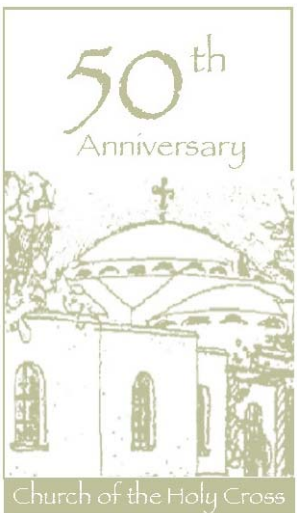


CROSS CURRENTS

Monthly Newsletter
JUNE 2006



In Gratitude

by *Father Peter Salmas, Pastor*

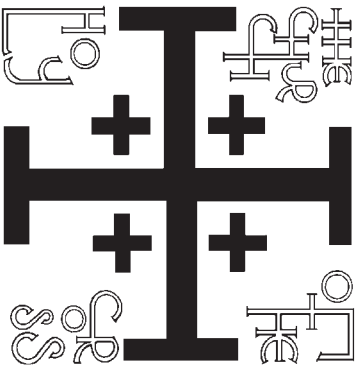


As we close another “spiritual academic year” I am grateful to our Lord for the many blessings He has granted our parish community including His guidance each day as we seek to spread His word as found in the Gospels.

There are so many people in our parish who offer their time, talent, and treasure and too many to thank at this time. However, I would be remiss if I did not thank a few for their overwhelming commitment to our community and especially to our children. The few mentioned here are but a representation of those who remain unnamed.

Anastacia Stamates has been the Director of our Religious Education Program for four years. In that time she has not only reorganized the religious education files and enhanced the supplemental materials that are used each Sunday in teaching our children the “faith of our fathers,” but she has been instrumental in attending many of our children’s other church activities these many years. Under her leadership, she has helped each teacher to better prepare and present their respective curricula for their classes.

She has done this while being a full time teacher in the Sequoia School District and while also earning her Master’s in Education and Administration. Still, she finds time and energy enough to team-teach our Senior Class with **Konstantine Salmas**.



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CROSS CURRENTS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Church of the Holy Cross
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Articles and ads for *Cross Currents* are due on the 15th of the month prior to the month of desired publication.
(Please note this change.)

(continued from front cover)

Anastacia Stamates needs to be thanked and honored as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary this year. She is the product of the generation who helped establish this community and makes it strong. She comes forward to offer her talents and love and continue the work of her parents and family here in the Peninsula. She offers a sterling example for those of her age as she offer back to our Lord through His Holy Church

In another academic arena our Holy Cross Greek School is a model for all others in the Bay Area. With over 120 students weekly, the directors; **Theodora Kounalakis**, **Kleon Skourtis**, and **Aikaterina Hiotis** deserve our thanks and commendation for a job well done. Not only have they continued the fine leadership of **Vaso Tonas** but have expanded the school to five days with a special program for toddlers 3-5 who do not speak Greek and another for toddlers 3-5 who do speak Greek in the home. Coupled with the Wednesday afternoon program and the promise of an additional program in

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the fall, Holy Cross Greek School has become the premier Greek language afternoon school in the Northern California. Congratulations to Theodora, Kleon, and Aikaterina and the very capable and talented teaching staff and PTO for a job well done.

I wish to also thank Mr. **Dimitri Melas** our Church Chanter for over 40 years. Until recently, Dimitri offers his beautiful singing voice freely and without compensation. Because of his dedication and commitment to our community all these years, it was decided this year we would offer him an honorarium in gratitude for his service to Holy Cross. In addition, Mr. **Steve Cardiasmenos** and **Anita Mottola** also deserve our thanks, as do the talented members of the Holy Cross Choir. Each Sunday, save the Sundays of July, the senior choir prayerfully offers their voices in praise of the name of our Lord. Steve, an accomplished director and composer, has written many church pieces that are sung by our choir and many other Greek Orthodox Choirs across America. Many thanks to Steve and the Choir of Holy Cross. With our Youth Choir having begun again this year with 6 members, we look to more combined participation in the fall and the expansion of their hymn repertoire. Mrs. **Khara-Maria Kalamaras** deserves our thanks and appreciation in offering her time, talent, and treasure to this important ministry.

Kathy Roque Albert has taken on the folk dance ministry here at Holy Cross and is also deserving of our gratitude. Overcoming many obstacles and difficult challenges has only made her more resolute in offering to our Lord and His Church her dedication and unselfish giving to insure our children receive the best possible opportunity to learn more about our culture and heritage. Kathy and the dance instructor with whom she works have given much in the way of time, talent, and treasure. The fall will prove to be even more exciting as we include Peter Kalafatis to our program and expand the dance repertoire.

Others who deserve our thanks and appreciation include **Rita Zaharioudakis** and **Fanoula Haramalis** who prepare each month the hundreds of loaves of prosforon and artous as a stewardship offering for the Divine Liturgy and special feast day celebrations. **Ella Stamates** who volunteers every Wednesday in the office and **Jim** and **Diane Stephanos** who share their talent in the garden, in the halls, and in the artistic upgrades that you see as the year progresses. Of course, Ella, Jim and Diane would be lost if it were not for the solid guidance and instruction offered by **Tyke Stamates**, our Facility and Grounds Manager. And where would any of us be without Hilton. His daily touch witnessed and expressed in almost every thing we do and say here at Holy Cross completes that which is lacking and fills that

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which is found to be in want. Deepest appreciation and gratitude to Hilton who celebrates 17 years at Holy Cross this August.

As a community we have accomplished much but we still have so much more to do . . . a classroom building and Education Center, additional Iconography, expanded parking facilities and maybe one of those apartment buildings just down the street and around the corner from us will be the much needed Senior Citizen Apartment complex. All is possible through God's will and our faithfulness. I believe the scriptural verse from Joshua says it all...in serving the Lord, our future as a community witnessing to our Orthodox heritage and culture, is secure. My deepest gratitude to all for your service and commitment to our parish community this past year...and now back to work, we have a House to care for, the Lord's House.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by **Gary Brenner**, Parish Council President



I am a member of a professional organization, which offered its annual conference in New Orleans for three days in May. Some of the members in our organization thought that our leaders had lost their minds in choosing the "Crescent City". We were reassured when a small group traveled there to inspect the Marriott Hotel and the surrounding area and reported that the flooding from Katrina had indeed subsided.

Arleen and I will be celebrating our 30th anniversary in June, my parent's 60th anniversary in October and the 50th anniversary of our beloved church all this year.

We were joined in New Orleans by Arleen's sister and husband from Steubenville, Ohio who were also celebrating their 30th anniversary.

I am delighted to report that most of the downtown and all of the French Quarter are operating at full capacity. The food was marvelous and Bourbon Street was raunchy and loud. There was a small Greek restaurant near our hotel called "Mena's Palace" and they served breakfast and lunch that was by far the best food value that we found in the French Quarter. It was there that we learned that the local Greek Orthodox Church, Holy Trinity Cathedral was having their Festival.

Holy Trinity claims to be the oldest parish in the Untied States tracing their roots back to the 1860's. The current campus for the cathedral was built in the early 1980's and is located on a beautiful bayou or canal.

Unfortunately, the entire church and Hall were flooded with 3 feet of water during Katrina. The water came within an inch of flooding the altar but that is where it stopped. It took four months to restore the church and the property and they returned in time to celebrate liturgy on Christmas Day and to welcome **His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew** on January 8 of this year.

On the first night of their Festival, there were so many people in attendance that after the church tour and a nice dinner, we returned to our hotel. In the cab on the way back, it was sobering to realize that the neighborhoods surrounding the church for at least 15 to 20 blocks were dark. There were very few habitable homes in the vicinity of the church yet people were arriving from miles away to support the church and join in the festivities.

We were inspired by the resurgence and faith of the Orthodox community there. The money that we donated to Katrina relief and the Orthodox community there was well spent.

We are certainly blessed at Holy Cross to live in an area where we are not vulnerable to extreme weather, even though earthquakes offer a similar risk.

I pray that our parish and community will never face the challenges to rebuild or restore our buildings as many have done in New Orleans.

I pray that our Parish will come together in our 50th year to renew our faith and commitment to our Lord. We have much to celebrate and many challenges to be met.

Paraphrasing John F. Kennedy's inaugural address in 1960, "Ask not what your Church can do for you, but what you can do for your Church."

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

- Rolling Stones

by **Dr. Tanya Spirtos**, Stewardship Chair



"Anyone who proposes to do good must not expect people to roll stones out of his way, but must accept his lot calmly if they even roll a few more upon it. A strength which becomes clearer and stronger through its experience of such obstacles is the only strength that can conquer them. Resistance is only a waste of strength."

Sometimes I am amazed at how, just when I am feeling particularly harassed or frustrated, something hits me right between the eyes. While searching the Archdiocese Stewardship Ministry handbook for inspiration, I saw a quote from Dr. Albert Schweitzer and decided to Google him; the search site not only gave his biography highlights but dozens of quotes of which this was one.

“The great secret of success is to go through life as a man who never gets used up. That is possible for him who never argues and strives with men and facts, but in all experiences retires upon himself, and looks for the ultimate cause of things in himself.”

Most people recognize his name from high school studies or even remember when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952. The son of a Lutheran pastor, Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) studied in Paris, Berlin and Strasbourg, devoting his early life to art and learning; licensed as a curate in 1899, he became a doctor of philosophy and taught in the theological college in Strasbourg until 1913, publishing a series of influential books on the Gospels; in his spare time he became an authority on Johann Sebastian Bach, writing a biography, excelling as an organist and organ designer. In 1905 he studied medicine, earned his degree and left for Africa with his wife, a nurse, to establish a missionary hospital where he spent the next 50 years fighting leprosy and sleeping sickness. A theologian, a humanitarian, an organist, a prolific writer, an advocate for peace, and a physician of souls and bodies—here is an individual who took his talent and multiplied it to the n-th degree. For him, service to others was both a responsibility and a joy, and he continually looked for opportunities to help: “whether it be helping a woman struggling with her luggage on a railway platform, writing a letter of encouragement to a high school student, or nursing an orphaned pelican back to health, he knew that few people have been graced with the opportunity or motivation for great service, but we all have the ability, and the spiritual need, to perform many small acts of kindness.” Providing direct service to our fellow men and women—decreasing the pain and increasing the happiness of others—is the subject of Schweitzer’s article “Your Second Job”:

“Our greatest mistake, as individuals, is that we walk through our life with closed eyes and do not notice our chances. As soon

as we open our eyes and deliberately search we see many who need help, not in big things but in the littlest things. Wherever a man turns he can find someone who needs him.”

“Whatever you have received more than others—in health, in talents, in ability, in success, in a pleasant childhood, in harmonious conditions of home life—all this you must not take to yourself as a matter of course. In gratitude for your good fortune, you must render in return some sacrifice of your own life for other life.”

And in his article “The One-Talent People” he writes:

“Our Lord does not speak in the parable of an ‘unfaithful’ servant; He makes what is really a much more severe condemnation. He speaks of a servant who is useless, unprofitable. The servant was one who did not know the importance that his master attached to the little service that he could have rendered...Perhaps Jesus is asking of you a little task, and, if you find it, later He will ask of you something that is greater. Always keep your eyes open for the little task, because it is the little task which is important to Jesus Christ. The future of the Kingdom of God does not depend on the enthusiasm of this or that powerful person; those great ones are necessary too, but it is equally necessary to have a great number of little people who will do a little thing in the service of Christ....seize that little task, be faithful to that little task, that your Lord may at last say to you also, ‘You have been faithful in the little thing I have entrusted to you. Enter into the joy of your Lord.’”

The humility, ceaseless energy, and great faith of this physician can be an inspiration to all of us; whether we are struggling with jobs, festivals, health problems, or recalcitrant children, he inspires us to keep trying to do ‘the right thing’:

So, when you hear the words “stewardship—time, talent, treasure”, may you immediately think of Albert Schweitzer and, when discouraged or upset, remember that he expected even more “rolling stones” in his path!

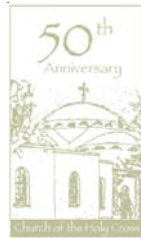
- A Gift from God

by *Brenda Visas*

As far back as I can remember, I have always been interested in poetry, both reading and writing it down. I haven't been copying poems, but writing down original works. I do not believe I am the author of these poems. I write them down as they have been given to me as a gift from God. Often times, the message usually comes at an inconvenient time, 2:00 a.m., or just following my father's death or even Christmas Eve, all times I'd rather be doing something else. The poems are gifts and in order for me to receive the gifts, I must sacrifice something to receive them; whether it's sleep, personal time or time with my family. Recently I was given a beautiful short story but I was too tired to get up and write it down, sure that I would remember it. As you might have guessed, relying on myself was not the answer. I didn't remember the story and didn't accept a precious gift because it was inconvenient. How many of us can apply this situation to the gifts we are offered through our walk with the Lord?

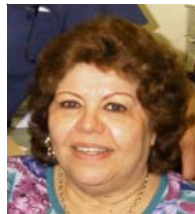
50TH ANNIVERSARY

**“AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL
SERVE THE LORD” JOSHUA 24:15**



MEMORY LANE 7 -- 50 YEARS AGO

by *Ella Stamates, 50th Anniversary Committee*



From September of 1962 to October of 1971, Father Steven Katsaris served as pastor. Upon his arrival he sought to improve parish organization and operation. A new location for the church offices was established at 261 South B Street in San Mateo by November of 1962. Father Katsaris encouraged smoother and more efficient relationships between the various committees functioning within the parish. With the architectural firm of Reid and Tarics, this teamwork helped to develop the design of the church and associated buildings.

The design was presented to the General Assembly on November 4, 1962. It was approved unanimously by the 200 in attendance. The cost of \$368,000 was approved contingent on suitable financing being arranged. At the 1963 Seattle World's Fair, the church received a first award for design excellence and attained national recognition.

Recognizing that the real financial strength of the parish lay in the long-term growth potential of the members, the Building Committee based its program on long-term financing. However, \$95,000 cash was required in order to secure a building loan from Bank of America. This sum was raised due to the willingness of some members to co-sign smaller loans from other banks and to borrow on second mortgages on their homes.

After the financial negotiations were successfully concluded, the firm of Harrod and Williams (the lowest of 14 bidders) was contracted for construction and on August 11, 1963 groundbreaking ceremonies were joyously and prayerfully conducted.

Up until this time, the parish was still known as the Greek Orthodox Church of San Mateo County. Early in 1963, a Church Naming Committee was established to select the official name. Members of the parish were invited to submit preferred names and the three most nominated names were put before the membership at a "Church Naming Dinner" on December 1. Over 350 members voted by secret ballot and the name "Holy Cross" was overwhelmingly selected ("Saint Catherine" and "Saint John" were defeated).

On August 15, 1964, an excited congregation, led by Father Katsaris, quietly and reverently conducted the "door opening service". Then, amidst scaffolding and unfinished floors, the first Diving Liturgy in the first Greek Orthodox Church in Mateo County was celebrated. Finally, after 10 years of parish hope and effort and 14 months of construction, the new church was completed. The official opening of the "Church of the Holy Cross" was held on September 13, 1964 – the eve of the Feast Day Of Holy Cross. Bishop Demetrios led several priests from neighboring parishes in the celebration of the Liturgy. In the afternoon, a luncheon was held at the Villa Hotel where a joyous parish paid tribute to all those who made that day possible and thanked God for the realization of their hopes, dreams, and prayers.

The next day, September 14, 1964, on the Feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross, the Divine Liturgy was again celebrated – exactly 8 years since the first Liturgy was conducted in San Mateo County.

50TH ANNIVERSARY GIFT

During Holy Week, all Holy Cross parishioners received a beautiful brochure inviting them to celebrate our 50th Anniversary and offer a special gift to the Church at this occasion. The brochure includes the schedule of 50th Anniversary events and copies of photos and newspaper articles from the early days of the Church.

Your gift may come in any size and be dedicated to any good purpose of the Church. Your generous gift at this time will help assure that we can continue to deliver the high-quality services and programs to which we have all become accustomed and meet the needs of our ever-growing parish.

We hope all parishioners will participate in this giving opportunity. Each gift will be acknowledged promptly, and the donating family will receive a “thank you gift” commensurate with the level of their giving. See the brochure for more details.

Since the original solicitation, we have received gifts from almost 111 families totaling over \$80,000. Many thanks to the following families:

George & Kitsy Anagnostou
 Loula C. Anaston
 Hido Athens
 Margaret & Carlo Bajada
 The Bangs Family
 Michael & Mary Bazigos
 Neil & Antigone Bellas
 Peter & Fran Bibbes
 James G. Bogios
 Gary & Arleen Brenner
 Josh & Elaine Buffum
 Mr. Aristedes A. Calfas
 Chrisoula Condos Carr
 Gregory P. Chagaris & Anthea C. Stratigos
 Mr. & Mrs. Bill Chapralis
 Angelo & Athanasia Charonis
 Sophie Chibidakis
 Andrew & Argero Chrisafis

Christoforidis Family – Andy, Edie, Chris, Julie, Andreas & Sofia
 Dr. & Mrs. John B. Cladis
 John & Eugenia Clark
 Mary & Charles Cockriell
 Angelo & Jean Combis
 Janice & John Conomos
 Harry & Artemis Curusis
 Bernice Dadaos
 The Danigelis Family
 Michael & Sophia Davos
 Kosta & Peggy Dedo
 Nicholas Delis
 Vicki Demakas
 Georgia Diamond
 Charles & Janice Donegan
 Chris & June Droutsas
 Helen & Charles Ernst

Daisy Fernando
 James & Joanne Fetsco
 George, Sophia, Michael & Alex Fonti
 George & Mildred Franco
 Charles & Claire Gagas
 Betty & Mary Gagianas
 Larry & Vivi Garcia & Family
 Mr&Mrs James E. Gavros
 John & Patricia Georgiou
 Jim & Susan Gerakaris
 Alexander G. & Wilma Geranios
 Michael, Melinda, Conner, Julianna, & Nicholas Glafkides
 Holy Cross Greek School
 Tony & Katy Haldezos
 The Haramalis Family
 David & Semele Heller & Family
 Mary Hionis
 Thalia , Michael & Jonna Hohenthal
 Vangelis & Polly Hytopoulos
 Vicki Joanou & Family
 Takis, Georgia, Maria, Christina, Anastasia & Andreas Kalogerias
 Peter Kanalakis & Family
 Julie Karbo, Anjelica & Emma Christon
 The David Kastanis Family
 Alfred & Emily Keriotis
 John & Ann Konstantelos, Peter & Mary Alexander
 Lorraine & George Korpontinos
 Alex & Anne Kotsopoulos
 Markos, Theodora, Georgette, George & Nickolas Kounalakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Yiannis Kousoulakis

Zoy Kyriakis & Family
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 Mrs. Maria Nodaros & Penny Mary, Christina, & Katina Orginos
 Diana Pappas & Jennie Pappas
 Mrs. Harry Petros
 Raluca Popescu, Sorin Popescu, Francesca Popescu
 Mary Portolos
 Guy & Lulu Salmas
 Vivi Sarantitis
 Stavroula & Vasiliki Sarris
 Jean Savalas
 Frances Schneider

Dem Karuntzos Smith
James & Martina Stallcop
CJ (Tyke) & Ella Stamates, Jim &
Anastacia Stamates, Paul & Mary
Christie
Peter & Angie Stambollis & Elias
Vula Stamos & Michael Stamos
Harry & Janella Thodos
Ann E. Thomas
Peter, Suzanne & Madeline Tzifas

Frank & Helen Valavanis
George, Brenda & Justin
Visas
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Vlahos &
Family
Maraki Vlasis
Ted & Cathy Zamenes
Mary Zongus
Michael & Joanne Zongus &
Family

So, please make your gift soon so you can obtain those “At the Hop” tickets!! If you have not received your brochure, please contact the Church Office immediately. If you have any questions about the giving program, please contact **Chris Canellos** at 529-0180.

CALLING ALL PHOTOS!

As part of Holy Cross 50th Anniversary celebrations, we would like to create a photo archive of the many moments, both large and small, that have taken place at our church. We would like to create a pictorial record of the baptisms, weddings, chrismations, and other sacraments that have taken place at our church. We would also like to see pictures of the many events that have taken place at our church. We also want pictures from all of the organizations in the church.

If you have photos of any of these events or occasions that have taken place at our church, please send or bring them to the church office. We are asking that all photos be clearly labeled with a post-it note. The note should state the **people** in the photo and the **name of the event and/or organization** and the **date**. Please place pictures in a letter size envelope (9" x 12") to ensure that they will be returned to you. Please label the envelope **Holy Cross Photo Archive, 50th Anniversary** with RETURN: your name.

Please take the time to send these photos. They will be an invaluable part of our church's 50th Anniversary celebrations this year and for always.

50th ANNIVERSARY PHOTO DIRECTORY

Still would like to take your family photo for the Church of the Holy Cross 50th Anniversary photo directory?

Other local parishes are currently working with Olan Mills for their parish directories. It may be possible to arrange to have your family's photo taken at another church. The next opportunity will be the last week of June at a church in Cupertino. If you would like to try to schedule a photo session, contact Holy Cross parishioner **Jim Smith** at 261-9208 and we will attempt to get your family a sitting with Olan Mills.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PHILOPTOCHOS BOARD

by *Mary Peros, President*

Here's to a job well done! As I am working on all the personal thank you letters I have to write to each of you and to some of our key helpers, I did not want to delay to tell you all that your participation in the annual Fashion Show was amazing. There was not one weak area. Yes, we can always do better. And we have to focus exactly on that . . . to always look to improve the way we host an event so that the sum of all the parts continues to get better and better. It is not about me or you, but about us.

The three chairs, **Theodora Kounalakis, Yvonne Sarles** and **Dee Sperow** worked together to get the job done. There were no egos, just hard work. They handled many details behind the scenes, too numerous to count.

Under the capable hands of **Cathy Zamenes** and **Janice Conomos** our mailing went smoothly. Thanks to **Annette Vlahos** the invitation, flyer and program were both eye-catching and creative. Erma Najjar handled our reservations and seating with grace under fire and I heard of very few problems. Thank you!

Thank you, **Helene** and **Alexandra Nemchik**, for again coming up with a beautiful golden backdrop and hall décor befitting our 50th Anniversary. Many of you won or bought the lovely centerpieces that **Kathy Craighead** created. Her attention to detail, wetting the moss, dusting the leaves, and choosing the planter, all were evident. The set up committee,

Mary Davlantes, Alicia Frangos and Theo Hegis, masterfully completed the elegant look to our tables.

Going to the area of the food, appetizers and bar, Roxanne Koston, Eleni Metaxas, with the help of Matoula Gialis and Popi Vlahos, and Don and Mitchell Craighead showered our guests with the delicious and the thirst-quenching all afternoon. To my knowledge, no one left our event hungry or thirsty. Our Church knows how to prepare sumptuous meals! No matter how perfect the meal, however, if the food service were lacking, the meal would suffer. A huge note of thanks to Arleen Brenner and her waiters who under Mike Orth's careful watch were efficient, on time and gracious.

The raffle prizes collected and beautifully wrapped by Eleni Metaxas and Sonia Risting were great. Sonia did a fantastic job working the room, selling raffle tickets. Dee Sperow, one of our chairs, patiently shopped and collected all the table prizes and favors and carefully wrapped each one, over 350 to be exact!

On to the fashions! They were lovely and our models looked smashing. Two of our three chairs, Theodora Kounalakis and Yvonne Sarles, invited the models, helped to choose their outfits, practiced with them with the help of Celina Doukakis, and transformed them into our own Top Models.

I would like to add a special note of thanks to those who joined the Board this year and stepped up to head or join a committee: Mary Davlantes, Alicia Frangos, Sonia Risting, Xandra Nemchik and Yvonne Sarles.

As you know there are many other people to thank. Many are noted in our program book. Many I will contact directly. What we need to keep in mind, however, is that this kind of event is successful because of the commitment, patience and hard work of each and every one of us.

Ke to chrono! - Mary

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

SUNRISE, SON RISE

by *Chris Canellos,*
Parish Council



Christ is risen! By the time you read this article, it will nearly be summer. The school year will be over, and I hope you will be able

to relax and unwind just a little. On a warm summer evening in Woodside, I love to look up at the night sky. Away from the city lights, the stars look much as they did to our ancient ancestors 2500 years ago. One of them imagined the long and graceful cloud of stars across the middle of the sky as the mother's milk of Hera, hence the "Milky Way" and the term "galaxy." Our ancestors awakened humankind with their great works in science, philosophy, political order, architecture, literature and the arts, igniting the torch of Western Civilization, which has burned brightly to this day.

A few hundred years later, simple shepherds would gaze at the same nighttime sky as they tended their precious flocks. And suddenly angels appeared to announce the greatest news we would ever receive. God had given us His Son and through Jesus' life, miracles, teachings and His life-giving death and resurrection, He provided us our faith and showed us the way to Paradise. The brightness of the Bethlehem Star and the unwaning light of His resurrection continue to be reflected in the works of His Holy Church to this day through its martyrs and its saints.

A millennium and a half later, the same stars began to guide ships carrying passengers from Europe westward to a new Promised Land, brimming with opportunity and freedom. Our forefathers wisely balanced those Hellenistic-born ideals of democracy with a deep and abiding faith in God, and our great American nation has been a beacon of hope for our world ever since. And while we bear the scars of Civil War and further strife, this great-

est experiment in human freedom continues. Our achievements, our sacrifices and our generosity are unsurpassed in the history of this planet.

The heroes of our Hellenic heritage, the heroes of our Christian Orthodox faith and the heroes of our American nation share common values – faith in something larger than themselves, a sense of strength in family and community, an unflinching commitment to their own core principles and an unquenchable belief that tomorrow will always be better than today and the willingness to work toward that end. Socrates, Pythagoras, Peter, Paul, the myrrh-bearing women, the Holy Martyrs, Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Reagan, our armed forces – all of them profoundly impacted our world for the better, unified by their common values and vision.

About 100 years ago, a community that shared all three of these traditions - Hellenic-American Orthodox Christians – came to the San Francisco Bay Area. Imbued with faith and committed to bettering life for themselves and their families, they worked tirelessly to establish a foothold in their new land. They survived persecution and torment. As they thrived, they invited more of their families to come and share in the American dream. And they built churches and brought their priests from the Old Country so that they could be strengthened by the faith of their fathers. They also stressed the importance of education to their children who would become successful doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs. As these families became more successful, they moved to the suburbs to provide a better life for their families.

It was 50 years ago that a prospering and visionary group resolved to establish an Orthodox Christian community on the mid-Peninsula. Slowly, but surely, others would share the vision and through their continuous faith, sacrificial efforts, perseverance and forbearance, our community was forged – a monument to some very special heroes who have visited the Belmont community and given their all. It's never been easy, we have certainly had our share of strife, but here we are 50 years later, enjoying that which has been built grace upon grace, festival upon festival, sacrifice upon sacrifice.

And so the next time you pass by Holy Cross at night, look up into the sky and for every star you see, remember and thank a Holy Cross hero, like George Catomer, who selflessly assured that the Church was well maintained each day, or Popi Pallad and her friends among the Philoptochos ladies who raised funds to build our Church building one dollar at a time by holding “teas,” or hundreds of others who came and offered what they could in service to their Holy Church. Perhaps you can take a moment to reflect on your own special work here and that of your friends and colleagues.

And then, ask yourself, what can I do tomorrow to assure that Holy Cross will be that shining place on a hill for all our families for generations to come.

Happy 50th, Holy Cross!

TRAVEL PLANS

by *Konstantine Salmas*



Greece is an important country for the history of the Church. Many of us will be traveling to Greece this summer for vacation. The history of the Church over an extended period of time can be seen in Greece, from churches with iconography, to monasteries offering hospitality for visitors and inhabitants who focus on prayer, to relics of saints kept in these churches and monasteries.

People living in Greece aren't always as motivated to consider certain aspects of the Church. Their travel is often organized around beach or the island with the least amount of tourists. Travel plans for natives rarely revolve around the things they take for granted or have already seen.

Our travel plans are organized around family or around a particular region/island(s) we want to see. Each region/island(s) has certain churches and saints which have historical significance for the life of the Church. We should pick one or two places and drive to visit so we can learn something more about the Church, her history, stories, and teachings.

I like to pick one or two churches and look at them, inside and out. For every twenty meals we enjoy, we should be able to say we enjoyed an investigation of a church or monastery, noticing the architecture, the iconography, and any relics of saints the church in the region have. This is how we develop emotional connections with the faith in Jesus Christ the Church continues to preach. We develop the emotional connections with our family in Greece and with the region/island we are looking forward to seeing or visiting again. Within the region we visit, we should visit a church and look to develop our understanding of the Church through this particular structure.

Happy travels.

WHO THEY ARE

by *Konstantine Salmas*

Church communities get older with time. In time, the distance increases between the founding generation and the representatives of the youngest generation. Also, families not related to the founding members make the parish their home. These bookend generations have very little contact with one another, even though a passing of the torch is taking place.

A Church community is not meant to be like an Athletic Club community, Yacht Club community, or Country Club community, or coffee house community. These places offer services that customers use. The members are connected by the fact that they use these services.

The service the Church provides is not like these other facilities. Holy Cross' primary function is to deliver the message of the gospel. The most important place this is done is in an environment of worship. The Divine Liturgy and other services of the Church are for worship of God. Worship is an activity of participation in the remembrance of God's plan of salvation for the world, an activity of prayerful remembrance that culminates in participation of the Eucharist. Worship calls us to Communion because we are called to communion with God because of the life of Christ.

Because of the life of Christ the world is called to a life *in* Christ. Holy Cross has many people who understand that church is a little like an Athletic or Yacht Club, but mostly unlike them, and unlike them in a fundamental way. I have noticed several high school seniors who come to church because they know what it is for and they believe it. All three, in another context, deserve words with regards to their academic life and their character as people. In this context, I want to stop and notice them for commitment to Holy Cross.

Gabrielle Nemchik, Katerina Kalaitzidis, and Sophia Zerebinski participate in various programs at Holy Cross, but over the years they have demonstrated a consistent commitment to Sunday worship that is rare and unconnected to participation in programs here at Holy Cross or at their high schools.

And for this, they deserve to be remembered.

RESTORE HEALTH AND BALANCE

Yannis Kepesidis is a graduate of the Sports-University of Cologne, Germany with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science and Coaching. He received his Master's of Arts in Sports and Fitness Management from the University of San Francisco in 2001. He has twenty years of practical experience as a fitness professional, basketball coach and a competitive athlete of various sports. He is a member of IDEA, the largest International Fitness Professionals Organization and holds the advanced "Performance Enhancement Specialist" certification from the National Academy of Sports Medicine.

It is our hope that he can begin a special program here at Holy Cross in this important of Health, Wellness, and Restoration.

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"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's Temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's Temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple." (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

Almost the entire top 10 causes of death, such as heart related diseases, cancer, unsafe sex or eating high-fat, high-sugar foods could be linked to lifestyle choices one way or another. In order to deal with these scary statistics many Christian churches are offering health and fitness ministries. Based on God's call to Wholeness, our church plans to create and offer the "Restore Health and Balance" Program which will help the members (and guests) of the Holy Cross Church to understand and integrate in their daily lives the principles of a balanced life guided by the tradition of the Orthodox faith. A balanced lifestyle addresses all aspects of human existence including the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects.

Designed to serve and empower individuals and groups the Wellness Program will make use of a variety of methods based on our Orthodox faith only, for wholesome living and it will develop progressively depending on the engagement and the commitment of the Holy Cross community. Our goal is to give a chance to all our members to benefit from this program and improve their quality of life no matter what their current status is. Please stay tuned for upcoming details, and offer us your thoughts and your ideas so we can serve your needs for a more healthy and balanced life.

UPCOMING EVENTS, SERVICES & MEETINGS



IT'S TIME TO ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES...

GREEK FESTIVAL 2006 is coming soon and the committees are forming and actively planning for a wonderful, exciting, well organized Festival. Co-chairs **Bob Nemchik** and **Peter Bibbes** thank everyone who has worked so hard over the past years to insure the continuous success of our festivals. They welcome and encourage everyone to get involved once again.

The first order of business is to set the calendar for cooking. Lucky for us, **Jenny Kalaitzidis** is chairing this area and in the process of seeking cooking chairs for all the delicious dishes made in our parish. Not only is it important to have a great chair of each food item; but, it is a necessity to have strong, talented people to work with each chair. People come to eat heartily and to celebrate Greek culture; and, so all of our food committees are extremely important in reaching the goal of providing superb cuisine. Please join Jenny in this effort by calling her at 650-261-9168. She looks forward to the participation of many and you are all appreciated immensely for the unselfish efforts put forth that benefit our church community.

...and then there's the AGORA...

...famous for its unique character of offering every imaginable item one can find in someone's home of good quality, good taste, usefulness, practicality and so much more. It is like a White Elephant sale where everything is like new and it's one of the bit hits of the Festival not to mention a great money maker. It's time to begin gathering the overflow in your homes and putting them aside for the Agora. Items you may include are books, dishes, glasses, trays, metalware, flatware, decorative items, holiday trims of all kinds, tablecloths, napkins, placements, doilies, dolls, jewelry, lamps, bowls, toys in

excellent condition and more. Items ***NOT*** to bring include clothes, shoes, upholstered furniture, blinds, large exercise equipment, hardwired lighting or electronics equipment, computers, broken or torn items and those things that are not in good condition. If you have questions about the appropriateness of household belongings or furniture in good condition, please call **Mary Peros** at 347-6910. Contributions will be accepted as of **July 1**. Thanks ahead for all you do.

UPCOMING SERVICES

subject to change - please check your Sunday Bulletins

Saturday, June 24 - Birth of Saint John the Baptist, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy;
5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, June 25 - Orthros, 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Thursday, June 29 - Saints Peter and Paul - Divine Liturgy, 9:00 AM

Friday, June 30 - Synaxis of the Apostles - Divine Liturgy, 9:00 AM

Saturday, July 1 - 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, July 2 - Orthros, 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Saturday, July 8 - 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, July 9 - Orthros, 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Saturday, July 15 - 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, July 16 - Orthros, 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Saturday, July 22 - 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, July 23 - Orthros, 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Saturday, July 29 - 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, July 30 - Orthros, 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Tuesday, August 1 - Paraclesis, 7 PM

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Also, please check your Sunday Bulletins for the dates and times of all meetings in the Ecclesiastical New Year.

15th of the Month, 4 PM - Articles and ads due for *Cross Currents* and *Youth Currents* (church office)

Every other Monday, 3:30 PM - Toddler Play Group (Gym)

Tuesdays, 10:30 AM - Bible Study (Fireside Room)

First **Tuesday** of the month, 11 AM - ORA (Oaks)

First **Tuesday** of the month, 7 PM – Philoptochos Board (Classrooms)
 First **Thursdays** of the month, 6:30 PM - Technology Committee (Contos Library)
 Third **Tuesdays** of the month, 7:30 PM – Parish Council (Contos Library)
*Please call the church office
 if we missed your organization's meeting.*

**NEWS &
 INFORMATION**

GIFT CARD EXTENSION

To all the ladies who attended the Philoptochos Fashion Show, your Mary Kay gift card and facial offer have been extended through July!!! Please call to set up your appointment today. A special gift will be given to the first 5 women who call. Thank you, **Angelique Lorig** 415-948-8539.



WEDDINGS

Mar 4 Adam Philipopoulos and Julie Kissenger, Jason Philipopoulos, sponsor
 May 21 Nick Denis Vorrises and Lana Marie Laduca, Petros and Eleni Metaxas, sponsors

BAPTISMS

April 29 Alexa Georgia, daughter of Jeffrey and Eleni Baxter, Leland Kozar & Athena Drouvalakis, sponsors
 May 13 Maximos, son of David & Anna Bragg, Kathy Ballart, sponsor

May 20 Gabriella, daughter of Panayiotis and Michelle Dedes, Georgia Manolas, sponsor
 May 20 Yianni, son of Panayiotis and Michelle Dedes, Kosta Manolas, sponsor

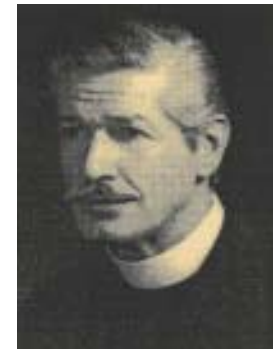
FUNERALS

Paul Andrew Dennison, who fell asleep in the Lord March 7
 Evagelia Tsoutis, who fell asleep in the Lord March 8
 Adriana (Diana) Modonas, who fell asleep in the Lord March 19
 Costa P. Boumis, who fell asleep in the Lord April 2
 Martha Zoe Alafouzou, who fell asleep in the Lord May 9
 Peter Kostas Zachos, who fell asleep in the Lord May 10
 Laura Ulbrich, who fell asleep in the Lord May 11

CHRISMATIONS

“Stephanos” Steven Lightfoot, Tyke & Ella Stamates, sponsors

**FATHER LEON
 FELLOWSHIP
 FOR GRAD STUDENTS**



The Church of the Holy Cross was blessed to have Father Leon Contos with us from 1979 to 1988. He remains an educational icon of our Church and embodied what living a true Christian life means. All who met him remember his grace, intellect, wit and warmth. Father Leon was Dean of Saint Sophia Cathedral from 1951 to 1965 and President of Hellenic College/Holy Cross Theological School from 1966 to 1972 With a Ph.D. from Oxford University and several honorary doctorates, he came to Belmont to continue his pastoral work. He brought to our parish a strong sense of stability and Christian purpose. His sermons are regarded as some of the most articulate and insightful. He was truly a scholar and a gentleman, a proud father, grandfather and loving husband. His leadership, quiet yet strong, allowed for lay leaders in our parish to grow. He pointed the way with a firm yet gentle hand. He was the consummate teacher. Understanding the importance of education within our Church, Father Leon became the first President of the Patriarch Athenagoras Institute at the Gradu-

ate Theological Union in Berkeley, California and was honored as the Alex G. Spanos Professor of Orthodox Studies there.

The Philoptochos, too, sees the support of educational endeavors as one its main focuses. For the Church to survive, the faithful must be knowledgeable in their religion. In that vein, the Philoptochos established the Very Reverend Dr. Leonidas C. Contos Fellowship. This monetary award is presented to a graduate student(s) who has attained educational excellence, is pursuing graduate studies and has displayed Christian values working within a church community. The award is possible through an endowment in Father Leon's memory.


If you are a graduate student and are pursuing continuing education and with your family have been a contributing member of this Church community, please pick up an application from the Church Office.

YOUTH CURRENTS

June 2006 edition

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

2 Peter 3:18



“For the Young on How They Might Derive Profit From Hellenic Literature”

by *Fr. Silviu Stanculescu*

In a recent article on the topic of education as it applies to popular culture, **His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios**, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, comes with a wonderful patristic based answer to the question: “What is the attitude of our Orthodox Church regarding popular culture, and is there ever a potential to view popular culture as one among many sources for our spiritual edification?”

I will share with you a few passages from this meaningful article. The answer to the above mentioned question has been consistent throughout

the centuries, and is perhaps best expressed by the fourth century advice of **St. Basil** when he speaks directly to the question of the popular literature of his day in his classic treatise “*For the Young on How They Might Derive Profit From Hellenic Literature*”:

“We should model ourselves on the bees when we participate in these works. They don’t go to all the flowers indiscriminately. And when they do fly to certain ones, they don’t try to carry them off whole. They take only what is useful for their work and leave the rest without a backward glance. In the same way, we, if we are wise, will gather what suits our needs and conforms to the truth, and pass over the rest.”

Following this sage advice, we would be wise not to embrace every single work of popular literature willy-nilly, nor to take the opposite extreme by condemning popular culture outright, but rather to approach popular culture and its products as St. Basil advises, with careful scrutiny, examination, and, to use a popular expression, “common sense.” St. Basil’s admonition can be applied rather well to the current hype that is buzzing around “*The Da Vinci Code*” and the “*Gospel of Judas*” these days. He was mindful, as we should be mindful, that the time which God has given us on this earth is precious. Consequently, we should pay heed with what we choose to preoccupy ourselves and our time.

We would be wise to recognize that these works mentioned above constitute the current vogue of our times. If something is said to be “in vogue,” it is inherently understood that it is a passing fancy; that while it has now achieved popular sensation in its proverbial fifteen minutes of fame, it will inevitably eclipse into the twilight, only to be replaced by something more likeable later on as tastes and interests change. Such is the ebb and flow of popular culture.

On the one hand, the heavy attention paid by our popular culture to these vogueish works reflects the sad reality that our contemporary society is fast approaching a near total theological and historical illiteracy. On the other hand, despite the grave theological illiteracy of our era, very few would dispute that people in our present time are thirsty for the truth, for substantive knowledge, for an authentic relationship with God. They are seeking the “living water” much like the Samaritan woman to whom Jesus revealed His messianic divinity, saying, “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water than I shall give him will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:14).

As Greek Orthodox Christians who live within the popular culture of America, we stand in a unique position to offer to others a balanced perspective that authentically reflects the truth offered by Jesus Christ; and we are called by Him to share the truth of His Gospel to others, who thirst for meaning. This brief piece has endeavored to explain the attitude of our Orthodox Church towards popular culture, the challenges associated with discerning its positive and negative characteristics, and the need to view products of popular culture with heightened scrutiny, as St. Basil was advocating in his times. In this way, popular culture and its works can, at times, have the potential to serve as one of many venues for reconsidering a relationship with God.

Let us hope that this brief reflection on an important topic may shed some additional light upon the culture in which we live, and emphasize our obligation as Orthodox Christians to share the light of Jesus Christ with others.

SUMMER CAMP 2006

Mark Your Calendars! **Session One: July 9 - 15 HOLY CROSS WILL ATTEND THIS SESSION**; Session Two: July 16 - 22; Session Three: July 23 - 29; Session Four: July 30 - August 5

A typical summer camp day at the Ranch begins at 7:00 AM with the wake-up bell. Campers, in their cozy dorm rooms, dress for the morning chapel service. Following the service, a hearty breakfast is served, kids go onto their first activity. Throughout the day the kids follow a rotating schedule filled with activities like arts and crafts, archery, canoeing, nature hikes, Orthodox Christian sessions, cowboy roping, athletics, and the ever-popular swimming in our cool pool (where life-guards are on duty)! At midday: Lunch! At 5:00 vespers are held, followed by a delicious dinner. Speaking of food, campers rave every year about the food our chefs lovingly prepare: barbecued chicken, hamburgers, spaghetti, apple pie and (don't worry, mom) healthy vegetables. After dinner begins the evening activity, which includes things like a pool party or a volleyball or basketball tournament. Every night a campfire is held, where energetic songs are sung, wacky skits are performed, and devotionals bring a peaceful end to a busy day.

For more information call the Church office @ 591-4447 and visit St. Nicholas Ranch website: http://www.stnicholasranch.org/summer_camp.htm

Young People Wanted for Fun, Musical Weekend!

Calling all young people who love to sing and have fun – you're invited to the annual San Francisco Metropolis Church Music Conference, **Friday, June 30 - Sunday, July 2**, to be held in San Francisco this year!

All youth participants will enjoy trips to the San Francisco Zoo, Pier 39 and the Aquarium of the Bay, plus a dinner-dance, arts and crafts, and more!

You'll also attend music rehearsals so you can sing portions of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning, and you'll also sing some fun songs onstage at the Saturday night banquet! Holy Cross' **Eva Canellos** will conduct the youth choir at the conference.

Young people, roughly ages 8-14, are encouraged to register for this awesome weekend! No youth choir experience necessary. Young people from throughout our Metropolis will be attending.

For information, registration forms and music, please contact Eva Canellos, (650) 529-0180, or cecanellos@aol.com.

HOLY CROSS

GREEK SCHOOL

Some excerpts from Newsletter #7, May 2006

A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR

It is amazing how quickly time passes us by and before we actually realize what season we are in, up comes the next one ...

We all hopefully enjoyed the beautiful Easter Holiday with our red eggs, delicious sweet bread, and the long awaited roasted lamb. Spring is now officially here with the lovely May flowers brightening our homes and we can now enjoy the longer spring days that are clear indicators that summer is just around the corner.

Nearly nine months ago we began our school year, with a positive outlook and excitement with what the year had in store for all of us. I hope and believe that this year was an extremely productive and successful year for all our programs.

Of course lets not get ahead of ourselves . . . We still have a month of hard work ahead of us. All the teachers need to ensure that their students are prepared for the end of the year review and the final examinations coming up. Also keep in mind that we will be having our monthly report. It is vital that the students are focused and do their best to attend all classes. There is not much time left, lets make sure we take advantage of it.

Please also note that Registration for next years classes will begin this month. We highly recommend to all parents, especially those of new students to the program to not procrastinate. The registrations forms as of May 10th will be available in the Greek School office for your convenience.

KALO MHNA!

Kindly, *Theodora Kounalakis*

A LETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL

The Education Office of the Greek Consulate in San Francisco wants to express its gratitude to the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Community in Belmont who acted as the host for 2006 examinations for the Certificate of Attainment in Greek.

The examinations were conducted on May 16 and 17. Some 30 candidates from California and surrounding states sat the exams which were organized by the Education Office of the Greek Consulate in San Francisco under the supervision of the Center for the Greek Language.

The Certificate of Attainment in Greek provides any user of Greek with an expert and objective opinion of the level of their knowledge. It gives to the students of foreign languages credits at U.S.A. schools and universities of present or future attendance. It serves as proof of the successful candidate's level of attainment in Greek in work market It is a requirement for the practice of various professions in Greece. At level C it allows foreigners to register at a Greek institution of higher education in case they do not have a Greek secondary education certificate. At level D it allows citizens of European

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**AND SO MUCH MORE...
COME IN & SEE FOR YOURSELF**

Union member states to prove complete knowledge and thus be employed in a Greek civil service position.

The Certificate of Attainment in Greek has been established by the Ministry of National Education and Religions of Greece. The examination for this Certificate is organized all over the world by the Center for the Greek Language in Thessaloniki and is held, for the time being, once annually, in mid May.

Evangelos Kasvikis, Ph.D.

Consul for Educational Affairs

Consulate General of Greece - Education Office

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

NEWS FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

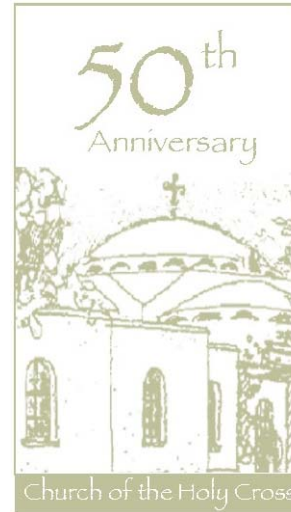
The school year is over. We hope that you have enjoyed it through learning, making new friends and having fun! Please take a moment to read the following information regarding the 2006-2007 school year.

Enrollment for the 2006-2007 school year continues. Registration forms can be found in the Greek School office. You can return your registration form in person, or by surface mail.

Also, we are very happy to announce that starting this fall, a new pre-kindergarten class will be added to the "Phevos" program. The kids must be 4 years old by **December 31 2006**, in order to be accepted in the class. Please let families and friends know about this new class. For information call **Theodora Kounalakis** at 594-9585.

AND MANY THANKS TO . . .

Mr. & Mrs. Andreas Cristoforidis for their generous donation to our school.



Save the date -

Friday, December 29

50th Anniversary Gala

An event

50 years in the making.

Join us with your family.

Golden details soon.

THANK YOU *CROSS CURRENTS* SPONSOR!

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