

CROSS CURRENTS

Church Newsletter
February 2009



WORDS TO LIVE BY

by *Father Peter Salmas, Pastor*

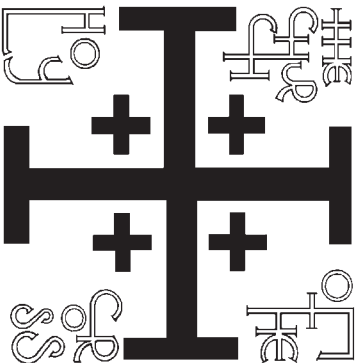


As I have considered the many options for the topic of this month's message to you, I am struck, once again, by the sobering thoughts surrounding how quickly time passes. The Advent Fast began and came to a close, bringing us to the celebration of our Lord's Nativity, the awesome awareness of the beginning of a new year, and finally our Lord's Theophany. Because these have come so quickly, it is as difficult to grasp a topic as it is to grasp time itself.

However, we are called to slow down and focus on the blessings inherent with the beginning of a new year. Opportunities for growth- intellectual, spiritual, and emotional - abound, each requiring of us maturity befitting our Christian callings. Among the many possibilities, two opportunities for growth come to mind, our worship as a community and our giving...our stewardship.

I, as do all priests, embrace the image of our churches filled to capacity as we raise the Gospel and intone, "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father..." thereby committing Sunday mornings to participation of the entire community in the Divine Liturgy. This hope is fulfilled by you, the faithful, as you arrive in church in time to hear these words which call us to worship Our Lord Jesus Christ. This should be our goal as a community...to worship together in a manner that includes the entire Divine Liturgy. This is in fact the work to which we are called as an Orthodox Christian community each and every Sunday morning.

I ask that we commit ourselves to Sunday morning worship, living Sunday morning as our spiritual work day and day of celebration wrapped



900 Alameda
BELMONT CA 94002-1604

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE



NON-PROFIT ORGAN.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 17
BELMONT, CA 94002

CROSS CURRENTS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Church of the Holy Cross
900 Alameda / Belmont, CA 94002-1604
(650) 591-4447 / fax (650) 508-9846
office@goholycross.org / www.goholycross.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Janitor's Closet	6	Young Adult Ministry	7
Choir News	9	Youth & Parents	11
Announcements	17	Church Services	18
Events & Meetings	18	News & Info	22

into one. Jesus tells us, "Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and all other things will be granted to you." Beginning each week with the Divine Liturgy and the words "Blessed is the kingdom" will help us place our Lord's Kingdom at the top of our priority list.

And speaking of words, a great deal has been discussed regarding the word "tithing"... a term that should in fact be in the vocabulary of every Greek Orthodox Christian. Recently, I have heard a few complaints about the instruction to tithe, the directive we receive through Scripture. "They" say we have never done this before and that "it" is a "Protestant" practice. Well, "they" are correct... they have never done it and it is a practice in the Protestant Church. But the reality is that it was the practice of the early Christian church to tithe and we are called to maintain this stance...to give our firstfruits to God, to show him that we are truly committed to Him, enough to follow His words of guidance which are for our own good. Somehow as Orthodox we dropped the practice, perhaps when we were under the Ottoman yoke for four hundred years or when we became so self centered that we thought that God really doesn't know what He is talking about. However, it is very much a traditional and appropriate Orthodox practice, one that I encourage each of us adopt as our own reality of stewardship to our Holy Cross community.

Words are important and the word tithing is as important as the words worship, prayer, fasting, confession, or sacrament. Each of these words describes an aspect of our Orthodox life and practice. If we seek

first God's Kingdom, offering back to Him a portion of His blessings to us expresses our thanks and appreciation. That ten percent or tithe is then returned to us many times over. It is part of our relationship with God our Creator, the giving and the taking, the back and forth. It truly becomes the expression of our faith in Him. Faith as small as a mustard seed is all that is required when following our Lord's instruction. I pray that this year of 2009 be the year during which we worship together the entire Diving Liturgy and allow God's Word and His words to flourish in our lives.

SUPER SUNDAY

by *Father Pete Sotiras, Assistant Priest*



By the time you read this, everyone will know the winner of Super Bowl XLIII (43). The players of both teams train and prepare for this epic contest where the winner is the sole champion of the National Football League. For any current or aspiring professional football player, the Super Bowl is the highest summit. It's what every player works for, and dreams of. It's what coaches and fans hope for. This is the culmination of hard work, hopes and dreams.

The excitement and passion that players, coaches and fans have for the Super Bowl is not that much different than the excitement and passion we should have as Orthodox Christians when we participate in the Divine Liturgy every Sunday. We often think that the Super Bowl for Orthodox Christians is Pascha (Easter is the term we are most familiar with, but Pascha is more appropriate.). However, every time we gather as the Church on Sunday, we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord. Every Sunday is Pascha! Every Sunday is our Super Bowl! Every Sunday, we have the opportunity to reach the highest summit of our lives, by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ through Communion. According to St. Nicholas Cabasilas, receiving the Body and Blood of Christ is the greatest moment we can experience in our life because we are united to God in the most intimate way. It's a moment that we should seek and prepare for frequently, not two or three times a year!

Why is Sunday the Lord's Day? Why is the Divine Liturgy on Sunday the day we celebrate the Resurrection? It's not arbitrary. We gather on Sunday because, Christ rose from the dead early Sunday morning (Mark 16:2). So, every Sunday morning, the first Christians gathered on Sunday to remember what Christ did for the world, to remember and celebrate His Resurrection. We continue to follow this tradition to this day.

Unfortunately, we as Orthodox Christians often don't have the same excitement and passion for our Super Sunday that NFL players have for their Super Sunday. There may be many reasons for this, but I believe that we would gather as the Church on Sunday more often and with more excitement if we understood that being an Orthodox Christian is not just a one day out of the week obligation but rather a daily reality, a daily fight, a daily joy. We look at these football players and many of us wish we could have that kind of experience. Just imagine. We would be involved in one of the greatest events of the world. We would be part of a great team and we would be able to say that our role is vital to the team's success. We would receive glory and accolades for our accomplishments. To be a part of the Super Bowl must be one of the most thrilling and fulfilling experiences that anyone can have.

I believe that we don't have to look that far to have an experience that would put the Super Bowl experience to shame. Our lives are not boring, without purpose, or lacking fulfillment. Quite the contrary! Being an Orthodox Christian means being part of the most fulfilling, thrilling and epic struggle ever (a struggle which we know has been won by Christ)! Our value does not come from whether we are a CEO, a professional football player or a musician. For all Orthodox Christians, the Kingdom of God is within us (Luke 17:21) and that's what gives us our value. If we all took the time to look within ourselves, to find out what makes us tick, to understand what goes on inside of us (the good and the bad), to determine what motivates us, to sincerely seek truth, then I assure you, we will all come face to face with the living God. We can do this by taking the time to check in with ourselves daily. We need to find a quiet time during the day when no one will disturb us in order to meditate. Whether it's for 5 minutes or 35 minutes, we can meditate on the Bible passage of the day. God speaks to us through the Bible. We need to open our hearts to God. Christ wants to

hear all of our hopes, feelings, fears, dreams, and concerns. By pretending that the feelings we have inside of us don't exist, we only hurt ourselves.

If we keep living life superficially, pretending to be happy and putting on a façade, then we will never know the excitement, the thrill, and the fulfillment that comes with being a Christian. If we never bother to take the time to look within, and to find the Kingdom of God within ourselves, we will never appreciate our Super Sunday, the Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RE-ELECTED

There are very, very few years that the parish council officers and council members remain exactly the same. This year, 2009, is one of those years; so, you may find the following article familiar since its first appearance one year ago. Our intentions are to present profiles about the leaders of our church that, in turn, inform you about who they are. Look for these parish leaders on Sundays and other church functions and speak to them about ideas to benefit the community.

On January 11, after the oath of the office was administered at the end of the Liturgy, the Parish Council met for election of officers. **Father Peter** officiated at this meeting and the following Council members were elected.

President: **Jim Smith**. Jim has been a Holy Cross parishioner since 1988, having come from the Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Mason City, Iowa. He is married to **Maria Eugenia** and they have 2 children, **Ana Elena** and **Elias**. They are joined by Jim's brother **Art**, who is also an active parishioner at Holy Cross.



Vice President: **Gary Brenner**. Gary is a long time member of Holy Cross as well as being the immediate past president for 2 years of the Parish Council and has been involved in other Holy Cross committees. Gary is married to **Arleen** and has 2 grown children, **Ashley** and **Derek**.



Treasurer: **Chris Canellos**. Chris is also a long-time member of the Parish Council and has served as Treasurer for many years with a couple of breaks, one of them as president of the Council. He is married to **Eva** and they have a 8 year-old son,



Christian.



Secretary: **Jenny Cladis**. Jenny is also a long time member of the Parish Council and is adding another term as secretary to a long list of other endeavors and volunteer projects. She is married to **John** and they have 4 children and 9 grandchildren!

The other Council members are: **Peter Bibbes, Harry Breeze, Tanya Spirtos Eleftheriades, Charles Gagas, David Iuppa, Leo Maheras, Tom Mavrakakis, Bob Nemchik, Nick Peros, Dimitri Sogas, Ella Stamates.**

Our officers and Council members have many years of experience and respond with fresh ideas as we progress through the years and the business at hand.

Congratulations to everyone; Holy Cross should have a very good year. *Axios!*

FROM THE JANITOR'S CLOSET

by Tyke Stamates, Facilities Manager

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We have a lot to do this year.

First we are installing a new heating and air conditioning unit for the main hall (gym). As you know, from the last General Assembly meeting, both heaters for the main hall went out and were not repairable. These heaters lasted over 30 years. The new units are more efficient and have A/C attached.

This is the year when we start replacing old equipment, hopefully not all at once, but it's just like our homes : when one item goes, it seems other appliances follow.



Last month I asked for donations to build a fence along the front of our property. I want to thank those of you who donated money but we still have a way to go. Contact **Jim Stephanos, Tyke Stamates** or the Church Office to give to this project.

Last month I also wrote about chewing gum in church. Last Sunday, 4 out of 6 family members sitting in front of me were chewing gum. All were adults and all 4 went and took communion. Come on people, wake up.

Ella and I went to the New Year's Eve Dinner Dance. It was great. The dinner was excellent, the decorations were great and everyone was having a good time. There were approximately 150 people in attendance, which brings me to this question : Why didn't we have 250 people? or more? I feel the price was right. They had a children's area set up, and the music was good, American and Greek, so why don't we have more people at a Family function where we could bring in the New Year in a safe Family atmosphere?

Please send me suggestions or reasons why attendance to our Church functions have fallen off. (Attendance in other Churches have also gone down.) Please send comments to (ctyke@goholycross.org).

Remember: Money is temporal and lasts but a short time, our church will be here long after we're gone. Generosity, not stinginess, often leads to having more money.

AN EPIC TRIP FOR THE YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

by Xandra Nemchik, Young Adult

If you didn't attend *the 4th Annual Young Adult Ski Trip*, then you sorely missed out. The fun began on Friday, January 16 at Zephyr Point Conference Center in the beautiful South Shore of Lake Tahoe. The anticipation of the weekend ahead of us was building as each guest arrived and received their awesome long sleeved Ski trip shirt (which was everyone's favorite attire for the next couple days.). We settled in to our rooms and cabins and met later for our icebreakers since many of us were from all areas of the Metropolis and didn't know each other. Young Adults came from Southern California, the Bay Area, Portland, and Seattle!

The next day some decided to play it safe and hit the slopes and others chose do extreme body sledding. By the end of sledding, few survived. I was one of the lucky ones to get out with a few scrapes and assorted bruises. We ended the day with Vespers and a wonderful discussion led by **Deacon Niko Bekris**, the Metropolis Youth Director, on how Christians are not born, but built. We learned that we all need to wear our armor as Christians, just like superheroes do. Later we all played different games, such as Travali, Cards, Apples to Apples, Spoons, Wii Mario Kart and everyone's favorite, Catch phrase.

On our final full day most of us decided to take it easy and hang out at a local Irish Pub, Mc P's and watch football playoffs. A few of us wanted to go on a Gondola ride to the top of Heavenly. The views were exquisite and offered us many photo ops. We all headed back to the retreat center, had Vespers and participated in a discussion led by our **Fr. Pete Sotiras** on "Vocation". After the discussion people resumed the games from the night before, but something else also occurred during our last night. The lights dimmed, the music played, and dancing started. It began with some traditional Greek traditional dancing and slowly turned into a crazy Disney/Musical Theatre cabaret act. We danced to *Aladdin* and carried someone on a chair, danced to *Phantom of the Opera* and *Wicked* and ended with a three-man show, where Deacon Niko, **Gabby** and I sang "Tradition" from *Fiddler on the Roof*. We ended the night with a community dance to *Mamma Mia* and returned to our rooms.



↑ **Father Pete, Dn. Niko, and the Young Adults at Zephyr Point.**

In the morning we had a bittersweet goodbye with people that became very close to us during the weekend. Some live too far away to visit, some we will see soon at FDF and some we will continue to grow with in friendship because they live nearby.

Overall the *Annual Ski Trip* was an amazing experience that will last in my mind forever. It was exciting to meet other Orthodox Christians who are as committed and dedicated in our faith as I strive to be.

If you want to have fun on a bi-monthly basis with other Young Adults (18-35) keep your eyes open for announcements. Our Young Adult group meets every other Saturday night, beginning with Great Vespers at the Church at 5:30 PM, followed by dinner/discussion and then an evening activity off the Church grounds. For more information, don't hesitate to contact me at 650-921-4091 or via e-mail at ChoXan1@aol.com. Hope to see ya there. Be there or be square!

HOLY CROSS CHOIR

CHOIR CHEESEFARE LUNCH SET FOR MARCH 1

It's almost time for the cheesiest affair of the year! That's right, the annual Choir Lunch will be held on **Cheesefare Sunday, March 1**, right after liturgy in The Oaks.

You can bet Chef **Thomy Iuppa** and her crew of Merry Meal-makers will have a cheese-filled menu that'll send your spirits soaring, as well as your cholesterol, to send you off properly into Great Lent.

Chairman **Loula Anaston** is making all the preparations to reel you in, and the choir will serve you and sing for you as well. Hope to see you there! Please support the choir!

Please see our flyer on page 20 or on the website.

CHOIR NOTES : WE'LL GET IT NEXT YEAR

by *Eva Canellos, Choir Member*

Father Peter called on **Esther Papangellin** to represent the choir at the recent parish vasilopita cutting. Esther is a great person and an awesome alto, but try as she did, she failed to secure the winning piece of the vasilopita. Nevertheless, she thoughtfully froze the coinless piece of bread and brought it to the next choir practice so we could all have a taste of the losing piece. It was delicious bread, even though it was a loser.

No disrespect to Esther— she represents us well, and I'm grateful to her— but I think we'll have to try someone else next year for the vasilopita. Either someone who is really lucky, or someone who has great "slight of hand" and can quickly insert their own coin into the bread and then gleefully jump and shout, "I got the coin! I got the coin!" And then the choir will have good luck for the year, and everyone will love us and cheer for us and ask us to sing during liturgy every Sunday! Umm, wait a minute.

Many of the choir members had the honor of singing at Oakland's Ascension Cathedral recently when **Fr. Tom Paris** served at his final liturgy before retiring as pastor. It was a beautiful service with **His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos** celebrating alongside Fr. Tom, as well as former Holy Cross parishioner **Fr. Michael Tervo** (who serves at Ascension) and several visiting clergymen.

The 50 voices in the choir packed the loft from end to end. Holy Cross supplied 18 singers to go with the choir members from Oakland, Holy Trinity-San Francisco, Concord, Novato in Marin County, and several retired choir members. We sang under the leadership of Oakland Choir Director **Yiorgos Vassilandonakis**, and our own **Steve Cardiasmenos** was Guest Conductor for his beautiful "Praise the Lord" during communion. How nice it was to help pay tribute to Fr. Tom after his remarkable 37 years at Ascension Cathedral!

We're excited to welcome not one but TWO new choir members. We were just getting used to **Laila Jadelrab Louridas** joining the choir as our newest member, when she surprised us by recruiting her own mom, **Laura Jadelrab**, and bringing her into the group! Laila must've gotten

wind of our tradition to have the newest choir member sing a special solo at the upcoming Cheesefare Luncheon.

We had our annual Choir Christmas Party at the beautiful new home of **John** and **Jenny Cladis**. To say their home is awesome is to underplay it. It is beautifully decorated, and it's so spacious that at one point I got completely lost and it took a good five minutes to find my way back, and that was just inside the bathroom. John and Jenny are two of the nicest and most genuine people I've ever met, and they were the most gracious hosts. We all had a fantastic time eating, talking and singing, the three things we do best, in that order.

We enjoyed singing at the Christmas Program. I'm extremely happy that the choir participates in this wonderful tradition, but it's the kids who are the real stars of the show. They always sing so beautifully and help deliver the spirit of Christmas. I hope many of those young singers will become choir members in the future. Certainly ONE of them can bring home the lucky coin for us!

YOUTH AND PARENTS

YOUTH NEWS

by *Mark Simon, Youth Council President*

We have a lot to do this year. The youth of Holy Cross are one more way – perhaps the most important way — to build our faith in Christ and to strengthen our relationship with our church. Children are another act of faith – the belief that with God's blessings and guidance, we can teach the right lessons, deliver the right messages and pay the right kind of attention that will ensure the young people in our midst will be the future adults of our community and the future teachers of the church's youth.

All that and more has been driving the work of your Youth Council in the last year and informs our planning for the coming year as we seek through our ministry to bring families closer to our church and to Christ and to teach our faith and our Christian values of fellowship, community and service.

In 2008, the Youth Council had a very busy year and the result was that our young people were present in every aspect of the church's activities.

We take great pride in the work of the Dance groups, led by **Kathy Roque** and the manner in which they represented us last year at FDF and as they prepare to represent us again this year. We will have a chance to see a preview of our dance groups on **February 7** at the annual Apokreatiko/Glendi. It's a fund-raiser for our dance groups as they prepare for FDF. Tickets are on sale now. We need all our dance parents to show their support for their children at this important fund-raiser.

At our Festival, our youth are everywhere, serving in food booths, manning the booths in the Fun Zone and dancing for our patrons. The performances of our Drama troupe, led by **Helene Nemchik** and her always-enthusiastic daughters, **Alexandra** and **Gabrielle**, are a consistent draw at the Festival.

These activities keep alive the cultural traditions of our community, but, more importantly, they are a ministry and their primary purpose is to build fellowship and draw us together as a community in faith.

The holiday season brings a rapid succession of events that emphasize the Youth Council's belief in service as a manifestation of our Christian faith. Near Thanksgiving, we sponsored the Piecemeal, an annual potluck feast that drew more than 150 adults and children. During the Christmas season, the Youth Council sponsored a number of activities, including tree decorating for the Valley Medical Center and a special Christmas Party for foster children from the San Mateo Receiving Home.

Our annual charitable efforts also culminated with two major drives. We delivered 100 backpacks, filled with toiletries, a warm scarf, and a few other human touches, to the homeless at the Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter in South San Francisco, and our annual Family Sharing ministry provided presents, food and gift cards to more than 50 families throughout the Peninsula. **Brenda Visas** oversaw both efforts.

The Youth Council ended the year with its sponsorship of the annual New Year's Eve party, led tirelessly by **Katie McGovern**. The evening included a wonderful prime rib dinner, the traditional vasilopeta and joyful dancing as we welcomed 2009. Meanwhile, some of our youth, with the supervision of **Louis Busta**, spent the evening playing games and

watching movies in The Oaks while their parents enjoyed the evening at the party.

Throughout the year, our youth groups have become increasingly active. Hope/Joy, focused on the younger children, is meeting regularly and in large numbers under the direction of **Katie Buehlmann**. **Father Pete** and **Nicki Davis** have put a jolt of energy into Teen Night, a gathering of our teenagers in friendship and faith that is consistently drawing large and enthusiastic crowds.

And, of course, our Athletic program is in full swing and in the midst of basketball season.

It will be a busy 2009 for our church's youth. It is our hope that these growing ministries will continue to thrive and become a basis for friendships in faith that extend a lifetime.

HOLY CROSS YOUTH PIPELINE

- In September, we didn't have a name for our teenage youth group or any members. As of Christmas, BLAST is averaging weekly attendance of 20 teenagers.
- The three Katherines - **Cathy Danigelis**, **Katie Buehlmann**, and **Katie McGovern** - are doing well by their namesake, Saint Katherine of Alexandria as JOY/HOPE sponsors.
- The Youth Groups want to thank **Tom Minaidis**, of Tom and Pete's Produce, for donating the pumpkins and "Charlie Brown" Christmas trees this year. First, the kids delivered decorated pumpkins to our Holy Cross seniors, then youth from the Receiving Home came to decorate the Christmas trees.
- Holy Cross congratulates **Katherine Fotinos** (Fordham), **Nick Walker** (Hofstra), **Alexandra Torre** (San Diego), and **Raquel Roque** (Santa Clara) for completing their first semester in college.

Parents: What do you want your children to think Church is for? Make sure your four and five year olds know how to do their cross.

PRAISE HIS NAME WITH THE DANCE

by **Deacon Niko Bekris**, *Metropolis Youth Director*



I remember my first year ever going to FDF with my dance group. It was 1990, I was eight years old, and I remember the beautiful Pacific Northwest was covered in snow that February. FDF that year was in my hometown of Seattle, Washington- not an area of the country that gets the honor of hosting a Folk Dance Festival very often (probably in part because of the way the weather was behaving that day...). My group, Junior Levendya, won fourth place in Advanced Primary that year. Not bad for a first experience of FDF, I thought, and there would be many more experiences to come. Through many blessings from above, not to mention hard work by my dad, my family and I got to attend every FDF after that (except one) for the next fourteen years! Each one was an unforgettable experience.

On several occasions I have asked myself, what is it about Greek folk dancing that I love so much? For that matter, what is it about Greek folk dancing that we all love so much? Have you seen how quickly an exhibit hall in Ontario will fill up with dancing once a Greek folk band starts playing there? It doesn't even matter if the music is Cretan, Thracian, Macedonian, Pontic, we love it! And why do we love it? That's easy- *because dancing expresses what's going on inside our soul*. When we're alone and sad, we're not very inclined to dance, are we? But around tons of our friends feeling joy and love, we can dance all night long (and many of us do!)

If you open your Bible to the Old Testament (and we should), you'll read many verses about dancing as an expression of joy. But even more than that, you'll see dance as an expression of praise to God. King David danced around the Ark of the Covenant- the sacred container where the Hebrews kept many holy items that symbolized God's love for them. (2 Kingdoms 6:5) Psalm 149 says "Praise His name with the dance," (v.3) and there are others. When you read these, you may think, "What does God have to do with Greek dancing?" He has plenty to do with Greek dancing. Look at how we dance the majority of our dances- holding hands

as one body. If one person moves off step, the whole line is affected, just like in life. Have you ever tried holding your hands up by yourself? Holding hands altogether is a lot easier, just like anything in life we do together. Let's look at the bigger picture, too- most of these dances came from the celebration of joyful events, like weddings, baptisms, and major feast days, and as your directors can tell you, even the harvest seasons! Dancing is something beautiful that God has created us to love!

FDF is such an amazing experience, and we can often get swept away in the rush of emotion and enthusiasm of the whole weekend that sometimes we may miss what the key component of the festival is: that we come as faith communities and as part of a greater faith community. Remembering this is how our dancing is fulfilled. At my first FDF in 1990, I didn't come as a member of "Junior Levendya, from Seattle." I came as a member of "Junior Levendya, *from the Church of the Assumption*, in Seattle." Let's hold closely to this beautiful part of our faith. And let's always remember to "Praise His name with the dance," so that we may know true fulfillment as we continue the dance of life.

IT'S A BLAST

by **Louis Busta**, *BLAST advisor*

With the advent of 2009 comes the excitement of a new year with the BLAST youth group. After taking a break from our normal activities to celebrate our Lord's Nativity and New Year's, we returned to our weekly meetings. We had a celebratory kickoff for the youth group with a spirited game of dodge ball. All the kids enjoyed this time of running around and pegging their friends with balls in a spirit of competition and fun. The following week, we discussed the role of friends, what makes true friends from false ones, and how the Orthodox Church provides true friendship as a community gathered together to love one another as Christ loves us. For BLAST, January has begun with important foundations in giving the youth the opportunity to have fun with friends, playing games, enjoying each other's company, and coming together to grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and the traditions of the Orthodox faith. We are thankful to God for his mercy towards us, and we can't wait to see how He leads the youth for 2009.

REFLECTIONS ON I.V. - 4 A.M.

(fourth of a series)

by *Konstantine Salmas*

The sand is so hot beginning at ten in the morning that the bottom of a person's feet burn. Hawaii sand rarely gets this hot. But, at four am, there is only mugginess left over from the day's heat and cement paths still warm to the touch. Things start over the next morning. The sand cools over night and is cooked by the sun all over again. Over the years, I have learned that night is forgiving, if not very long. The things that happen during the day don't carry over into night and the next morning the staff and teenagers have a chance for a fulfilling day. Because Ionian Village is only as successful as the staff's daily commitment, every day is a day of potential. Repentance is easy and the effects are immediate. You don't have to pass by the lonely camper again. Today, if you sing during morning chapel, people will hear the difference. Hard feelings, mistakes, homesickness all seem to get deposited into the black hole of night. Almost without fail, year after year, the staff is ready to begin anew every morning.

I don't know why the night works this way here. Staff members are looking to maximize their experience of faith, want to be challenged, and they know their time at Ionian Village is short. They come into the summer with an awareness that they are willing to go above and beyond in the areas of forgiveness, mercy, and reliability. Commitment in these three areas is crucial for a community that is functioning with unity as the center, even when they are challenged. Staff members don't want to leave, they take their commitment here more seriously than most of the commitments they may enter in their lives.



← The chapel at Ionian Village is dedicated to St. James

They want to have the kind of impact as the four a.m. Greek night that helps people start anew, the kind of permanence as sand on the beach, the kind of staying power that is the result of a commitment to unity.



BAPTISMS

- Sept 13 – Vasil David, son of David and Anastasia Morrison; Dennis & Christina Thomatos, sponsors
- Nov 2 – Nora Anna, daughter of Maurice & Madeline Ghattas; Justin Jaghab, sponsor
- Nov 9 – Rustam Christos, son of Charles and Claire Gagas; Adam C. Gagas, sponsor
- Nov 9 – Raisa Antonia, daughter of Charles and Claire Gagas; Evangelyn Surette, sponsor
- Nov 22 – Joshua George, son of George & Susan Kotsovolos; Fran Bibbes & Dyana Brock, sponsors
- Nov 29 - Jack Marek, son of Andrezej & Ellen Skoskiewicz; George & Amy Gavallos, sponsors
- Dec 12 – Zsa Zsa Constantina, daughter of Thomas and Ingrid Sperow; Laurel Myers & Viorgos Tagaras, sponsors

CHRISMATIONS

- Dec 11 – Bernice “Anna” Dracopoulos, Virginia Coppock, sponsor

WEDDINGS

- Nov 29 – Michael Aretakis & Joanna Hanoumis, Chris & Yota Siouris, sponsors

FUNERALS

- Michael A. Davos fell asleep in the Lord October 9
- Angie Stambollis fell asleep in the Lord November 12
- Demetrios Nickolaos Leonardos fell asleep in the Lord December 11
- Christine Jane (Bibbes) Brock fell asleep in the Lord December 14

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, February 1 – Sunday

Monday, February 2 – Presentation of the Lord - 8 AM, Matins and 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, February 7 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, February 8 – Sunday (Triodion Begins)

Tuesday, February 10 – Haralambos, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, February 14 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, February 15 – Sunday

Saturday, February 21 – Saturday of Souls, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, February 21 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, February 22 – Sunday

Saturday, February 28 – Saturday of Souls, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, February 28 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

EVENTS & MEETINGS

Please check your Sunday Bulletins for the dates and times of all meetings.
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 Wednesdays of the month - 7 PM, Youth Council

second Monday of the month - 7:30 PM, Executive Council

third Tuesdays of the month - 7:30 PM, Parish Council

third Fridays of the month - service at the Samaritan House Kitchen

page 18 - *Cross Currents*

Tuesdays, 10:00 AM, Bible Study

Tuesdays, 6:00 PM, Hope/JOY

first three Wednesdays of the month, 7:30 PM, Choir

Thursdays, 7 PM, Studies in the Faith

Thursdays, 7 PM, BLAST

first Thursdays of the month, Daughters of Penelope

Saturdays - following Great Vespers, Young Adult Ministry

Dance - please check with your Directors

APOKREATIKO GLENDI

The logo for Apokreatiko Glendi features the word "APOKREATIKO" in a bold, black, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the word "Glendi" is written in a large, colorful, rounded font. The letters are: 'G' in red, 'l' in pink, 'e' in green, 'n' in blue, 'd' in light blue, and 'i' in magenta.

The Youth Council of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross, Belmont proudly invites you to our annual Apokreatiko Glendi! Join us **Saturday, February 7** at the Fellowship Hall.

5:30 - Great Vespers in Church

6:30 - Appetizers

7:00 - Tri-Tip dinner

8:00 - Performance by Holy Cross Dancers

8:30-Midnight - Music by D.J. "Greg the Groove"

Adults, \$50 (after February 1, \$60); **Children** (12 and under), \$15

General questions : call Kathy Roque-Albert @ 650-571-6876

Reservations : call Katie Buehlmann @ 650-367-6187

Mail, with your payment (made to **Holy Cross Youth**), to :

Church of the Holy Cross

900 Alameda - BELMONT CA 94002-1604

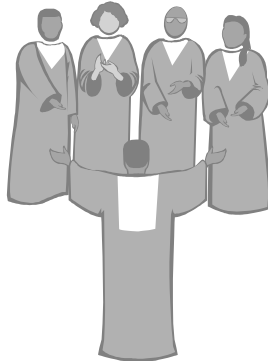
Cross Currents - page 19

CHOIR LUNCH

The Holy Cross Choir
invites you to our

Annual Choir Lunch

Cheesefare Sunday, March 1
In The Oaks Following Liturgy



Enjoy a luscious lunch made by Thomy Iuppa
and delicious dessert by Leslie Cardiasmenos!
Musical program, too!

Proceeds to benefit our Choir.

Admission: \$15
Youth (6-12 years): \$10
Maximum \$50 per household with youth.

Reservations / Information
Helen Valavanis (650) 573-5315
or Mary Pappas (650) 591-9940

CHOIR LUNCH - Cheesefare Sunday, March 1

For reservations, please mail check, payable to Holy Cross Choir, to **Helen Valavanis, 881 Haddock St., Foster City, CA 94404.** Paid reservations will be held at the door. Tickets will also be sold at the lunch.

Name _____

Phone _____ Address _____

♪ How many adults or youth over 12?
_____ X \$15 = \$ _____

♪ How many youth ages 6-12?
_____ X \$10 = \$ _____

♪ How many children under 6 requiring seating?
_____ FREE

♪ Total amount of check: \$ _____

I am unable to attend the luncheon but wish to support the Choir. Please accept my donation: \$ _____.
All donations are appreciated and will be acknowledged.

Thank you!

CRAB FEED



*This crab is smiling
because we've just
invited him to dinner.*

SAVE THE DATE!

CRAB FEED 2009

Saturday, March 7 *details soon*



NEWS & INFORMATION

RELIGIOUS DAILY STUDY BY EMAIL!

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

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. Your e-mail address will not appear on these e-mailings (as we will "blind copy" you) and we will identify these with "Church Mailing" in the subject line.

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

(We'll be happy to include multiple e-mails for your family, i.e., for spouses, children, yia-yias and pa-pous.)



STEWARDSHIP 2009

Thank you

to those who have submitted
their 2009 pledge cards.

If you haven't yet, please return
your pledge cards to the church office as soon as
possible. This pledge information helps us a great
deal in planning for our finances this year!