

CROSS CURRENTS

Church Newsletter
December 2007



Transposing Our Life (Part 2)

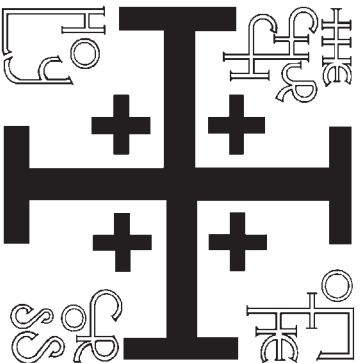
by *Father Peter Salmas, Pastor*



Relationships are what our lives are all about. Parents, siblings, spouses, friends, co-workers, fellow students, parishioners, all reflect relationships that are either nurtured or ignored. We seem to recognize this truth more at Christmas time than at any other time of the year. But do we give these annual feelings and resultant activities their proper due? Do we thank our Creator, born for us in a Manger, for opportunity to celebrate this joyous season?

The authenticity of the relationship we have with the Holy Child whose Birth we celebrate, with Our Lord Jesus Christ, is a reflection of our relationship with the Body of Christ, with His Holy Orthodox Church. Our involvement may be active or passive, over extended or apathetic...perhaps non-existent. Sometimes the lack of a relationship in one area of our life can subconsciously motivate us to develop another relationship that is totally unrelated.

I am often surprised how those who may not have an active relationship with the Church can manage to give a great deal of their time to help others; hospital volunteers, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, half-way houses, etc. Giving a helping hand to someone in need of food, clothing, or shelter certainly is a very visible expression of compassion and love and most commendable. However, these actions should be conscious extensions of our spiritual and physical relationship with



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CROSS CURRENTS

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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.

our Father who is in Heaven. They should be offerings in response to the Offering of our Lord to his people.

The early Church, as witnessed by Saint Paul in his letters to many Christian communities, often speaks of the Eucharistic gathering as being central to a Christian life. The Church Fathers, Saints John Chrysostom, Basil, and Gregory, offer similar instructions and guidance. The most genuine expression of compassion and love for the plight of our fellow man can only come as a result of a deep and abiding relationship with our Father and Creator, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Transposing our life into a relationship with the Father is our first and most important call. There can be no substitute for joining the community...the "body of Christ" in worship. The Incarnation of our Lord is the ultimate act of love on the part of our Creator. Our response needs to also be our ultimate expression and it begins with our Christian Orthodox lifestyle, expressing our faith in every action and word. Our worship experience, including the receiving of His Holy Body and

Precious Blood, equips us with the spiritual tools necessary to confront the deception and evil that awaits us each day.

We deny ourselves these spiritual gifts and tools when we do not make the necessary preparations for full participation on Sunday mornings. Regardless of how we were raised in the faith, there is no substitute for participation in the Eucharist each Sunday.

As we prepare to "celebrate Christmas," I encourage you to prepare as if you are aware that it is for the Birth of your Savior that you are preparing. Gifts of this Holy season are "legitimate" gifts of the season when understood in the context of the greatest of all gifts, the opportunity to become one with God. Begin this Sunday by "transposing the event of your existence and life into a relationship with the Father," thereby reaffirming your relationship with the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by *Gary Brenner, Parish Council President*



Serving on the Parish Council is a great honor. One must commit their time, their talent and their treasure to meet the challenges as a Parish Council steward.

As Parish Council president I have served with some extraordinary individuals **who have made personal sacrifices and continue to sacrifice for the good of our Parish.**

The Executive Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. We meet once a month to prepare for the Parish Council meeting which also occurs once per month. There are a number of committees that also meet including the Technology Committee, the Hall Committee the Preschool Board and Stewardship Committees. Every member of the Parish Council deserves a huge pat on the back for outstanding service to our Church. I must however single out those who have worked closely with me on the Executive Committee.

Jim Smith who is serving his first term as an officer has quietly taken on large responsibilities and always executes his tasks efficiently.

Jim is now in the final stages of lay-out for our 50th Anniversary Directory. He has spent long hours coordinating the photo shoots, selling ads, planning layout and preparing for distribution of the book. Jim has a wife, Maria and two young children who come first but he never turns down an opportunity to serve our church.

Jenny Cladis served two terms a Parish Council President and agreed to serve as Secretary for two more years. Secretary is a demanding job which requires constant attention to detail to record accurate decisions by Council and the General Assembly. Jenny also agreed to chair the 50th Anniversary Committee. It was an enormous responsibility but Jenny worked, coordinated and executed all of the events of the 50th year flawlessly.

Chris Canellos has served as Treasurer of our Parish forever. He has taken a year or two off to serve as President of the Council. The average parishioner probably does not know how much time and talent it takes to manage our budget. He is constantly searching for the lower interest rate for our debt and the highest return for our investments. There are monthly reports and analysis of the books to insure that the highest accounting standards are maintained. Chris also sings in the Choir and assists with Religious Education.

I must also mention a former member of the Executive Committee who after many years stepped down to give Jim Smith an opportunity. **Nick Peros** has served a term or two as President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer! Now, all he does is serve as coordinator of the Technology Committee which requires weekly meetings and coordination with his very talented committee. In his spare time he is furiously editing our 50th Anniversary Commemorative DVD for distribution this month.

All of these talented individuals are stewards of our church and servants of our Lord. Support them and all of the members of the Parish Council with your prayers and thank them with a well deserved pat on the back.

PHILOPTOCHOS

PHILOPTOCHOS

- GIVING AND RECEIVING - SOME ADVICE FROM MOM

by *Mary Peros, Philoptochos President*

To give is better than to receive. My mother would say these words and as a child I never really understood. The idea of Christmas and all the gifts under the tree was almost too exciting! Would Santa bring me that doll I was hoping for? As the years passed the excitement became less intense and the letdown after the Christmas hysteria more apparent. I remember clearly the day when I gave away a favorite possession to a good friend who so loved it. What I felt inside was profoundly more satisfying and I quietly smiled each time I saw that friend and that possession. My mother was right.

Over the last two months the Philoptochos has given part of its treasury to help the fire victims in Greece, to support the Children's Medical Fund and to contribute toward the costs of a private adoption of four abandoned siblings. Our Board discussed the amounts to give to each of these needs. As we talked about what we could afford, all of us agreed we could do give more. We left these meetings feeling a little happier knowing we gave freely from what may have been dear resources. My mother was right.

As we journey through this holiday season, and as we approach the New Year, please consider joining us at our upcoming events. After our Holiday Brunch and Christmas Tea in **December**, we will celebrate the cutting of the Vasilopeta with a luncheon on **Sunday, January 13**. On **February 24**, we will offer a coffee hour buffet to support Kids'N Cancer. On **March 15** and **16** we will once again have our Art Show and Auction Night, a great success two years ago. More details will follow on these events and the spring events to come.

In January we again ask the wonderful ladies of this parish to join us in pledging any amount for membership 2008. We obviously hope that you will share your time and talents with us, too. However, whatever membership money we are given ultimately goes to someone in need. Everyone can feel a part of that giving spirit, that joy in giving to those less fortunate. To a blessed holiday season and joyous New Year!

- CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

“Circle of Friends” crocheters and knitters will resume in **February, 2008**. Watch for exact dates and details. All are welcome!

- BOOK CLUB UPDATE

Our next book club will be in **January**. Please contact **Claire Gagas** (claire.gagas@att.net) if you are interested.

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

AND THE SON

by *Konstantine Salmas*

The Scripture makes sense. The gospel of John flows out of Ezekiel. Luke flows out of Numbers. Scripture is a parable. The ending of the parable is the Resurrection. The New Testament writers wrote about a person they knew. This person they knew healed people, was rejected by people, spoke about a relationship with God that others did not share, and Resurrection. The ending to this parable – Resurrection – makes all the time John spent with Jesus, that much more important to John. The way things close out with Jesus – Resurrection – means that when John starts talking about this person he needs to use words that he wouldn't use to explain things in everyday life. If someone doesn't

heal others, doesn't make children come back to life, if someone doesn't leave the leadership speechless, if someone isn't crucified, then John can speak about him with the words he uses to speak about a brother, a friend, another person. But this person, Jesus – who Resurrected – forces John to bring unusual and seldom used words into play because these words provide a way to give full value to the experience John has of Jesus. Because of the Resurrection, John applies the term Word to Jesus. This term allows John to explain the reality he experiences in living with Jesus. The term Word means Jesus was with God before time. We were not. The term Word is applied to Jesus because after Jesus has been considered, Word is the only term that allows us to understand God's presence in the world as a continuous presence in the first century and forward, stretching back to the creation of the world. The Scripture makes sense and the term Word is vital for our understanding of things to be opened onto God.

YOUTH & PARENTS

GREEK SCHOOL

by *Tonia Spyridi*, Greek School PTO president



- NEWS FOR THE MONTH

The Greek School choir made its debut on the 28th of October at the Oaks. The children's beautiful voices touched us with the performance of deeply moving songs about the "OXI" day. The same day, Greek School sponsored the coffee hour with an abundance of food! Thank you to everybody who supported Greek School by coming to the coffee hour.

The staff and students of Greek School hope you've had a Happy and Peaceful Thanksgiving and hope you have a blessed Christmas!

NEWS & INFORMATION

SAVE A LIFE

Please help us save the life of **Evanthia Pappas** a 37-year-old Greek Orthodox San Francisco native who has Inflammatory Breast Cancer. Evanthia was baptized at Holy Trinity Church, a student at Holy Trinity Parochial School, participated in the Annunciation Cathedral Dance Group, graduated from Lowell High School, UC Davis and Golden Gate University Law School.

She is a Deputy District Attorney in the Special Victims Unit in Sonoma County, a former San Francisco Assistant District Attorney of six years and Special Prosecutor for the San Diego District Attorney's Office. She also shares her knowledge and expertise by teaching other district attorneys in California and the United States through the National District Attorney's Association and California District Attorney's Association. She is also an adjunct professor in the criminal litigation department at Golden Gate University Law School.

Evanthia has Inflammatory Breast Cancer, has undergone multiple tests/scans chemotherapy and mastectomy and now urgently needs a Stem Cell Marrow Transplant. The cost is \$235,000, which, her HMO has declined to cover. This does not cover any additional necessary tests, treatment, housing and meals.

Please join the numerous other Greek Orthodox organizations who are working so diligently towards saving her life. Evanthia is a patient at MD Anderson Cancer Center the only Inflammatory Breast Cancer Hospital in the world.

Donations may be sent to:

MD Anderson Cancer Center

1515 Holcombe Blvd., Houston, TX 77030

Attention: John Tietjen, VP, Financial Services.

Note on check should read "Donation benefit Evanthia Pappas acct #1586838979".

Please forward this message to others. Thank you!!!!

50th ANNIVERSARY PHOTO DIRECTORY – UPDATE

We are close to submitting the 50th Anniversary Photo Directory for publishing. We are currently proofing the materials and finishing collecting the advertisements and personal messages from the businesses and individuals who have made commitments to the directory. Once all this information is collected the directory will be submitted electronically to Olan Mills for publishing. Questions please call Jim Smith at 261-9208 or jimsmith.holycross@sbcglobal.net

PATRIARCH ATHENAGORAS ORTHODOX INSTITUTE WOMEN' S BOARD

by *Jenny Cladis, Parish Council Secretary*

Recently the Women's Board of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute (PAOI) held a luncheon at Church of the Holy Cross to honor the new PAOI director, **His Eminence Metropolitan Nikitas**. Metropolitan Nikitas comes to this position after serving for ten years as the Metropolitan of the Hong Kong and South-East-Asia Diocese. He is an experienced clergyman, an educator, an administrator, and is a welcomed addition to the Board of Trustees.

Father Peter and **Presbytera Nikki** were also guests at the luncheon. Fr. Peter graciously led the group through the church to view the icons.

The PAOI was established in 1981, with major funding by **Mr. Alex Spanos**, in honor of the late Archbishop of America. The Very Rev. Dr. Leonidas Contos was named the first Alex Spanos Professor. **Paul Manolis** also played a major role in the founding of the Institute.

The Institute is a member of the Graduate Theological Union of the University of California. It is an ecumenical and interfaith consor-

tium of nine independent seminaries and ten affiliated centers based in Berkeley, California.

The Women's Board was primarily established in 1988 to augment the work of the Institute. Their interests and goals have become quite diverse. Now they are focusing on the development and funding of the Women's Board Scholarship Endowment that funds scholarships to students who study at the University, and on fulfilling their annual monetary commitment of to the Institute.

The current President of the Board is **Danica Hendrickson** from Walnut Creek.

The luncheon was chaired by the Holy Cross parishioners: **Loula Anaston, Jenny Cladis, Paulette Economus, Helen Ernst, and Virginia Lagiss**. These women are also members of the Women's Board.

The Women's Board is grateful to the Nob Hill Caterers, under the direction of **Ted Giouzelis** and his daughter **Felicia**, for preparing a wonderful meal. They paid special attention to the many details of the luncheon and the service.

Tyke Stamates helped magnificently to orchestrate the event.

We all wish you a joyous Christ-filled Christmas,

THREE HIERARCHS BOOKSTORE

Father Peter recently traveled to Peoria, Arizona to participate in a recording session for Narthex Press. Coordinated by **Father Michael Pallad** (the priest of the Church of Saint Haralambos and the brother of **Eva Canellos**), he and **Father Dino Pappademos, Father Jon Magoulis, Father John Bakas, Father Alex Leong** and Father Pallad have, for the last several years, been recording the Sunday Orthros service in English in the eight tones of Byzantine music. Thus far, four CD's have been completed and are available for purchase, including Tones 1, 2, 3 and the Sunday of All Saints. Fourth Tone, having just been completed, will be available for purchase before Christmas in our Holy Cross Bookstore. These recordings are the traditional hymns of the Holy Office of Orthros, chanted in English and available with the accompanying music book in western notation. In addition to their aes-

thetic beauty, they afford for the listener the depth of the theological teachings found in the Hymnology of our Holy Orthodox Church.

You will find books, icons, tapestries of our Pantocrator and a new shipment of Byzantine crosses available for personal use and gift giving during this Season of the Nativity of Christ. Do come by. You may be surprised at the wealth of inventory in our bookstore.

JOIN THE LIST

So many of us spend a lot of time on our computers for shopping, e-mails and work. Now, you can receive a daily dose of inspiration over e-mail with a religious daily study.

Father Peter puts together a Daily Study on the Saints and Scriptures that he sends out on e-mail every day. If you would like to receive inspirational messages regularly to begin your day, please send your e-mail address to him at frpeter@goholycross.org.

SEND US YOUR FAMILY EMAIL ADDRESS AND HELP US SAVE

To save money on printing and postage on *some* church mailings (like *Cross Currents*), we would like to e-mail such mailings to our parishioners instead of going the expensive, and old-fashioned paper, ink and envelope and stamp way.

If you would like to help us with this expense, please tell us the e-mail address where you receive *family* e-mail. These e-mailings will be infrequent but, in the long run, will save us a lot of money. We *will not give* your e-mail address to anyone else and will *only* use it for this church mailing purpose. We will identify these mailings with "Church Mailing" in the subject line.

If you can lend a hand, just e-mail your address to OFFICE@GOHOLYCROSS.ORG. Thank you!

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Please check your Sunday Bulletins for the dates and times of all meetings. In the next issue, we'll be back from summer break, so expect LOTS of meetings and events to be listed below. Group leaders : Be sure to get your organization's meetings on the calendar!

first Tuesdays of the month - 11 AM, ORA
first Tuesdays of the month - 7 PM, Philoptochos Board
first Thursdays of the month - 7 PM, Youth Council
second Monday of the month (usually) - 7:30 PM, Executive Council
second and fourth Tuesdays of the month - 7 PM, Youth Groups
third Tuesdays of the month - 7:30 PM, Parish Council
Tuesdays, 10:30 AM, Bible Study
Wednesdays, 7 PM, Studies in the Faith
first three Wednesdays of the month, 7:30 PM, Choir
Dance - please check with your Directors

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Dec 16	Christmas Tea
Dec 17	Family Sharing Distribution
Dec 31	New Year's Eve Dinner Dance
Jan 13	Vasilopeta
Feb 24	Coffee hour buffet to support Kids'N Cancer
Mar. 8	Crab Feed
Mar 15 & 16	Philoptochos Art Show and Auction Night



UPCOMING SERVICES

subject to change - please check your Sunday Bulletins

Sunday Services are 8:30 AM, Orthros, 10:00 AM, Divine Liturgy
Saturday Vespers are at 5:30 PM

Sunday, December 16 – 8:45 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
Monday, December 17 – Saint Dionysios – 8 AM, Matins; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy
Saturday, December 22 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers
Sunday, December 23 – Sunday before the Nativity – 8:45 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
Monday, December 24 – 8 AM, Office of Great Hours; 9 AM, Vespers
Monday, December 24 – Christmas Services – 8 PM, Orthros; 9 PM, Divine Liturgy
Thursday, December 27 – Saint Stephen – 8 AM, Matins; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy
Saturday, December 29 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers
Sunday, December 30 – Sunday following the Nativity – 8:45 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
Monday, December 31 – Saint Basil the Great – 6 PM, Orthros; 7 PM, Divine Liturgy
Friday, January 4 – Forefeast of Holy Theophany – 9 AM, The Royal Hours
Saturday, January 5 – Eve of Holy Theophany – 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy (Lesser Agiasmos); 5:30 PM, Great Vespers for the Holy Theophany
Sunday, January 6 – Holy Theophany – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil (Greater Agiasmos)
Monday, January 7 – Saint John the Baptist – 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy
Saturday, January 12 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers
Sunday, January 13 – Sunday following Holy Theophany – 8:45 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

NEW YEARS DINNER DANCE

Please send your reservations NOW! Forms are available at our website and around church, and were available in the November *Cross Currents*.

HOUSE BLESSINGS

Each year, after the celebration of Epiphany (**January 6**), it is the Orthodox tradition to bless our homes with the Holy Water of Epiphany. Please fill out the form and return it to the Church Office if you would like to have Father bless your home.

=====

Use this slip, the form that's available with the Sunday Bulletin, or transfer this info to a separate sheet of paper, and submit it to the Church Office in January. *Yes*, I would like to have Father bless our home :

DAY : (a weekday after Jan. 6) : January _____, 2008

TIME : _____ AM / PM (between 10 AM & 5 PM)

Name : _____

Phone (s) : _____

Address : _____

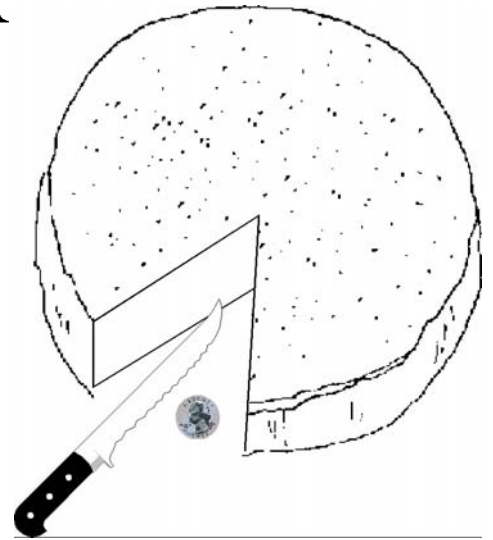
Directions from church (please indicate cross-streets / draw a simple map if you think that would help) :

ΧΡΟΝΙΑ

ΠΟΛΛΑ

ΚΑΛΗ

ΧΡΟΝΙΑ



Cutting of the Vasilopeta

Sunday, January 13

Following Divine Liturgy.
Join us for a delicious luncheon.

Your donations help support
Saint Basil Academy for Children.