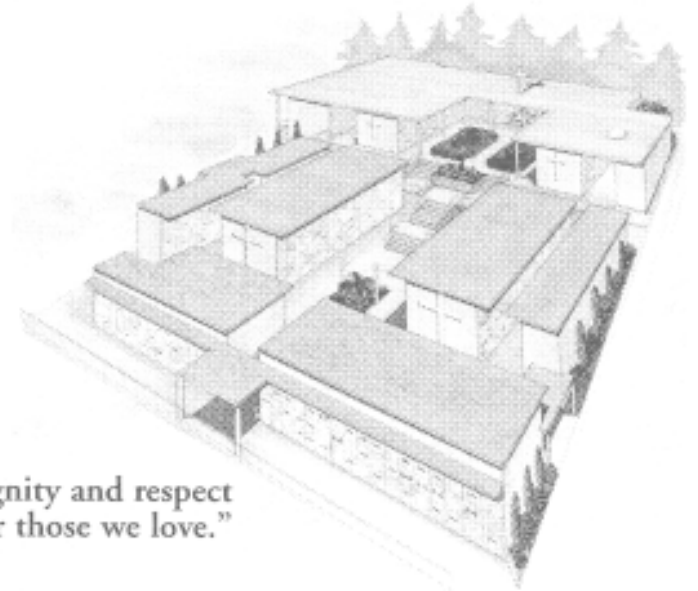
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5. **Abraham** - See Genesis 22:1-2, 6-9 “After these things God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ He said, ‘Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you...’ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, ‘My father!’ And he said, ‘Here I am, my son.’ He said, ‘Behold, the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?’ Abraham said, ‘God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.’ So they went both of them together. When they came to the place which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.”

December
is
Family-to-Family Sharing
Month!

Look for news on how *your* donations
of food, toys and/or money
can help make a wonderful Christmas
for a needy local family.

The *Angel Tree* is up and waiting for *YOU*
to adopt an angel!

and talents. You didn't. Christians attend Divine Services regularly, You, to my knowledge, and to the knowledge of everyone I've talked to, haven't darkened the door of our church in years.

From what I've been told you were rather successful at what you did. You obviously spent lots of time learning career skills, spent lots of time working and making money. From your address I see that you certainly were well-off financially. But even this confuses me, because our parish keeps records of everyone who donates even the smallest amount of money, and I've never seen your name there. You had money for the government. You had money for food. You had money for shelter, for vacations, for a cottage, for concerts, and for restaurants. Yet now that you're dead, it's the Church, the same Church you didn't support when you had the chance, that gets asked to bury you. "But he was baptized here," they tell me. Sometimes I think the sectarians are right, and we should wait until people reach the age of reason so that they might consciously accept baptism, with all its consequences and responsibilities. The fact that you were baptized here simply underlines the fact that someone failed perhaps your family, perhaps our community, perhaps you yourself in your Christian upbringing and development. If you hadn't been baptized you (and your parents and godparents) would at least have an excuse for your conduct.

At times like this I just want to go on vacation, and let a substitute priest deal with things, because not knowing the situation at least he won't have qualms of conscience. Did you believe in God, or did you mock God? Were you positively disposed to the Church and Her teachings, or did you actively support social and moral teachings such as access to abortion which are anti-Christian? Not knowing these things, I don't know if it's proper to bury you. A Christian burial is for Christians. Were you? The Church always gives the benefit of the doubt, but we've got to base that benefit on something. So far, I'm drawing a blank.

What do I say to your family? They are distressed and heartbroken. All of us realize that death is just around the corner, that a weak heart, a drunk driver, or any of a myriad of other causes can snuff out our life even as we feel ourselves to be young, healthy, and in control of our destiny. Your sudden death, not having time to say even a simple "good-bye, I love you" has devastated them. I hope there were no unresolved conflicts, because in a case like this it makes those left behind even more distraught, and sometimes those wounds never heal.

The one thing I can say for sure is that you do have a few devout relatives, people who truly love God and serve Him in any way they can.

While most of your friends and family would be only mildly upset if I didn't bury you. (I actually think they'd be happier. A "rent-a-preacher" service would be shorter and more easily forgotten, and afterwards they'd have the satisfaction of complaining about how the priest was "unfair" or "judgmental" and feel justified in not having anything to do with the Church. Until they wanted a nice wedding. Or to baptize their child. Or died). It's these pious relatives who are foremost in my mind as I consider what to do.

But as the saying goes, "God has children, but no grandchildren." It doesn't matter whether our parents or aunts or uncles are saintly, or priests, or bishops, or whatever, it's what we ourselves do with the time, talents and material wealth which God has given to us which will either open or lock the gates of Heaven for us. If we don't want to be saved even God Himself can't force us (and God can do anything!).

The bottom line, you see, is that I don't feel comfortable making either you, or me, or the Church into a hypocrite. Jesus preached love, but He also preached truth and responsibility. He accepted the worst sinners who repented, but he condemned everyone (the "Church people" first and foremost!) who was hypocritical. So you see, my problem is not that you were a sinner. I'm a sinner too. My problem is that if you consciously chose not to have anything to do with the Church during your lifetime then burying you from the Church makes you into a hypocrite, which I don't want to do. If I decide to bury you for a stipend, or just in order not to "make waves" in the community, I'm then a hypocrite. And if hypocritical priests bury hypocritical laymen it certainly makes the Church appear hypocritical, doesn't it?

"But the Church is full of hypocritical people," you might say. You're right, and again, I'm one of them. I personally would rather deal with an honest agnostic than a nominal believer. But the very fact that someone is willing to give God the "benefit of the doubt" (if not real faith) by paying their parish membership, by being well disposed towards the Church, by showing up for the occasional religious or cultural or social gathering really does mean something. We are taught that when we take one step towards God, He comes running toward us (you may have heard the story of the prodigal son. It's been on the best seller list for a long time). At this moment I'd really like to learn about any conscious step you may have taken in your adult life towards God. I'm not having much luck.

So I don't know what to do. I don't know whether giving you a Christian burial will be for God's glory, or compromise the Church's authority and discipline. We all know that a funeral has absolutely nothing to do with whether we go to heaven or not. Many saints didn't receive a Christian burial, but are

You say: "I can't forgive myself"	God says: "I forgive you..." (1 John 1:9; Romans 8:1)
You say: "I can't manage"	God says: "I will supply all your needs..." (Philippians 4:19)
You say: "I'm afraid"	God says: "I have not given you a spirit of fear..." (2 Timothy 1:7)
You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated"	God says: "Cast all your cares on Me..." (1 Peter 5:7)
You say: "I don't have enough faith"	God says: "I've given everyone a measure of faith..." (Romans 12:3)
You say: "I'm not smart enough"	God says: "I give you wisdom..." (1 Corinthians 1:30)
You say: "I feel all alone"	God says: "I will never leave you or forsake you..." (Hebrews 13:5)

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. **The Good Samaritan** - See Luke 10: 30-37 for the story about the kindness of the Samaritan.
2. **Matthew** - Matthew was a Jewish tax collector for the Roman government. He was despised by the Jews because he collaborated with the Romans who were hated by the Jews as overlords of their country. Nevertheless, Matthew responded to Christ's simple call to follow Him.
3. **Isaac** - See Genesis 26:12 "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him."
4. **He would give half his wealth to the poor and would repay those he had cheated.** - See Luke 19:8 "But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.'"

Zacchaeus met Jesus and his life was changed. He made a declaration of what he intended to do now that he had come to know the Christ!

YOUTH CHOIR

The Youth Choir is looking for new or returning members. We meet the first three **Thursdays** of each month from 3:45-4:45, and sing with the adult choir monthly. Second-graders through high school are welcome. It is a fun group of kids and your participation will make this important ministry even more rewarding. For more information, call Patty Kane (650) 728-2021.

BIBLE TRIVIA

(See if you can find these in the Bible before you look at the answers!)

1. What kind person cared for a wounded traveler?
2. Which book of the Bible was written by a tax collector?
3. Who grew a tremendous crop that was 100 times the grain he sowed?
4. What did Zacchaeus volunteer to do after his encounter with Jesus?
5. Who, following God's instructions, built an altar and laid his son on it as a burnt offering?

WISDOM/REFLECTION

You say: "It's impossible"	God says: "All things are possible..." (Luke 18:27)
You say: "I'm too tired"	God says: "I will give you rest..." (Matthew 11:28-30)
You say: "Nobody really loves me"	God says: "I love you..." (John 3:16; John 13:34)
You say: "I can't go on"	God says: "My grace is sufficient..." (2 Corinthians 12:9; Psalm 91:15)
You say: "I can't figure things out"	God says: "I will direct your steps..." (Proverbs 3:5-6)
You say: "I can't do it"	God says: "You can do all things..." (Philippians 4:13)
You say: "I'm not able"	God says: "I am able..." (2 Corinthians 9:8)
You say: "It's not worth it"	God says: "It will be worth it..." (Roman 8:28)

in heaven. Others, who were buried with great pomp and ceremony but had grave, unreported sins weren't helped by their funerals, because repenting is one of the few things only we can do for ourselves. In any other sphere of life a different set of expectations is in place - if I'm not in the army, for example, and ask for a military funeral the officer at the local base will not only deny my request, he'll think that I'm crazy. But the Church is, well, supposed to be different!

"But Father, the funeral is for the living." If I hear this nonsense one more time I think I'm going to be sick. I've never heard of a funeral being served for someone who was alive. Orthodox Christians believe that prayers for the dead can be beneficial. We don't believe in "closed casket" funerals, or worse yet, funerals without a corpse. Yes, a funeral, piously served and chanted, with a proper sermon, can bring great comfort to the grieving and spiritual edification (sometimes even enlightenment) to those present. But it's my experience that people "write their own eulogy." In cases like yours, lying won't do, and telling the truth might not be terribly comfortable.

So forgive me. If I was wiser, and more compassionate, and holier, I'd know what to do, what to say. But I don't. Am I going to serve the funeral? I don't know yet. The only thing I know for sure is that at this moment I hope and pray with all my heart that your current dilemma is less traumatic than mine. But somehow I doubt it.

THE VERY REVEREND DR. LEONIDAS C. CONTOS FELLOWSHIP TEA -- A GREAT SUCCESS!

A beautiful Philoptochos Tea was held September 21 at the home of **Virginia** and **Jim Lagiss**. The proceeds from this event were put into this fund that grants scholarships to deserving Orthodox graduate students. Father Leon was a passionate supporter of higher education. In his memory, \$7578 was donated. If you were unable to attend but wish to contribute, donations are being gladly accepted. Please make your check payable to "Philoptochos - Contos Fellowship."

PHILOPTOCHOS SENDS MEDICAL AID TO ORTHODOX MISSIONS

At their last meeting the Philoptochos Board voted to appropriate \$800 to purchase two medical kits that are desperately needed by the Orthodox Missions Project. One kit will go to the orphans in the Hogar Rafael Orphanage in Guatemala. The other kit will be sent to a missionary physician in Albania. Each kit contains antibiotics, aspirin, Advil and vitamins. Through a generous donation of a local pharmaceutical company, the actual value of each kit is \$10,000 with enough medication to treat 700 children. That is a total of 1400 children whose lives may be saved or whose pain may be eased.

During the service on Sunday, October 13, **Mother Ivonne** from the orphanage in Guatemala expressed her gratitude to the congregation for its support of the missions. She spoke of orphans arriving on the doorstep of the orphanage already infected with the HIV virus. Her words were very timely. Thanks to **Bob Nemchik** and **Father Michael**, the collection that day for the HIV/AIDS Ministry paid for an additional medical kit. Another 700 children will be helped.

Medical kits are now on their way to these underprivileged children who deserve to live healthy lives. A special thank you goes to **Claire Sperow** for not only working with the missions directly, but also for her continuing support of the entire project.

FELIA

by *Tyke Stamates, President*

Well after a 2-month vacation we had a great October meeting. It was good to see everyone, especially **Dan Stamos** who we helped celebrate his 90th Birthday. A big Happy Birthday to you Dan and many many more.

We welcome everyone to join us on **December 7** when Filia will have their annual Christmas Party. Save this date and be on the lookout for more information.

true meaning of Thanksgiving, which is to be thankful for what you have. Andy was thankful that he had people in the audience who loved him and supported him no matter what, his family. He was also thankful for having a role in this awesome play, even if it was just the turkey.

I'm so thankful for everything that I have, a warm house to come home to, great friends who are always there for me and, especially, for my family, who love me no matter what. I thank God for all that He has blessed me with and I pray for those who don't have the things I have, most of all health. This season is a time to stop, and think about how fortunate you are, and to thank God for those you love.



ATHLETICS

Practices have begun, so please turn in your registration forms to the Church Office. For more information, please call the Holy Cross Athletic Director, Mr. Frank Catomer in the evenings at (650) 343-7191.

GREEK FOLK DANCING

Registration for the 2002-2003 year is closed. In order to participate in the Holy Cross Dance Program, a child must be a baptized Orthodox Christian, participating actively in the Holy Cross Religious Education and Youth Group Programs, and his/her family must be a pledging member of the community. Practices are on Tuesday nights, beginning at 6:30 PM. For more information on practices, please contact the appropriate parent advisor:

ANGELOUDAKIA	4-6 YEARS	Cathy Pereira	631-9952
		Athia Giotinis	568-0281
KAMARI MAS	7-9 YEARS	Hope Callas	345-1672
		Nicky Papadakis	321-2225
Astarakia	10-12 Years	Irene Fotinos	349-1535
		Tula Giesecker	652-4641
Efstrofia	13-15 Years	Vicki Boubalos	802-0422
		Hope Callas	345-1672
Meltemia	16-20 Years	Carole Angelis	592-2754
		Irene Pappas	591-6976

messed up. Despite these failures, everyone still had hope and was extremely excited, everybody that is except for poor Andy, who sat in the corner of the room in his hideous turkey costume waiting for his cue. He felt like a nobody, an unimportant role in this significant play. All he was, was the turkey, the main part of the meal. How embarrassing.

The day Andy dreaded finally arrived. The third grade class and Mrs. Hall hustled about getting costumes on, putting on essential make-up, and making some last minute preparations, as Andy moped along behind them. At five o' clock, the class received a quick "pep talk" from the principal, Mr. Janison, and then got into their places. The play had begun.

As Andy's cue got closer, his knees began to shake, his body tense and he started having last minute thoughts of backing out. Right when he was ready to run out of the theater, Mrs. Hall whispered, "Get ready Andy. You're up." He stepped up in place and as soon as he heard his cue line, took a deep breath, and stepped on to the stage.

The amount of people in the audience surprised him. In the first row, he saw his mother and father, and all his aunts and uncles who had come to see him. The strange thing though, was that nobody was laughing. He heard no giggling from anyone in the crowd, only "ooo's" and "ahhh's" from the parents looking towards him, grinning and nodding. He smiled, teasing the crowd, waddled center stage and began "Gobble, Gobble, Gobble! A Thanksgiving meal just wouldn't be complete without a turkey, which the pilgrims and Indians shared in peace."

He had done it! The crowd went wild when he finished his lines and the cast came up all around him and bowed. When the curtain closed, the class cheered, thankful for a successful performance. When they all finished cleaning up and getting changed, the cast went back to their classroom to join their parents for a great Thanksgiving play celebration.

When they arrived at the classroom, the parents all clapped and hugged their children and congratulated them. Andy found his parents who then showered him with hugs, kisses and compliments. Even the principal shook his hand and praised him for a job well done. When everyone settled down, Mrs. Hall stepped to the front of the class and announced that she had certificates for everyone who was in the play. She called Andy up last, and also gave him the award of MVA, "Most Valuable Actor". He felt like a champ.

Andy learned a lot of important lessons on the night of that play. First of all, he learned that having the main part of the play, or anything else, doesn't make you the most important person. All that matters is that you do your best, because sometimes the little things count, too. He also learned the

FROM THE JANITOR'S CLOSET

by *Tyke Stamates, Facilities Manager*

Well it's been a couple of months since you've heard from the closet. So I'll open the door and come out to say a few things.

I believe we had a great Festival, **Nick** and **Tanya** did an outstanding job and they succeeded in putting 90% of Festival information in the computer.

A Big YaSOO to **Geri Mayers** for getting Sunnyvale Ford to donate an electric vehicle to Holy Cross. It really saves time and leg muscles for me on a daily basis and **Bob Nemchik** is offering rides for those of us who have a difficult time walking to coffee hour on Sunday after Liturgy.

A Big YaSOO to **Peter Evangel** for making wood boxes so that we can organize the pantry.

Thank You, Geri and Peter.

We have hired **Hector Rivas** as our second-shift custodian. A gentle giant type, Hector is learning the ropes and is doing a good job.

Another Big YaSOO to Hector for finding and turning in a diamond that fell out of a ring. We located the owner who was very happy and appreciative to have her diamond returned.

I must remind everyone, When you are planning Church related events or activities please call the church office and get your activity scheduled. We have many other groups who want to use our facilities and we must know your dates in advance so they can be posted on the schedule. If you call at the last minute you may find your dates already taken.

I will try one more time; we need an Event Supervisor for weekend events. This is a paid position and would be great for a mature college student or someone looking for extra work. Please call Tyke at 591-4447.

Now for some sad news, we have to replace the towel dispenser in the men's bathroom. It is sad because our own children, Holy Cross youngsters were practicing their karate kicks and punches on it. These hooligans have no respect, lack common sense and show their idiocy when destroying property. Whether they are martial arts students or not they have brought disrespect and shame on their parents, *sensei*, and themselves.

Please have your children read the above and teach them to respect one another and all things living or not.

Till next time - Happy Cleaning!

spiRitUAL REFLEctiOn

"I will meditate on Your commandments, and contemplate Your ways."

Ps. 119:15

SAINTS COSMAS AND DAMIANOS THE UNMERCENARIES (November 1)

The Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian of Mesopotamia, and their mother, Saint Theodotia were natives of Asia Minor. Their father, a pagan, died while they were still quite small children. Their mother, Theodotia, raised the brothers in Christian piety. The example of their mother and the reading of holy books preserved them in chasteness of life in accord with the command of the Lord, and Cosmas and Damian grew up into righteous and virtuous men.

Trained and having become skilled as physicians, they acquired a graced gift of the Holy Spirit - to heal by the power of prayer people's illnesses both of body and soul, and they treated even animals. With fervent love for both God and neighbor, the brothers went forth into social service. For the maladies that the brothers treated they never took payment, and they strictly observed the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Freely have you received, freely give in return." (Mt 10:8). The fame of Saints Cosmas and Damian spread throughout the entire surrounding region, and people called them unmercenaries.

One time the saints were summoned to a grievously ill woman, whom all the doctors had refused to treat because of her seemingly hopeless condition. Through faith Palladia (her name) and through the fervent prayer of the holy brothers, the Lord healed the deadly disease and she got up from her bed perfectly healthy and gave praise to God. In gratitude for being healed and wanting them to accept a small gift from her, Palladia went quietly to Damian. She presented him with three eggs and said, "Take this small gift in the Name of the Holy Life-Creating Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Hearing the Name of the Holy Trinity, the unmercenary one did not dare to refuse.

Cosmas, however, when he learned of what had happened, became very sad. He thought that his brother had broken their strict vow. When the time approached for Saint Cosmas to fall asleep in the Lord, he gave last instructions that his brother should not be buried alongside him. After a short while Saint Damian also died. All were greatly perplexed where Saint Damian's

filled with groans and boos. "Now kids, don't be rude. But remember, don't be too disappointed about what task you receive for the play, for there are no small parts, only small people." Mrs. Hall said.

"Umm, excuse me Mrs. Hall," interrupted smarty pants Susie. "I think you've been mistaken. The saying goes there are no small parts, only small actors."

"Oh, of course." Mrs. Hall grumbled, trying to smile.

The day slowly dragged on, but Andy couldn't keep his mind on his work. He kept daydreaming off into his own thoughts about the play. "It's going to be great!" he thought, "especially with me and Kimmie as the lead roles." Just when he thought he was sure to pass out from anxiousness, the lunch bell rang and the whole third grade classroom jumped up in a chorus. They grabbed their lunches and quickly fought their way towards the door and into the hallway, where the results were posted. Andy finally made his way outside where the other kids were to see the results.

As soon as he stepped outside, he knew something was wrong. The whole class, who were busy chatting and gossiping a minute ago, immediately stopped talking and stared. What was the matter? As he walked towards the paper with the results, he heard snickers behind him, and his name mentioned a couple of times. "They're probably just jealous that they didn't get the main role and that I did," he thought.

The paper was divided into three parts, the names of the people who got the roles of a pilgrim, an Indian, or an animal. Andy skimmed down the list of Indians. Sure enough, Kimmie Harris had snagged the part of Pocahontas, but his name wasn't there. He looked down the list for the pilgrims, but Andy wasn't listed there either! His heart began to pound. There had to be some mistake. He was a perfect Captain Smith. He read over the lists again, but he still couldn't find his name. They must've forgotten about me." He thought. "Unless . . . No, it wasn't possible, or was it?"

He slowly brought his eyes to the list of animal roles. The deer were assigned to Rosie and Cameron, the singing birds to Derek and Ben, and the turkey to - "What?" Andy shouted aloud in disbelief. "I'm the the the . . . The turkey!" the rest of the class exclaimed in heaps of laughter.

The next part of the week was full of rehearsals, which were not going very well. No one could memorize their lines, and Crybaby Craig, who had received the part of Andy's choice, Captain Smith, sobbed every time he

an effort to improve ourselves. In the words of Stephen king: “So I ask you to begin the giving, and to continue as you begin. I think you’ll find in the end that you got far more than you ever had, and did more than you ever dreamed.”

THE TURKEY DAY PLAY

by *Kettie Fotinos*

*Every year, on the eve of Thanksgiving, we celebrate the Divine Liturgy to give thanks to God for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us, our friends and families, and to pray for those who are less fortunate. Each year we ask a few of our Religious Education classes to offer a little speech on what they are thankful for. This year, we received a short story from one of our 7th graders - **Kettie Fotinos** - and we thought we might share this with you too.*

To my Thea Maggie

Today was the day! Andy pounced out of bed and quickly threw on an old pair of jeans and a dirty T- shirt that he’d been wearing for the past week. He ran downstairs, grabbed his Pop Tart, and was out the door before you could say a word.

It was a crisp, November morning, and the wind nipped Andy’s nose playfully, but he didn’t seem to notice. He was too absorbed in his own thoughts, about the school’s Thanksgiving play that he tried out for yesterday, about what his classmates, especially Kimmy Harris who was sure to get the co-starring role of Pocahontas, would think when he received the lead part in the play -- but wait, what if he didn’t? What if he was given a character with no lines, or an embarrassing role, where everyone laughed at him? But no, he was sure he had gotten the best role, the leader of the pilgrims, Captain Smith. He just knew it.

When Andy arrived to his busy third grade classroom, he got unpacked while he socialized with his friends about the play. Everyone was so excited. Finally the bell rang and everyone scurried off to their seats. Mrs. Hall, their teacher stepped to the front of the classroom smiling. Everyone was anxious to hear what she would say.

“Hello class,” she began. “Now I know everyone is extremely anxious to hear the results for the play that you tried out for yesterday, but unfortunately they won’t be posted for you to see until lunch time.” The classroom

grave should be. But through the will of God a miracle occurred: there came to the people a camel, which the saints had treated for its wildness, and it spoke with a human voice saying that they should not doubt to put Damian alongside Cosmas, because Damian did not accepted the gift from the woman for the reward, but on account of the Name of God. The venerable remains of the holy brothers were buried together at Theremanea (Mesopotamia).

Many miracles occurred after the death of the holy unmercenaries. There lived at Theremanea, nearby the church of Cosmas and Damian, a certain man by the name of Malchos. One day in setting off on a distant journey, and leaving behind his wife all alone for what would be a long time, he prayerfully entrusted her to the heavenly protection of the holy brothers. But as time went by, a friend of Malchos went to her at home and said that her husband had sent him to take her to him. The woman believed him and went along. He led her to a solitary place and wanted to molest and kill her. The woman, seeing that disaster threatened her, called upon God with deep faith.

Two stern men then appeared, and the cunning man let go of the woman, and took to flight, falling off a cliff! The men led the woman home. At her own home, bowing to them deeply she asked, “What are your names? My rescuers, to whom I shall be grateful to the end of my days!” “We are the servants of Christ, Cosmas and Damian,” they answered and disappeared. The woman with trembling and with joy told everyone about what had happened to her, and glorifying God she went up with tears to the icon of the holy brothers and offered up prayers of thanks for her deliverance. And from that time the holy brothers were venerated as protectors of the holiness and inviolability of Christian marriage, and as givers of harmony to conjugal life.

“Unhesitating faith, unchanging hope, unshakable love. Place these in your heart and show them in your works.” - (St. John of Kronstadt - 1908)

“The grace of charity is greater than the grace of resurrecting from the dead... No one is saved if he does not help others to be saved also...” - (St. John Chrysostom)

“Do not say that you are the temple of the Lord, writes Jeremiah (Jeremiah 7:4); nor should you say that faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ can save you, for this is impossible unless you also acquire love for Him through your works. As for faith by itself, “devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19). - (St. Maximos the Confessor)

ASK MAX

by *Max the Office Rabbit*



DRIPS AND GREEK BIRDS - (Thankfully not the other way around!).

If you missed mother nature's signal earlier this month when the skies opened above us, go NOW to get new wiper blades for your car. Since it has been so long since the spring rains, chances are, your blades are about to fall apart or are at least cracking. Just go to any auto parts store (or KMart or Target) with the model and year of your car - there will be a parts guide hanging in the automotive section, just look up your car and the corresponding part ID for your wiper blades. (You usually only have to replace the plastic+rubber part - don't be finagled into buying the complete metal+plastic+rubber part if you don't have to.) Husbands - the Niners and the Raiders are going to blow it anyway - take a few minutes out of your Sunday and go get some blades for your wife's car, too.

How often have you dreamed about being a bird? Flying over things, joyful and carefree. How about being a Greek bird?!? On **Saturday, November 30**, San Jose's PBS television station presents "Visions of Greece" a unique show about Greece from a bird's perspective. There will be plenty of soaring visuals over the cities, islands, and the ancient ruins - I hope their helicopter is armor-plated if they choose to fly over a Cretan wedding (I'M JUS' KEEDING!!!). That starts at 2 PM - check your cable listings for the broadcast station KTEH-54 (I don't know what the cable channel is - I can't get cable in my cage). Later in the afternoon, soar on down to church for Great Vespers which start at 5:30 PM to make up for what your were mumbling to the TV during those interminable PBS pledge breaks. The show will be repeated **December 1**, 3:30 PM, **December 3**, 9:30 PM, **December 8**, 1 PM, and **December 13** at 6 PM.

MORE TV - Also of interest is a concert by tenor **Mario Frangoulis** taped in Thessaloniki. Tune in for that on **Sunday, December 1** at 5 PM.

Did you know the three words which form the second most dreaded phrase in the English language are : "YOU'RE" "BEING" "AUDITED"? The MOST dreaded phrase is formed by "YANNI" "IN" "CONCERT" - which brings me to a ~~warning~~, sorry, notice, of a concert by the Man-with-the-rabbit-tail-

"So I want you to consider making your life one long gift to others. And why not? All you have is on loan anyway. All that lasts is what you pass on.

"Giving isn't about the receiver or the gift but the giver. It's for the giver. One doesn't open one's wallet to improve the world, although it's nice when that happens; one does it to improve one's self."

Isn't this the same message we hear in the Bible? "But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you." (Luke 11:41) "Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys." (Luke 12:33) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)

This year we have instituted a Stewardship Program in our Religious Education classes in an effort to teach from an early age the power of giving. But giving is not only about monetary wealth. We have wealth in talents and in time as well. All of us have specific gifts given to us by God, which can be put to use to help the Church and our fellow man. To squander or hoard this wealth is just as much of an abuse as if we do so with our money. Time we also have in abundance - we have all been given an average of about 70 years on this earth. If we cannot find or make time to give, then we truly have not made an effort. As King says, "A life of giving - not just money, but time and spirit - repays." How will we be repaid, when our time here on earth is up?

As our Religious Education teachers have been presenting our Stewardship Program, our students have been personally challenged to make an effort to put God first. Money is always a sensitive subject, and in these difficult times, especially here on the Peninsula, we treasure what we have even more. However, what we have is a blessing from God, we don't really own any of it. Yet, these "possessions" can be used to benefit those things we can truly call our own - our body, mind, and soul. By giving of ourselves, we show that we truly accept the gifts God has given us; and by placing God first in all aspects of our lives, God will place us first when we enter into His heavenly Kingdom.

It is never too early to realize that giving is better than receiving. When we offer our time, treasures, and talents to our Church and to our fellow man, it is not the world we are trying to improve, rather, we are making

YOUTH CURRENTS

NOVEMBER 2002 edition

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

2 Peter 3:18



"A LIFE OF GIVING"

by **Simon Thomas**, Pastoral Assistant

I started reading Stephen King books when I was in Junior High. I was given the book *It*, and ever since, I have never looked at clowns the same way. I have read probably 20 books or so by the "Master of Macabre," including *Carrie*, *The Shining*, and *The Stand*. I often wondered what kind of person could write books of such a grizzly nature. Then I read an article he wrote in a magazine put out by "Heifer International," an organization that provides animals for poor and starving countries. This time, I won't look at Stephen King the same way.

Stephen King is one of the most popular writers of our time, probably of all time. He has written over 40 books, not including several screenplays. Most of his books are best-sellers. He recently estimated his earnings at over 100 million dollars. He is basically set for life. Yet a couple of years ago, he learned what "you can't take it with you" really means. In June of 1999, King was hit by a van while walking near his home in Maine. The result of the accident could just as easily have come out of one of his books instead of being real, but King wound up in critical condition, with massive injuries. I guess that experience changed a few things for King. He realized that while he was lying on the side of the road, if "Death" would have come for him, "Death" wouldn't take *American Express*.

King wrote about his experience, "I got a painful but extremely valuable look at life's simple backstage truths. We come in naked and broke. We may be dressed when we go out, but we're just as broke. Warren Buffet? Going to go out broke. Bill Gates? Going out broke. Tom Hanks? Going out broke. Steve King? Broke. Not a crying dime.

under-his-nose taped at Royal Albert Hall. Tune in **Tuesday, December 3** at 8 PM (repeated **December 5** at 9:30 PM and **December 7** at 10 PM). Rumors that Yanni is secreting back the Elgin marbles in his keyboard cases are false.

You may actually WANT to watch the pledge breaks this time as volunteers from the newly opened Hellenic Heritage Museum in the San Jose History Park will help staff phones and take pledge calls - so look for your South Bay friends as they pretend to look busy.

Max will entertain any question submitted on clean, natural, carrot pulp-based paper written with low-salt, soy-based ink . . . or e-mail him at askmax@goholycross.org.

sEniOR FOCUS

by **Vickie Buonocore**

Arick Mathios has been president of our ORA organization since March 2001. He is a native Californian, born in San Francisco at Stanford Lane Hospital on Clay Street. This hospital later moved to Palo Alto and it is now the renowned Stanford University Medical Center, famous for its medical school, training of future doctors, distinguished staff and achievements in medicine.

Arick attended Commerce High School on Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco, close to the Opera building and Civic Center. The high school is now used as administration offices.

Arick is and has always been a very hard worker, even all the way back to his high school days. He worked in a grocery store during high school and after graduation. In 1942, he was drafted in the Army during World War II and served until 1945. Most commendable during these uncertain and still interesting times in Arick's life, was that he received the distinguished Purple Heart after being wounded in action. In 1945, he also received a Bronze Star for saving another soldier's life in the Philippines.

Arick married Nikki Pantages in February 1947. They were happily married for 44 years. Unfortunately, Nikki passed away in May of 1991. They have two wonderful sons, **Jim** and **John**. Both are happily married and living in Saratoga and Campbell. Arick is so proud of his two sons, his two daughter-in-laws, **Diane** and **Aleta**, and his two adorable granddaughters;

Jeannette, 16 years old, and **Gina**, 12 years old. He always gets a twinkle in his eye when he talks about his granddaughters.

After a long career as a longshoreman supervisor on the waterfront in San Francisco, Arick retired in 1989 and now enjoys league bowling every Tuesday and working for our church. Everyone who attends Holy Cross has seen him ushering on a particular Sunday and also in the Narthex passing out Sunday bulletins. He always has a smile on his face and a kind word for all. ORA members **Mitzi** and **Andy Petropoulos** are Arick's sister and brother-in-law.

spOtLight

Broadway, look out! - Congrats to **Jessica Malekos-Smith** who was recently dubbed a "Rising Star" by the Peninsula Civic Light Opera. Jessica just completed the PCLO's Youth Theater Conservatory program and was recruited to be in a SamTrans educational video. Jessica most recently appeared in the children's chorus of PCLO's *Evita*.

Thank YOU!!! Tom Minaidis of Tom & Pete's Produce, Half Moon Bay, CA donated some pumpkins to the Church of the Holy Cross.

Congratulations to **Chrysann Zongus**, charter member of the Interact Council of San Mateo High School - a student-sponsored suicide prevention program. The program provides peer outreach to students dealing with personal crises. Students in the local high schools are given cards that have the phone number of local and national suicide prevention centers and a place to fill in the names and phone numbers of two trusted individuals to call if they need someone to talk to.

Interact Council members go through an intense training program, arming them with basic information and techniques on how to respond to a call for help. If a caller is in danger, peer counselors are urged to immediately contact a trusted adult. As one counselor said, "Sometimes, just having someone to talk to can make all the difference in the world . . . they might not mention suicide but a lot of teens have depressed thoughts."

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Suicide is the third leading cause of death for Americans aged 15-24.

2002 AnnOUNCEMENTS

Baptisms & Chrismations

- October 27** Luke, son of Peter and Allison Virsik; Matthew Shaheen, sponsor
November 16 Christopher, son of Christopher and Gecenia Vasilakos; Johnaton Vasilakos, sponsor
November 16 Kandace, daughter of Murray and Kristina Weber; Vicki Becker, sponsor
November 16 Victoria, daughter of Spiros and Judy Vasilakos; Mary Belich, sponsor
November 17 Nicole, daughter of Harry and Lillian Haramis
November 23 Thomas, son of Bernard Hatcher and Stephanie Anagnostou; Margaret Morearty, sponsor
November 24 Niko, son of Dan and Felia Rivera; Chris Bogios, sponsor
November 24 Vincent, son of Dan and Felia Rivera; Chris Bogios, sponsor

Weddings & Blessings

- October 12** Brent Alverson and Elizabeth Sakaldasis; Dan and Eleni Woerz, sponsors
October 19 David Aurelio and Tanya Trochalakis; Elsa Kitts, sponsor
October 26 Dimitrios Dimitrelis and Nina Parker; Stamatis Vokos sponsor
November 9 Michael Dacey and Catherine Theodore; Amy Ambatielos, sponsor

Funerals

Memorial prayers are offered for the repose of the soul of:
Spiro Fotis, who fell asleep in the Lord on **November 5**

If there are omissions or corrections to the above, please let the church office know (591-4447 or office@goholycross.org).

**NEW
YEAR'S
EVE
PARTY!**

2003!



Make plans to be with your Holy Cross family as we welcome in the new year. Our evening will include a delicious rib-eye roast dinner, a vasilopeta at every table, American and Greek dancing, and midnight toast with champagne and sparkling cider.

adults, \$50 / 16 & under, \$25 - SEATING is LIMITED!

For information, contact Brenda at 510-793-5397 or e-mail at NYEatHC@aol.com

Mail your RSVP as SOON as POSSIBLE!!!

**Church of the Holy Cross - 900 Alameda @ Ralston, Belmont
Tuesday, December 31, 2002**

6:00 PM, Orthros; 7:00 PM, Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil

8:30 PM, hors d'oeuvres and cocktails; 9:00 PM, dinner & dancing

this form available at www.goholycross.org



Name : _____ Phone # day : _____

eve : _____

adults _____ x \$50 = _____

(16 & under) _____ x \$25 = _____

TOTAL (to Church of the Holy Cross) _____

If you would like to be seated next to or near another family, please make that notation on the back of this slip.

**PLEASE ENCLOSE PAYMENT AND
SEND TO :** Holy Cross Church

900 Alameda

BELMONT CA 94002-1604

RESERVATIONS WITHOUT PAYMENT WILL NOT BE RECORDED.

<p>December 1 14th Sunday of Luke following Liturgy, Parish Council elections Angel Tree up! 1-3 PM, Yperifania (Gym) 2 PM, baptism</p>	<p>2 1 – 5 PM, NDE (Gym) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>3 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Contos Library) 11 AM, ORA (Oaks) 3-6 PM, HM B'B 6:30-7:30 PM, Angeloudakia (N-2) AND Kamari Mas (3-4) 6:30-8 PM, Astarakia (Oaks) 6:30-8 PM, Efstrofia (Gym) 7:30 PM, Philop Board (Library) 8-9:30 PM, OCF (Stanford) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>4 Saint Barbara 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 3:30 – 5 PM, NDE (Gym) 4:30-6:30 PM, Greek School (classrooms) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 7PM – 8:30PM, AHEPA (Oaks)</p>	<p>5 Saint Savva 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 3-6 PM, HM B'B 3:45 PM, Youth Choir (N-2) 4:30-8:30 PM, Greek School (3-4) 4:30 PM, wedding rehearsal 7 PM, RE Teachers Meeting (Library) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>6 Saint Nicholas 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 10-Noon, Moms (rms N-2) 3 – 8 PM, NDE (Gym)</p>	<p>7 5:30 PM, Great Vespers 11 AM, wedding afternoon, confirmation evening, Felia Xmas Party, (Oaks)</p>
<p>December 8 10th Sunday of Luke St. Nicholas Ranch Sunday 1 PM, Yperifania (Gym)</p>	<p>9 1 – 5 PM, NDE (Gym) 7:30 PM, Exec Council (Office) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>10 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside) 3-6 PM, HM B'B 6:30-7:30 PM, Angeloudakia (N-2) AND Kamari Mas (3-4) 6:30-8 PM, Astarakia (Oaks) 6:30-8 PM, Efstrofia (Gym) 7:30 PM, JOY (rms N-2), Jr. GOYA (rms 3&4), GOYA (Fireside) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>11 3:30 – 5 PM, NDE (Gym) 4:30-6:30 PM, Greek School (classrooms) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 7 PM, Youth Council (Library) 7:30 PM, Choir (Oaks) with Piano</p>	<p>12 Saint Spyridon 9 AM, Divine Liturgy 2 PM, Grief Support, Rm 4 3-6 PM, HM B'B 3:45 PM, Youth Choir (N-2) 4:30-8:30 PM, Greek School (3-4) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 7 PM, Felia, Oaks 7 PM, Greek School Staff Meeting (Library) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>13 10-Noon, Moms (rms N-2) 3 – 8 PM, NDE (Gym)</p>	<p>14 5:30 PM, Great Vespers Xmas program rehearsal (Oaks/Gym) 7 PM, Diocese YAL Christmas Party (Diocese House)</p>
<p>December 15 11th Sunday of Luke following Liturgy, Xmas Tea (Oaks) 1 PM, Yperifania (Gym) evening, Xmas Program</p>	<p>16 Family to Family set-up (Gym) 7-9 PM, Confession</p>	<p>17 Family to Family set-up (Gym) 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside) 3-5 PM, Confession 6:30-7:30 PM, Angeloudakia (N-2) AND Kamari Mas (3-4) 6:30-8 PM, Astarakia (Oaks) 6:30-8 PM, Efstrofia (Gym) 6 PM, Parish Council Dinner (Oaks) 7:30 PM, Parish Council (Oaks & Library) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>18 Family to Family set-up (Gym) 3-5 PM, Confession 4:30-6:30 PM, Greek School (classrooms) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>19 6 PM, Family to Family pre-dinner and distribution (Gym/Oaks) 3-5 PM, Confession 3:45 PM, Youth Choir (N-2) 4:30-8:30 PM, Greek School (3-4) 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>20 10-Noon, Moms (rms N-2) 3 – 8 PM, NDE (Gym)</p>	<p>21 5:30 PM, Great Vespers 6-8 PM, Confession evening, Songs & Stories of Christmas (Oaks)</p>
<p>December 22 SUNDAY before the Nativity of Christ 1 PM, Yperifania (Gym)</p>	<p>23 6-8 PM, JV Bball (Gym) 8-10 PM, Adult Bball (Gym)</p>	<p>24 CHRISTMAS EVE 7 AM, Royal Hrs. 8 AM, Divine Liturgy 7 PM, Matins 8 PM, Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>25 THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST 10 AM, Divine Liturgy Office closed No Greek School</p>	<p>26 Office closed 4 PM, Cross & Youth Currents due</p>	<p>27 Saint Stephen 9 AM, Divine Liturgy OCF Conf (St. Nicholas Ranch)</p>	<p>28 5:30 PM, Great Vespers 10:30 AM, baptism OCF Conf (St. Nicholas Ranch)</p>
<p>December 29 SUNDAY after the Nativity of Christ OCF Conf. (St. Nicholas Ranch)</p>	<p>30 OCF Conf. (St. Nicholas Ranch)</p>	<p>31 6 PM, Matins 7 PM, Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil following, New Year's Eve Party (Gym/Oaks)</p>	<p>January 1, 2003 NEW YEARS Office closed No Greek School Gym closed</p>	<p>2 3:45 PM, Youth Choir (N-2) 4:30-8:30 PM, Greek School (3-4) Gym closed</p>	<p>3 Royal Hours for Epiphany 9 AM, Royal Hours Gym closed</p>	<p>4 5:30 PM, Great Vespers</p>