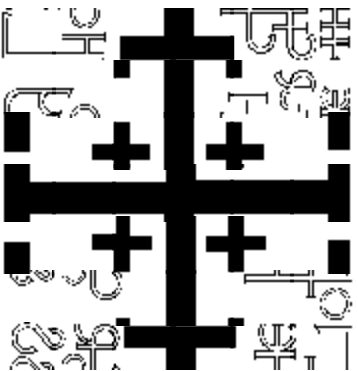


CROSS CURRENTS

Monthly Newsletter
January / February 2003

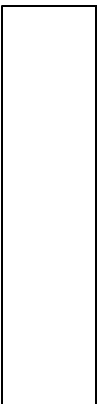


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CROSS CURRENTS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Church of the Holy Cross

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office@goholycross.org / http://www.goholycross.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

EDITOR'S NOTE : *Due to production problems, this is the latest issue of Cross Currents since the November 2002 issue. We apologize to those who submitted articles and to the Greek School, especially, whose Christmas wishes, while still heart-felt, are a little off tempo. News items, when necessary, have been updated. Again, please stay current with church happenings by reading your Sunday Bulletin and/or visiting the church website. Another issue will be coming soon. Thank you for your patience.*

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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.

GREAT LENT: OUR RETURN TO THE FATHER

Time passes so very quickly, especially as we grow older. Why, just *yesterday* I was dancing with my lovely wife at our wedding and *today* I am receiving mail from AARP and other senior citizen groups. Nevertheless, life is just as interesting and exciting...and I might add and, with the passage of this time, even more meaningful.

Having completed the celebration of our Lord's Nativity, His Baptism, and His Presentation into the Temple, we now find ourselves in the period of the Great Lent. It may come as a surprise to some of you but I await eagerly for the time the Great Lent...a time for greater emphasis in prayer,

fasting, and worship, the slowing down of my life and the deliberate turn to and focus on spiritual concerns. I believe that the greatest aspect of Great Lent is the time that it offers me to reflect upon my relationship with God and correct as much as possible the flaws in my communication with Him as well as my inability to live every moment in prayer and focused dedication to serve Him.

In the Gospel of Mark we are taught, by our Lord, the important need for fasting and prayer. In fact, each of the Gospels share this important message. As Orthodox Christians we are called to prayer and fasting for it is the way in which we can better equip ourselves with the necessary spiritual, physical, and mental strengths to combat temptation and sin.

Our “return to the Father” is imperative if we are to enjoy the treasury of blessings that await us. As in the parable of the Prodigal Son, our Father eagerly awaits our return to Him, for we, like the prodigal, have squandered the inheritance given to us. In his newly published book entitled “Return,” **Father Nektarios Antonopoulos** discusses in a simple but profound way our necessary return to God, our Father and Creator, through the Sacrament of Holy Confession. This message is of particular interest during the time of Great Lent. Please take a moment to read this one passage and reflect upon its meaning for you. I am sure that, as you continue in your Lenten preparations, the instructions and reminders found within Father Antonopoulos’ inspiring treatise will be of great benefit to you and those with whom you share the faith. *Kali Sarakosti*. A good and holy Great Lent for you and your family.

as excerpted from “Return” - the following is an extract taken from “The Pilgrim Continues His Way” translated by R.M. French.

“At the end of a week, in which I had been getting ready for my Confession, the thought came to me that I would make it as detailed as I could. So I began to recall and go over all my sins from my youth onwards very fully, and so as not to forget it all I wrote down everything I could remember in the utmost detail. I covered a large sheet of paper with it.

I heard that at Kitsaevya Pustina, about five miles from Kiev, there was a priest of ascetic life who was very wise and understanding. Whoever went to him for Confession found an atmosphere of tender compassion, and came away with teaching for his salvation and ease of spirit. I was

very glad to hear of this and I went to him at once. After I had asked his advice and we had talked awhile, I gave him my sheet of paper to see. He read it through, and then said: Dear friend, a lot of this that you have written is quite futile. Listen: first, don't bring in Confession sins which have already repented of and had forgiven. Don't go over them again, for that would be to doubt the power of the sacrament of penance. Next: don't call to mind other people who have been connected with you sins; judge yourself only. Thirdly: the holy Fathers forbid us to mention all the circumstances of the sins, and tell us to acknowledge them in general, so as to avoid temptation both for ourselves and for the priest. Fourthly: you have come to repent and you are not repenting of the fact that you can't repent- i.e., your penitence is lukewarm and careless. Fifthly: you have gone over all these details, but the most important thing you have overlooked: you have not disclosed the gravest sins of all. You have not acknowledged, nor written down, that you do not love God, that you hate your neighbor, that you do not believe in God's word, and that you are filled with pride and ambition.

I was very much surprised to hear this, and I said: "Forgive me, reverend Father, but how is it possible not to love God and our Creator and Preserver? What is there to believe in if not the Word of God, in which everything is true and holy? I wish well to all my neighbors, and why should I hate them? I have nothing at all to be proud of ;besides having numberless sins, I have nothing at all which is fit to be praised, and what should I with my poverty and ill-health lust after? Of course, if I were an educated man, or rich, then no doubt I should be guilty of the things you spoke of."

"It is a pity, dear one, that you so little understood what I said. Look! It will teach you more quickly if I give you these notes. They are what I always use for my own Confession. Read them through, and you will see clearly enough an exact proof of what I said to you just now."

He gave me the notes, and I began to read them, as follows:

<<H YiaYia Mou>> is the special subject of these short essays written by the sixth graders in Kyria Theodora's class.

A CONFESSION WHICH LEADS THE INWARD MAN TO HUMILITY

“Turning my eyes carefully upon myself and watching the course of my inward state, I have verified by experience that I do not love God, that I have no love for my neighbors, that I have no religious belief, and that I am filled with pride and sensuality. All this I actually find in myself as a result of a detailed examination of my feelings and conduct, thus:

1. I do not love God. For if I loved God I should be continually thinking about Him with heartfelt joy. Every thought of God would give me gladness and delight. On the contrary, I much more often and much more eagerly think about earthly things, and thinking about God is labor and dryness. If I loved God, then talking with Him in prayer would be my nourishment and delight and prayer would draw me to unbroken communion with Him. But, on the contrary, I not only find no delight in prayer, but even find it an effort. I struggle with reluctance, I am enfeebled by sloth, and am ready to occupy myself eagerly with any unimportant trifle, if only it shortens prayer and keeps me from it...I am forward in talk about frivolous matters and things which degrade the spirit; that gives me pleasure. But in the consideration of God I am dry, bored and lazy...I am tirelessly curious about novelties, about civic affairs and political events; I eagerly seek the satisfaction of my love of knowledge in science and art, and in ways of getting things I want to possess. But the study of the Law of God, the knowledge of God and of religion, make little impression on me, and satisfy my soul...To put it shortly, if love for God is recognized by the keeping of His commandments, and I do not keep them, but even make little attempt to do so, then in absolute truth the conclusion follows that I do not love God. That is what Basil the Great says: “The proof that a man does not love God and His Christ lies in the fact that he does not keep His commandments.”

2. I do not love my neighbor either. For not only am I unable to make up my mind to lay down my life for his sake (according to the Gospel), but I do not even sacrifice my happiness, well-being and peace for the good of my neighbor. If I did not love him as myself, as the Gospel bids, his misfortunes would distress me also, his happiness would bring delight to me too. But, on the contrary, I listen curious, unhappy stories about my neighbor, and I am not distressed; I remain quite undisturbed or, what is still worse, I find a sort of pleasure in them...

3. I have no religious belief, neither in immortality nor in the Gospel. If I were firmly persuaded and believed without doubt that beyond the grave lies eternal life and recompense for the deeds of my life, I should be continually thinking of this. The very idea of immortality would terrify me and I should lead this life as a foreigner who gets ready to enter his native land. On the contrary, I do not even think about eternity, and I regard the end of this earthly life as the limit of my existence...If I say I believe in immortality, then I am speaking about my mind only, and my heart is far removed from a firm conviction about it. That is openly witnessed to by my conduct and my constant care to satisfy the life of the senses. Were the Holy Gospel taken into my heart in faith, as the Word of God, I should be continually occupied with it, I should study it, find delight in it and with deep devotion fix my attention upon it...

4. I am full of pride and sensual self-love. All my actions confirm this. Seeing something good in myself, I want to bring it into view, or to pride my self upon it before other people or inwardly to admire myself for it. Although I display an outward humility, yet I ascribe it all to my own strength and regard my self as superior to others, or at least no worse than they. If I notice a fault in myself, I try to excuse it, I cover it up by saying, "I am made like that" or "I am not to blame." I get angry with those who do not treat me with respect and consider them unable to appreciate the value of people...In a word, I continually make an idol of myself

The Fourth Grade students wrote these Holiday essays in Alexander Mallas' class.

and render it uninterrupted service, seeking in all things the pleasures of the senses, and nourishment for my sensual passions and lusts.

On reading through this form of Confession which the priest gave me I was horrified and I thought to myself: Good Heavens! What frightful sins there are hidden within me and up to now I've never noticed them! The desire to be cleansed from them made me beg this great spiritual father to teach me how to know the causes of all these evils and how to cure them. And he began to instruct me. (*To be continued*)

I highly recommend the reading of this book and encourage participation in the Lenten Covenant program and Bible Studies on Tuesday mornings.

FDF KUDOS

Congratulations to all our dance instructors, dancers, parents, and Holy Cross family supporters for exhibiting great poise, dexterity, kefi, and Christian agape as they represented the Church of the Holy Cross at the 27th Annual Folk Dance Festival held in Anaheim, California at the Hilton Convention Center Presidents Day Weekend.

Our young dancers performed with outstanding skill and enthusiasm and brought the house down with their magnificent performances. A special note of gratitude is expressed to Mr. **Simon Thomas**, our pastoral assistant and Dance Program Director.

ANGELOUDAKIA - Cathy Pereira and Athia Giotinis

KAMARI MAS - Hope Callas and Nicky Papadakis

ASTARAKIA - Irene Fotinos and Anthie Metropoulos

ZOIRI - Tula Giesecker and Hope Callas

YPERIFANIA - Carole Angelis, Irene Pappas and Joanne Zongus

Kai Tou Xponou!

SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY 2003

This year Holy Cross will sponsor a Spiritual Odyssey **March 28-30**. This year's theme will focus on Church Traditions and their Historic and Patristic

Connections. **Rev. Dr. George Dragas**, Professor of Patristic and Church History at Holy Cross Theological School in Brookline along with **Rev. Dr. Joachim Cotsonis**, Director of the Archbishop Iakovos Library and Archival Museum will be our featured guest speakers.

All are invited to attend with the program beginning Saturday morning and continuing with lunch and presentations to follow and culminating with the Office of Great Vespers. A registration fee of \$30 per person is requested to help defray expenses. In addition, a book fare sponsored by our Three Hierarchs Bookstore will also be set up for the purchase of important items including icons, CD's, prayer robes, incense, prayer books as well as books and theological treatises on many ecclesiastical subject. Mark your calendars and plan on attending.

STEWARDSHIP

by *Tanya W. Spirtos M.D.*

It's a new year and here I come with my new year's resolutions . . . In terms of stewardship, that is!

During the past five years, the committee has used many different modalities to try to reach all the families of Holy Cross, including "the Ark", articles in *Cross Currents*, the Quill program of direct letters, reminder letters from the committee, monthly accounting letters, quarterly update letters, and even Sunday School involvement. But here it is January and I am faced with an almost identical list of families that never pledged for 2002, families that paid part of their pledge, and families that have paid nothing toward their pledge. Funny, they are the same families from year to year!

As hard as **Father Peter** and all of us on the council stress the importance of "fair share", pledges and responsibilities toward stewardship, some people assume it doesn't apply to them. Quote the Scriptures, reason, plead—nothing works. My new year's resolution?—pray for them even harder, that they may see the light and understand what a privilege it is to give back to our Lord as he has requested of us—commanded us (just ask Father Peter for the appropriate Scripture references— believe me, they are not subtle hints, and God does not want promises or empty pledges from us but clearly expects us to ante up). Father Peter's sermons this past year came straight to the point and I couldn't possibly say it any better to those who never listened the first time around.

Hilton is particularly happy to hear that I am praying rather than

sending out more pleas, notes, letters and postcards that he has to write, address and mail out. He will add his prayers to mine! Anyone who wants to join us on the stewardship committee is welcome to do so: it is a worthwhile endeavor, an education in itself, and a way of contributing to our Church.

Remember: it's our Church— our priest, our building, our classes, our children, our legacy. Each and every one of us will account to our Lord for what we did and failed to do.

STEWARDSHIP, PART 2

As our new Parish Council convened in 2003, we had a chance to review the numbers for 2002 and our projected budget for this year. Donations and fair share fell far short of our projected figures and, as can happen, there were additional expenses encountered last year. Parish council members have been extremely forthcoming this year in contacting fellow parishioners concerning unpaid pledges or nonpledging status. Every one of us understands the importance of stewardship—always keeping in mind that stewardship includes giving of our time, our talent, as well as our treasure.

During the past three years as I have watched the parish council work, I have been amazed at the incredible energy, talent, and time that is contributed day in and day out by this dedicated group of individuals and their families. I only wish that those people limiting themselves to Sunday services would avail themselves of opportunities to serve in youth activities, Philoptochos, religious education and general support during our many fellowship activities throughout the year. The best example of religious worship for the child is not just receiving communion on Sundays, but being part of a family that participates as Orthodox Christians, giving of their time, talent and treasure in all daily aspects of our community.

This committee would strongly encourage all parishioners to attend the Spring General Assembly in April, to join in discussions pertaining to the continued financial health and well-being of our parish and to learn of the many exciting and rewarding programs planned for 2003.

ON TITHING

FROM *ORTHODOX AMERICA*, AUGUST 1997

As much as we might groan and grumble about it, we know that paying taxes is part of our responsibility as citizens of this country. Just as we should

know that as parishioners we have a responsibility to contribute to the financial support of our parish... Money tends to be a sensitive issue; people grow tired, even resentful of frequent appeals, and priests do not want to cause offense by suggesting that someone is not giving enough, or to imply that the Holy Mysteries carry a price tag. Parishioners, meanwhile, often do not know what is expected of them in this regard: there are no “rules” for financial giving, as there are for fasting. Because such giving is purely voluntary, we tend to give from our surplus, after our “real” expenses have been met: food, utilities, health insurance, etc. It is all too easy to assume that other parishioners are in a position to give more than we, and that once we attain financial security we, too, will contribute more to the parish... Many of us give when we feel inspired to do so, and we may give very generously to some cause that strikes us as being particularly worthy, but this does not fulfill our obligation to our parish, which seldom figures as the recipient of such inspired giving...

Supporting one’s parish should be as much an accepted part of spiritual life as prayer and fasting. We give not for the benefit of our parish (this is simply a consequence); we give for the benefit of our souls. Our giving should be guided not by parish budgets but by Biblical principles.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites were commanded to give a tenth of their increase to the Lord (Lev. 27:30-34, Num. 18:21-24). This is called a tithe, and in contemporary terms translates to ten percent of one’s gross income. With the establishment of the New Covenant, many of the Old Testament laws and regulations became obsolete. Christ Himself, however, makes it clear that the tithing requirement was not abolished. In an oft-quoted passage on the subject, He does not upbraid the Pharisees for paying tithes, but for neglecting the weightier matters of the law: judgment, mercy and faith: *these ought ye to have done and not to leave the other (i.e. tithing) undone* (Matt. 23:23)...It was not the Pharisees’ observance of the law that Christ denounced but their attitude: their pride, their boasting, their self-satisfaction, their disdain for those who did not keep the letter of the law...

In this spirit, we can see that tithing is a baseline requirement, as it were, of our spiritual life... Nor should this give us cause to be proud, for we are simply doing that which is our duty to do, as unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10). Tithing precedes almsgiving on the path to perfection where, far ahead of us, we have the example of those early Christians who sold their houses and lands and laid the proceeds at the apostles’ feet for distribution...

If we are afraid of the financial strain this might impose, we can begin with a lesser amount... like someone learning to fast. Eventually, how-

Metaxas died at the beginning of the war and in Cairo, Egypt. An exile government was founded and in 1944 British forces entered and started the liberation of Greece.

The "OXI" day was celebrated and presented in the Oakland Ascension Cathedral Greek Orthodox Church, by the United Hellenic American Societies of Northern California (UHAS).

The organizing committee of Angeliki Karantzas, Katerina Mavroudi-Steck Dr. Eva Prionas, Elena Vlahu and Nikos Karvelis did a marvelous job of organizing a reception / luncheon and the children from various Greek schools including ours which presented various plays, poems and songs.

Nikos Prionas gave an exceptional speech on the perception of 28th of October.

The 2002 "OXI DAY" award was presented to Mr Elias Frangos and Mr Evangelos Constantouros by Dr. Prionas.

Various dignitary members of the Greek community gave speeches for the occasion such as our State Assemblyman Hon. Lou Papan, Consulate General of Greece, Hon Dimitris Touloupas, Hon Consul of the Republic of Cyprus Nicolaos Theophanous, SE and the new Consul for Educational Affairs Dr. Evangelos Kasvikis.

As is the custom which was established by Dr Yiannis Mavrommatis on the "OXI" day the students and adults of the Greek language having successfully completed the Greek testing administered by the Greek Government receive their diplomas of "Ellinomathias" recognized in EU and various educational institutes in the USA.

Maria Kalogerias, Nickolas Skourtis and Charles Skourtis from our church of Holy Cross were among the 21 recipients of the "Ellinomathia" which received their diploma from Dr. Kasvikis.

As always the program was very successful, will be celebrated again next year. The program was concluded by the singing of the Greek national anthem.

ever, we should work up to the ten percent that is our moral obligation. It should become a matter of conscience, like fasting, or saying our morning and evening prayers. Whether other people in the parish tithe or just how the parish uses our money should be of no concern to us. What we give, we give to God—with no strings or emotional attachments. And we should tithe willingly, recognizing that all we have is from God, and that our tithe will accrue to our spiritual benefit, as promised by the Lord, Who said through His prophet:

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith... if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it... and all nations shall call you blessed (Malachi 3:10-12).

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

AVAILABLE ON-LINE

Applications are being accepted for scholarships to be awarded from George and Naouma (Gioule) Gioles Scholarship Fund of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The Gioles Scholarship Fund was established in 1997 with a generous gift in memory of George and Naouma Gioles. At least three scholarships of \$1500.00 each will be awarded for the 2003-04 academic year.

Criteria and forms are available on-line at:

<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/administration/chancellor/giolesscholarship.pdf>

+ + + + +

Applications are being accepted for the Katina John Malta Scholarship Fund, a new scholarship program established at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America by means of a generous gift from the estate of Katina John Malta. The donation and the formation of the scholarship program has been done in recognition of the love Katina had for the Church and in honor of the desire she had to help others, especially children and youth. For the 2003-04 academic year, two scholarships will be awarded in the amounts of \$2000 for each scholarship.

Criteria and forms are available on-line at:

<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/administration/chancellor/maltascholarship.pdf>

+ + + + +

Application forms are also available upon request from the Office of the Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese - (212) 774-0586 or e-mail (ppolychroni@goarch.org). Completed applications should be sent to the Gioles Scholarship Fund, c/o Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Office of the Chancellor, 8 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10021. The deadline for applications is April 1. Awards will be announced no later than May 31.

CHURCH & COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE NOW

One of the Philoptochos' most enduring and important projects has been the education of the young people of our Parish. For over twenty years, awards have been presented to our children for their service to the church and community rather than for scholastic achievement. We urge all of our young people graduating this year and continuing their education to pick up applications from the church office (Monday-Friday, 10-5). The deadline for completed applications is **Friday, April 11**--no exceptions. For more information please contact Christine Hopkins (367-7861) or Helene Nemchik (345-2719).

AN ADVENTURE IN FASHION COMING MAY 3

Sift through the sand, push past the pyramids, and clear your calendar for "An Adventure in Fashion," the annual Holy Cross Philoptochos Fashion Show and Luncheon, **Saturday, May 3**, 11:30 AM, in our Community Center.

This year's "adventure" theme is based on the "Indiana Jones" movies and will feature an exploration of the latest fashions from local clothiers, as well as escapades in fine food, premium prizes and exciting fun!

Co-chairs **Arleen Brenner** and **Mary Peros** and their committee are cracking the whip to make sure "An Adventure in Fashion" will be, like the pyramids, something you'll marvel at for years!

A new counselor of Greek Education, **Mr. Evangelos Kasvikis**, has been appointed at the office of education in San Francisco. He met with us twice. The main purpose of his visits was to encourage all of us who are involved with the teaching of the Greek language and to have some new information and ideas for the benefit of our students. On behalf of the Greek School and the whole community of Holy Cross I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Kasvikis, to congratulate him in his new position, wish him luck and offer our help and cooperation to him.

Continuing a beautiful tradition, our students joined Sunday School in the Annual Christmas Program by singing a few Greek Christmas carols.

OXI DAY CELEBRATION 2002

by Cleon Skourtis

28th of October 1940 - This day is known as "NO" day and is celebrated very much like the national day. School children parade in white shirts and blue trousers or national costumes there is a military parade overlooked by the President, the Archbishop and representatives from the Church and political leaders.

The day marks when in 1940 Mussolini asked that Italian troops should have free passage through Greece. Naturally the answer was "OXI". This led to an Italian attack on Greece, that the Greeks successfully repulsed, only to be occupied by German forces a few months later.

The second World War was a very tough period for the Greeks. Half a million people died from starvation. Ten of thousands were executed or deported. Almost the entire Greek-Jewish population was annihilated.

A massive Greek resistance groups as EAM, ELAS and EDES were mobilized from the very beginning of the occupation and there were heavy fights all over the country.



HOLY CROSS GREEK SCHOOL

900 Alameda
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**ELLHNIKO
FWS**

**December 2002
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Number 1**

*Fr. Peter G. Salmas,
Vaso Tonas, Principal
Theodora Kounalakis, Coordinator;
Cleon Skourtis, Co-Coordinator*

*Editorial Staff:
Theodora Kounalakis, Cleon Skourtis,
Vaso Tonas, Erma Najjar, Alexander
Mallas*

GREEK SCHOOL NEWS

by Vaso Tonas

Greek School began in September with a successful enrollment of 72 students in elementary and junior levels and nine students in the adult level.

We are very fortunate to start the year with a complete staff and a dedicated teacher for each level.

We are pleased to announce that teacher **Katerina Chiotis** has joined again our teaching staff. This year's great addition to our school is **Dr. Peter Nanopulos**. He is going to guide and assist us for the better function and operation of the school. A warm welcome to both Katerina and Dr. Nanopulos from all of us.

Congratulations go to the following volunteer parents who are our new PTO officers: **Tina Cardaris**, President; **Georgia Kalogierias**, Vice President; **Cathy Pereira**, Secretary; **Eleni Varelas**, Treasurer, **Athia Giotinis**, Teacher Liaison and **Angela Louis**, Liaison Secretary. Other parents and relatives have offered their help and we are thankful. We ask for all parents to get involved and support the students and the school.

HOLY CROSS OUTREACH

Thanks to all the parishioners who worked in the Samaritan House Dining Room and Kitchen 2002 : **John & Vivi Sarantitis, Fro Sclavos, Yvonne Gavros, Daisy Fernando, Helen Valavanis & Edie Christoforidis**

Parishioners who are interested working in the Dining Room every third Friday of the month should call Vivi at 697-3739 or in the Kitchen Food Preparation every third Thursday of the month call Edie at 345-8981.

A BIG FAT

OAKLAND GOYA REUNION

- FROM THE 50'S AND 60'S

... is being organized to bring everyone together from this time period for a celebration on **October 25** at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Ascension in Oakland. The committee is excitedly planning a memorable evening to include delicious food, dancing, a special program to bring memories back of our youth in Oakland, and other surprises besides enjoying the fellowship of friends long remembered.

We are currently building a data base of people who were part of GOYA at this time. If you know of someone or are interested, please notify GOYA central through the following email: goyareunion@earthlink.net. Willing volunteers are needed to help plan and carry out the evening activities. Meetings are currently taking place monthly with locations to be announced. Memorabilia are also desired. If you have pictures, music or other artifacts important to this time you may also let it be known via the above email. Come and join us; be a part of rekindling our heritage and peeking into our past for one joyful evening.

Father Tom Paris and the Ascension community is to be thanked for allowing us to proceed in using the hall to make arrangements for this special event. So, as you can see, we have a date and place along with the data base which is updated regularly.

Watch the mail in the next couple of weeks for more information. We welcome everyone to attend. Contact one of the following committee members or email to the special GOYA address above.

Contact : **Ella (Christie) Stamates** at 369-9825 or **Cathy (Daskalakis) Zamenes** at 369-2627.

SPOTLIGHT

Kids from the Receiving Home, which takes in children from abusive or otherwise stressful home environments, joined our youth groups for an evening of tree decorating and other holiday fun.

- *Thank you for your kindness and taking time out of your life to make mine that much better - **Jason***
- *Thank you for the \$300 plus party and gift certificates that you have given us. We all appreciate it and is very bless to have people who care. Thank you, **Barbara***

+ + + + +

Safeway manager Robert Ratto was shot and killed as he was driving to work last summer. Police still do not have any leads to the suspects or to the motives for this senseless killing. Robert leaves behind a wife, **Anna**, and a young son. We were able to contribute a trust fund, created for the education of 3 year-old **Joshua**. This note was written by one of Robert's brothers, **Chris**.

Thank you so much for your support through the difficult time as we deal with the loss of Robert. Robert's presence will remain with the family as we watch Joshua grow up. We will share the love and stories of Robert and make sure Robert's dream comes true - having a loving successful son. Your contribution to the trust fund from the Festival proceeds will greatly assist with that dream. Words can never fully express our thanks.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARDS

We were unable to list some names in last year's Community Christmas Card but are happy to be able to list them here with wishes for a safe, healthy and prosperous new year :

*George & Kitsy Anagnostou
Ciro & Vickie, Annie & Lea Buonocore
Lefty, Eleftherios, Peter & Mike Eliopoulos
Michael & Nancy Fadis
Jim and Joanne Fetsco*

followers. In time, these followers, along with his writings, eradicated the Monothelite heresy, and restored Orthodoxy to the Christian Church

Saint Maximos left the Church a large theological legacy. He wrote exegetical works explaining difficult passages in the Holy Scripture, and also commentaries on the Lord's Prayer and the 59th Psalm. He wrote commentaries on Dionysios the Areopagite and Gregory the Theologian. He also explained the Divine Services in "Mystagogia" ("Concerning the Mysteries"). His dogmatic works discuss the Orthodox teaching of the Divine Essence and about Hypostatic-Persons of the Holy Trinity, about the Incarnation of God, and about the "theosis" ("deification") of human nature. Among his moral compositions is his "Chapters on Love."

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

"I will meditate on Your commandments, and contemplate Your ways."
Ps. 119:15

MAXIMOS THE CONFESSOR (January 21)

The Monk Maximos the Confessor was born in Constantinople in about the year 580 and was raised in a pious Christian family. In his youth he received a very diverse education: he studied philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, he was well read in the authors of antiquity and he mastered to perfection theological dialectics. When Maximos entered into government service, the scope of his learning and his conscientiousness enabled him to become first secretary to the emperor Heraclius (611-641). But court life vexed him, and he withdrew to the Chrysopoleia monastery (on the opposite shore of the Bosphorus - now Skutari), where he accepted monastic tonsure. By the humility of his wisdom he soon won the love of the brethren and was chosen Abbot of the monastery, but even in this dignity, in his own words, he "remained a simple monk." But in 633 at the request of a theologian, the future Jerusalem Patriarch Saint Sophronios (com. March 11), the Monk Maximos left the monastery and set off to Alexandria.

Saint Sophronios was known as an implacable antagonist against the Monothelite heresy, which confessed in the Lord Jesus Christ only one nature (the Divine, but not the Human nature, of Christ). Influenced by this erroneous tendency of thought, the Monothelite heretics introduced the concept that in Christ there was only "one Divine will" ("thelema") and only "one Divine effectuation or energy" ("energia"). Even though Monothelism was condemned at the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451), it continued to plague the Christian Church for many centuries.

Maximos joined Sophronios in his effort to teach the Truth about the two natures of Christ: both Divine and Human. However, many people in high places – emperors and patriarchs alike – still believed in this false doctrine. In 654, Maximos was accused of treason and locked up in prison by the Emperor Constans II. While exiled, his tongue and right hand were cut off. When he died in 662, Maximos had only a few

*Bill, Jayn & Veronica Feyling
Con & Mary Glafkides
Paniota Husmas
Vasiliki B. Husmas
Jean Kidera
Nick F. Lolonis and Family
Evdokia Melas
Litsa and Kia Melas
Anthony & Demetra Sperow
Erephile Visas
Greg & Annette Vlahos and Family*

YOUTH CURRENTS

JAN / FEB 2003 edition

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

2 Peter 3:18



ORDINATION

By the grace of God, and through the Apostolic Tradition of the Laying on of Hands, **Simon Thomas** will be ordained by **His Eminence Metropolitan Anthony** to the Holy Deaconate on **Saturday, March 22**, and to the Holy Priesthood on Sunday, March 23. Both ordinations are to take place at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 313 Tokay Avenue in Modesto. Divine Services begin with Orthros at 9 AM, followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10 AM. If you cannot be present in person, your prayers are requested on these days.

ACOLYTES

The schedule for the 2002-2003 year is available in the church office. If there are any questions about guidelines or expectations, call **Simon Thomas** at 591-4447. The group assignments for the next few Sundays are as follows:

Sunday, March 23 – Group B

Sunday, April 6 – Group D

Sunday, March 30 – Group C

Sunday, April 13 – Group A

All teams are encouraged to attend services for the **Saturday of Lazarus - April 19**, with Divine Liturgy beginning at 9 AM & **Palm Sunday - April 20**. For Lenten and Holy Week schedules, please refer to the Acolyte Schedule.

ATHLETICS

The Varsity & Adult Season has begun! For information on game times, please call the Holy Cross Athletic Director, Mr. **Frank Catomer** in the evenings at (650) 343-7191.

GREEK FOLK DANCING

The 2003 Folk Dance Festival in Anaheim took place February 13 – 17. All five groups from Holy Cross performed very well. In fact, the buzz around FDF was how much the groups from Belmont have improved, and how well they danced. Our kids were well behaved, and the venue at the Hilton Anaheim was terrific. Next year's FDF will take place in Ontario, CA.

The dance groups will take a break from practicing during Great Lent, but groups will be opening up again after Pascha. If you would like to join the Holy Cross Dance Program, that is the time to do it!

YOUTH GROUPS

THIS MONTH'S MEETINGS ARE **TUESDAY, March 11 & March 25!**
NEXT MONTH, **TUESDAY, APRIL 8.**

The advisors for the year are:

HOPE- Irene Fotinos (349-1535) and Tina Cardaris (369-9629)

JOY- Vickie Buonocore (510-581-4661) and Jenny Kalaitzidis (261-9168)

Jr. GOYA- Patty Kane (728-2021)

GOYA- Hope Callas (345-1672) and Gary Brenner (592-4755)

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** at (650) 728-2021.

- o "Whoever wants to be saved must have his heart in a state of repentance and contrition..." St. Seraphim of Sarov (1833)

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Joshua (See Joshua 6:1-16)

"On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets... have the people give a loud shout, then the wall of the city will collapse..."

The divine plan to march around Jericho for seven days would test Israel's faith and would accentuate the fear already present in the people of Jericho.

2. Mahershalalhashbaz (See Isaiah 8:1)

"The Lord said to me, 'Take a large scroll and write on it with an ordinary pen: Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.'"

It's the name of Isaiah's son. This name means quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil.

3. Moses (See Exodus 17:14)

"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.'"

This is the first reference in the Bible to the writing of what was to become recognized as Holy Scripture. The battle of the Amalekites, the descendants of Esau or the Edomites, was not won by Israel's might but by the power of the Lord. The written word was to be a continual reminder of this fact.

4. Micah (See Micah 5:2)

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from old from everlasting."

Matthew 2:5 shows that this prophecy was recognized by Jews as indicating the birthplace of the Messiah. The earlier name of Bethlehem (Genesis 35:19) is added to distinguish it from the Bethlehem in Zebulun (Joshua 19:15).

5. Bethsaida (See John 1:44)

"Philip was from the town of Bethsaida, where Andrew and Peter lived."

These three were the first of Jesus' disciples.

thanks to her and her group of volunteers: **Erma Najjar** who patiently and lovingly took reservations, **Perry Paraskevas** and his crew who prepared an exceptional dinner, the Holy Cross Youth who set up, and the guys in the bar who kept us refreshed.

(Please note: Once again, reservations came in VERY late, making it difficult for us to properly prepare for this event. Please make your reservations well before the date of an event, in order to guarantee your participation. If we do not have your reservation, we cannot guarantee your place at the event!)

BIBLE TRIVIA

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

1. Who knew that by following God's orders, he could take Jericho?
2. What is the longest word in the Bible?
3. Who was the first author to be mentioned in the Bible?
4. Which Old Testament prophet had predicted that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem?
5. What city was the home of Peter, Andrew, and Philip?

WISDOM/REFLECTION

- o "He who pursues righteousness and kindness will find life and honor."
Proverbs 21:21
- o "Live in constant glorification and thanksgiving towards God, because the greatest sin is ingratitude, and the worst sinner is the ungrateful person."
Elder Paisios the Agiorite (1994)
- o "Each one of us will give account not only for his legitimate and illegitimate deeds, but also for a vain word and for thoughts, which we thought wrongly."
Elder Joseph the Agiorite (1959)
- o "For the achievement of virtues and of purity the following three are tools: Contenance of the stomach, continence of the tongue, and a bit on the eyes..."
St. Ephraim the Syrian

We look forward to hearing these enthusiastic young people sing Liturgy on **Sunday, April 6** and on Saturday of Lazarus.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

The New Year's Eve Dinner-Dance was once again a successful event enjoyed by all who attended. 290 people enjoyed cocktails and hors-d'oeuvres, followed by a prime rib dinner, including roasted vegetables, rice, salad and a bread roll. Galactoboureko was for dessert, and champagne was popped at midnight. Everyone danced the night away (and early morning) to the sounds of DJ **Alexandros Mallas**.

Special thanks to **Brenda Ropoulos**, who chaired the event for the night, to **Chris** and **Marika Tsardoulis** for cooking a wonderful meal, to **Rita Zaharioudakis** for making the Vasilopita, to the youth of Holy Cross for setting up in the morning, to **Helene Nemchik** for the decorations, and to all the guys who served drinks in the bar. The night would not have been possible without the help of all of these people.

GODPARENT'S BREAKFAST

The Godparent's Breakfast was a huge success. We had more people than we could seat, and we were all treated to a wonderful breakfast of eggs, sausage, bacon, muffins & fruit, all prepared by **Eleni Lolas** and **Alicia Petrakis**. Thank you also to **Jenny Kalaitzidis** who had the enormous task of taking reservations. Our dance groups put on a wonderful show for those who were not able to attend FDF.

(Please note: MANY people did not send in their reservations until the week before the event, or not at all. For this reason, we were unable to accommodate some people. Reservations are required for all Youth Council events, so that we may prepare for the correct amount of people. Please make your reservations well before the date of the event, in order to guarantee your participation. If we do not have your reservation, we cannot guarantee your place at the event!)

APOKREATIKO GLENDI

Our annual Apokreatiko Glendi was held on the 1st of March. Our dance groups presented an award-winning performance, fresh off of their experiences at FDF, and the band *Fotia* played our favorite songs well into the night. **Tula Gieseke** chaired this successful event once again, and many
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LENTEN SERVICES

Mondays - 7 PM, Great Compline

Wednesdays - 6:30 PM, Presanctified Liturgy

Fridays - 8:30 AM, Presanctified Liturgy

Fridays - 7 PM, Salutations (except April 11 - Akathist Hymn, and not on April 18)

UPCOMING WEEKDAY LITURGIES

March 25 Annunciation, Tuesday, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

April 28 Saint George, Monday, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

May 2 Life-Giving Spring, Friday, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 28-30 **Spiritual Odyssey** - The Oaks

April 1 **ORA**, 11 AM, The Oaks

April 1 **Philoptochos Board** 7:30 PM, Library

April 4-6 **GOYA Lenten Retreat**, Marin Headlands

April 6 **Spring General Assembly** – Sunday, following Liturgy, The Oaks

April 8 **Youth Groups**

April 10 **RE Teachers Meeting**, Thursday, 7 PM, Library

April 10 **Greek School Staff Meeting**, Thursday, 7 PM, rooms N-2

April 11 **Philoptochos Church & Community Service Awards** applications due, Friday, 4 PM

April 13 **District Oratorical Festival**, Sunday, Ignacio

April 20 **Palm Sunday Luncheon**, following Liturgy, Community Hall

April 25 **Religious Education Good Friday Retreat**, all day, Classrooms

April 26 **Midnight Reception**, Saturday, following services, The Oaks

April 27 **Easter Picnic**, Sunday, following services, Church grounds

May 3 **Philoptochos Fashion Show** – Saturday, The Oaks

June 2 **Golf & Tennis Tournament** – Monday, Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club. Reserve your spot early as space is limited. Contact the Church office at 591-4447 for details.

REGULAR MEETINGS

Tuesdays 10:30 AM, Bible Study (Fireside)

Tuesday March 18 and April 15, 7:30 PM, Parish Council (Library)

Wednesdays 4:30-6:30 PM, Greek School (classrooms)

Wednesdays 7:30 PM, Choir (Loft)

Thursdays 3:45 PM, Youth Choir (rooms N-2)

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

April 19 Saturday of Lazarus - The Raising of Lazarus, Divine Liturgy, 9:00AM

Great Vespers, 5:30 PM

April 20 Palm Sunday - Divine Liturgy and Blessing of the Palms, 10 AM

The Service of the Bridegroom, 7:00 PM

April 21 Great and Holy Monday - Service of the Bridegroom, 7:00 PM

April 22 Great and Holy Tuesday - Service of the Bridegroom, 7 PM

April 23 Great and Holy Wednesday - Liturgy for Workers, 6:00 AM

The Sacrament of Holy Oil, 3:00 PM

The Sacrament of Holy Oil, 7:00 PM

April 24 Great and Holy Thursday - Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, 9:00AM

The Service of the Holy Passion, 7:00 PM

April 25 Good Friday - The Vigil of the Royal Hours, 8:30 AM

Vespers of the Descent from the Cross, 3:00 PM

The Service of the Lamentations, 7:00 PM

April 26 Great and Holy Saturday - Divine Liturgy, 9:00 AM

Resurrection Matins, the Paschal Liturgy, 11:00 PM

Divine Liturgy, 12 Midnight

April 27 Easter Sunday - Vespers of the Resurrection, "Agape", 11 AM

CONFESSION

Great Lent is not only a time of fasting and prayer, it is also the time for Holy Confession. Those who wish to receive Holy Communion during this Lenten Season - and throughout the year - should participate in the Sacrament of Holy Confession at least two or three times a year. The Sacrament of Holy Confession will be heard at the following days and times :

3-5 PM - **Mon, April 14; Tues, April 15** and **Wed, April 16**

3-5 PM and 7-9 PM - **Thursday, April 17** and **Friday, April 18**