

CROSS CURRENTS

Church Newsletter
October / November 2009



COMMITTING OURSELVES AND ONE ANOTHER TO CHRIST OUR GOD

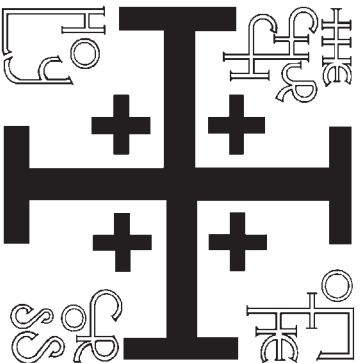
by *Father Peter Salmas, Pastor*



Thanks be to God, our Festival this year was the best ever and a great way to end the summer and begin the new ecclesiastical year as a community. Nearly five hundred volunteers were involved in this year's success and we thank **Gary Brenner** and **Mark Simon** as the chairs for their energy, commitment, strong faith, and calm approach to a very important and crucial parish event. We also thank **Peter Bibbes** and **Bob Nemchik** for the continued commitment and guidance to the new chairpersons and their committees.

As large an endeavor as it may be, the Festival is only one of many activities that make up the life of our Holy Cross community. First and foremost, we are a Eucharistic community. Our first priority as the Eucharistic community is to safeguard the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to spread His Word to all, building up the Body of Christ. For without Christ as our center any and all "successes" are without any real success; without Christ as our center, our work is meaningless.

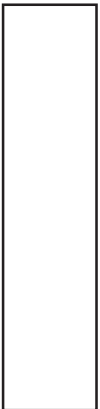
Saint John Chrysostom tells us "the living performs the works of life, of that future life, which is truly life. And Christ has declared what are the works of that future life, with which we ought always to be occupied. . . The living differ from the dead, not only in that they behold the sun, and breathe the air, but in that they are doing some good. For if this is wanting, the living are no better than the dead. . . A man who lives in pleasure is dead while he



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lives, for he lives only for his belly. In his other senses he does not live. He does not see what he ought to see, he does not hear what he ought to hear, and he does not speak what he ought to speak. Nor does he perform the actions of the living. **For nothing relating to the life to come affects him.**"

As we receive, each week, the sacred Body and Blood of our Lord, it is important to note that the gift of Holy Communion unites us to Him, who gives us life, and to one another, building up the Body of Christ.

"So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." John 6:48-58

More and more of us have come to understand the importance of partaking of Christ's Body and Blood on a regular basis, and how we are strengthened both physically, in the healing of every infirmity, and spiritually by casting out our demons and guarding against temptation and sin.

The Holy Fathers of the Church prescribe frequent participation in both the Holy Sacraments of Holy Confession and Holy Communion. Despite our greater participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Confession is still a difficult mystery for us to fully embrace.

"When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." John 20:21-23

But like many other difficult challenges, once confronted, the uncertainty and fear dissipate. And the more often we participate in Holy Confession the more frequently we receive His love, mercy and forgiveness and the more we understand how to forgive and be merciful to our brethren.

Yes, we enjoyed a very successful Festival but the true measure of our Eucharistic community is in the fellowship of worshipping the one Triune God. As we begin each new week properly prepared for participation in the Divine Liturgy, we will grow to understand the significance of the words "committing ourselves and one another to Christ our God."

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

DECIDE ALREADY!

by *Konstantine Salmas*

Someone puts shoes on the mannequin. Someone puts a sweater on the mannequin, but before they have pulled the sweater over the fake face time was taken to put on a dress shirt, button the sleeves, then insert each of the buttons into the slits on the other side of the shirt, as if a long crack in a glacier is being sealed.

Because the temperature is 20 degrees outside, meaning 20 cold degrees, the mannequin is fully dressed with knit cap, long grey scarf, and gloves that shine. This is all done for the mannequin in the window. More and more, all the decisions, even minute ones, are being made for us. They



are being made easier for us which makes it more difficult for us when we do have to make a real decision. Clothing stores show us how to dress. All we have to do is find the correct size.

America dresses up many religions and philosophies with “clothes” Also, the international world exposes us to their mannequins, to the different “clothes” that truth wears.

But truth doesn't wear different clothes. Because we are used to decisions being made for us in many realms of life, we don't know how to undress and expose the many different outfits as false. When it comes to Christ, I wonder if we feel like we've been wearing Him for too long or we've forgotten that at baptism and confirmation we were “dressed” as Christians. It's up to us to pay attention to what we are wearing.

THE JANITOR'S CLOSET - 2009 FESTIVAL AS I SEE IT



IT WAS GREAT! I BELIEVE THIS WAS ONE THE BEST IF NOT THE BEST FESTIVALEVER.

It was the best because we all had a good time. We enjoyed each other, we were all happy, we knew our jobs and we performed well.

This is the first time we received so much feedback complementing us on our hospitality, warmth and friendliness.

I personally am very pleased at some of the comments I received after the Festival.

Diego and **Alvaro** both commented on what a great Festival this was and that people were happy. They both said that **Gary** and **Mark** had a lot to do with the success of the Festival due their positive attitudes; Gary and Mark were always smiling and they made everyone feel good during the Festival. Alvaro has worked six Festivals and Diego has worked four. When they told me this, I was pleasantly surprised that the comments came from them.

Never know who's keeping track.

One morning, about a week after the Festival I was speaking with a Belmont Police officer in our parking lot. We were talking about the Festival and I recognized the officer as the one who helped us with an emergency. He repeated a conversation he had with other officers that morning. They were discussing our Festival and all agreed it was the best event in Belmont. They complemented us on inviting the community to a cultural event and how we handled the traffic, safety issues and crowd control. They were surprised and pleased that no one gets out of hand and they were especially complimentary about the Fun Zone and that we catered to the “FAMILY”.

I want to thank Gary and Mark for co-chairing Festival “09” they did an outstanding job.

Some suggestions for Festival “10”:

- (a) Start planning sooner
- (b) Co-chairs should be limited to one per booth plus day captains
- (c) Small one-on-one meetings between general chairs and co-chairs need to take place in the months of planning prior to the Festival
- (d) Two all-inclusive informational meetings providing cake and coffeee to relax nee to take place
- (e) Take control.
- (f) Establish Festival philosophy.
- (g) Plan and execute. (Especially the ones that don't listen . . . Just a joke!)

The Festival is a people event; it is run by people for people. Lose the e-mail, cell phones and humanize. **Harry Mitsanas** is successful because **Emily** spends hours on the phone calling (not e-mailing) people to cut and skewer the meat kabobs.

When Harry, George Bagis and I were involved with the Festivals, we all agreed that the Festival was needed to do the following:

- 1- Bring people together.
- 2- Invite the community at large to experience the Greek culture and Orthodox Christian way of life.
- 3- Help raise money to fund extra projects.

We have succeeded in the first two but have failed in the third. We are still depending on the Festival to balance the budget. We need to increase our giving so the Festival monies can be used for those extra projects.

That's the way I see it - *The Janitor*

YOUTH & PARENTS

RIGHT TO BE RUDE?

by *Father Panagiotis Sotiras, Assistant Priest*



At this past MTV Movie Awards, rapper **Kanye West** interrupted **Taylor Swift** during her acceptance speech for the award she just received. Now I normally don't watch this awards ceremony but the incident got all kinds of attention. Kanye received a lot of bad publicity for what he did. However, he's not the only one who's been in the news lately for rude behavior—tennis superstar **Serena Williams** recently blasted a line judge with some very inappropriate language because she felt the judge made the wrong call. There's also an abundance of rudeness on TV, especially "reality" TV. It seems that being rude, and creating drama, sells. Arguing, yelling at someone, putting them down, or disrespecting someone seems to get the most attention on TV for some reason.

What is it that makes people think that it's okay to be rude? One of the main reasons I've heard is that people who are rude are just telling the truth. Just ask **Kristin Cavallari** of *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills*. It seems like there's this notion that just because you believe you're right, it's okay to say whatever you want.

The fact is, is that it is not cool to be rude. Even if you feel you're right about something, that doesn't give you the right to be rude. Kanye may have believed in his heart of hearts that **Beyonce's** video was awesome and better. But, that doesn't give him the right to do what he did.

Yes, there are times when standing up for the truth and for your beliefs will offend people. But there's a difference between being rude and standing for truth (like when you refuse to gossip about someone or when you refuse to compromise your relationship with God to fit in).

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The Church calls us to be kind and never to respond to ridicule or rudeness with ridicule and rudeness. Christ Himself was never rude. He spoke the truth but He always did so in love, and with the intention of helping people. When we're rude, our intention is not to help someone. Rather, we're rude because we want to hurt someone and because it makes us feel and look better than the other person.

If you want to be honest with someone, make sure you communicate the truth in the right way. If you do it in a way that is hurtful, negative and to make yourself look cool, then even though you're right, you're ultimately wrong in how you handled the situation. If you share the truth by being kind and trying to put yourself in the other person shoe's, then you're on the right track. When we are rude, no matter if we're right, we end up hurting, rather than helping our chances of someone believing us. Remember, "let all that you do be done with love" (I Corinthians 16:14), even when telling someone the truth.

To his credit, Kanye apologized. He called Taylor personally to apologize for what he did. It takes a lot of guts to be able to admit being wrong and changing. When you're rude, just make sure to apologize to the person you've hurt. Remember, being right doesn't give you the right to be rude.

WHAT IS LOVE? - part 1 of 4

by *Rev. Deacon Niko Bekris,*

Metropolis Youth Director



Is there any word in the English language that is thrown around as much as "love"? How about in any other language, for that matter? We hear the word "love" everywhere. Is there any song on the radio these days that is not about this word? How often do we see this topic in popular culture? How many clothing lines, backpacks, school supplies, you name it- have hearts on them or other love-themed pictures? We hear people using this word often in public, when saying something like "Oh, I love that!" or, "I'm in love." Certainly, everyone seems to know what love is, and I'm pretty sure everyone has an idea of what it means to be "in love." But truly, despite how often we hear this word, do we really know what love is?

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I think it's safe to say that we love *something* when it has a lot of meaning for us, or when we really, really, enjoy something- a good restaurant, a movie we really enjoyed, maybe a song, a piece of jewelry, or anything else, we say that we "love" it. What about a person? We all love our parents, relatives and friends we meet in our lives, which is definitely a kind of love. What about a special *someone* in our life? One day we find ourselves in the presence of someone we find attractive, someone we'd like to get to know more about and be around. We find that we have butterflies in our stomach when we see them, we want to know more about them, and more than anything we really want them to like us back. When this happens, we say that we "have a crush" on this person, or we "like" this person, or we're "in love with" this person. Here is where our question comes in...

There's no doubt that love, to a degree, is an emotional response. Those butterflies in our stomach are our blood rushing and hormones getting amped up. But why does this reaction happen? Is it just because we find the person physically attractive? Is it simply because we're infatuated with them? That's probably part of it, but not all of it. Someone's personality plays a part, doesn't it? Even if a person is very attractive, are we just as inclined to want to be in a relationship with them if that person is mean and acts like a jerk? We probably don't have the same feelings for them after that, do we?

The truth is that romantic love is just as much a spiritual response as it is a physical one. When we find that we are "in love with" someone, part of it is because our soul wants to have a special relationship with that person. Something about that person's soul connects with us. Have you heard a story of someone meeting their future spouse, and they knew right away they wanted to marry them? I felt this happen to me, and I am convinced it is a reaction of a person's soul. As I heard a dear priest once say to me, it's "two hearts speaking to one another."

Think about this: God is love (1 John 4:8), and therefore whatever true love we feel has been created by God. God wants to have a special relationship with each of us, and we, too, since we've been created in His image and likeness, feel this as well- someone's heart connecting with ours. Physical attraction is healthy, since God has given us these feelings as well. If we are to have a healthy relationship, however, even a "healthy crush," physical attraction cannot be the only attraction we feel, and we should not

be duped by pop culture into thinking it is. So what is love? "Love" is an emotional reaction, yes, and something physical, but it is also very much a function of our soul, something we truly realize in our faith in Jesus Christ who loves each of us. With this in mind, we can be guided to a healthy idea of love, and who we are "in love with."

Now what about dating...?

MORE THAN FRIENDS - part 2 of 4

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

I'm thankful for many things in my life- my wife, my family, my friends, health, food, shelter, clothing, the freedom to worship freely in our country. Is it silly to say I'm thankful for love? A little abstract, sure, but it's true. I'm thankful for the fact that I have ended up with THE right girl. I am thankful when I see friends of mine find someone right for them, date, and get married. Relationships are certainly one of the most interesting aspects of our life on earth, and healthy relationships can truly be one of the greatest gifts God gives us. November is a month where we reflect on what we are thankful for, and this is certainly something I feel I should thank God for daily.

Last month, I shared some thoughts on what love is, from a Christian perspective- about meeting someone, being attracted to them (and that butterflies-in-the-stomach thing). This month, I want to discuss what is commonly the "next step" following the initial attraction- going out with someone.

It usually goes something like this: you find someone attractive, you want to spend time with them, and if they say yes, the two of you go to dinner, or a movie, or to do something fun with a group of friends. Hopefully along the way, you enjoy your date, and either ask if you want to have another date, or go your separate ways because your personalities just weren't clicking. So is this what makes two people "boyfriend/girlfriend?" I think it takes a little more than just going out somewhere, right? Obviously, it's not a simple answer, because it's not a simple subject. But there are a few simple thoughts I have about dating that might be beneficial to keep in mind.

Going on dates with one person on a regular basis, or being a “boy-friend” or a “girlfriend,” means that you spend time together in order to learn a little more about yourself, and what kind of person you gel with. There are unique qualities about ourselves that we only begin to understand in a relationship with the opposite sex- and I’m not referring to physical relations, but spending time and even just conversing with the other person. Dating gives us a unique opportunity to find out just how generous or selfish, patient or impatient, kind or mean-spirited we really are, not what we think we are. Dating gives us a right to learn more about ourselves, about guys and girls, about people. It gives us a right to enjoy life from a new perspective. However, like any relationship, there are ways that we can take advantage of and even abuse these rights.

Like any relationship, we should go into dating remembering of course, the golden rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (Luke 6:31, Matthew 7:12) If we go into any relationship asking ourselves “What can I do for this person?” rather than “What can I get from this person?” your relationship will go well, and you will grow as a person. More important than anything else, though, we have to remember that we fully understand a person’s heart, and true love, when we look at the other person as a child of the Most High, a child of God (Psalm 82:6). God has created each of us in His image, which means each of us is special. God loves that person, and we have to try our best to love them the same way He does. When we stop trying to love is when the other person becomes a mere object, and we cease respecting them, and possibly even hurting them deeply. When we acknowledge this, and keep Christ at the center of a dating relationship, or any relationship, we too will be thanking God for this beautiful gift of love He has given us.

Still with me? More next month...

READY, SET, GO

by *Adrienne Roberts, Youth Religious Education Teacher*

It is really great to be back to Sunday School, and such an honor for all of us Sunday School Teachers to get to spend our Sunday mornings with the incredible youth of The Church of the Holy Cross. We are truly blessed.

As you all know, our Church and community were recently even further blessed by being gifted a relic of Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco. This modern-day saint is a wonderworker, whose good works included running a Russian Orthodox parish on Geary Street in San Francisco, and founding an orphanage. His story is beautifully chronicled in the book “Saint John and Goolya”, which you can purchase in our Holy Cross Bookstore, or even just borrow from me if you want. Try asking your kids about this saint, maybe they can show you where his icon is in our Church. This is a prime opportunity to extend your family’s Sunday School experience into your home and daily discussions. As you’ve all learned by now, or maybe not, the new official end time for Sunday School is 12:15. We’re very excited about this change, because it offers our teachers a better framework for planning their lessons, and more fully engaging our children. With the exception of our preschoolers, all students will be escorted to the hall by their Sunday School teachers at 12:15. We ask, urge, beg you not to wait outside the classrooms if at all possible: it is really distracting to all the students, and makes the jobs of our Sunday School teachers all the more difficult. Go up to the hall and enjoy an extra few minutes of peaceful community. Revel in the fact that your kids are safe in their Orthodox Family!



GREEK SCHOOL NEWS

Our learning journey began for the 2009-2010 school year in September with the service of *Agiasmos*. “*Agiasmos*” has an immense significance at all beginning occasions. Our Greek School was extremely honored by the presence of **His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos** for the *Agiasmos* of Koraeos program. Along with **Rev. Fr. Peter Salmas** and **Rev. Fr. Pete Sotiras** blessed the school and encouraged students, teachers and families with words of wisdom.



His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos; Father Peter; Father Pete; Greek School Director Theodora Kounalakis (far right) and members of the Greek School Staff. His Eminence, Father Peter, and Greek School students at the annual Agiasmo



Our program includes classes for children and adults. The program offers instruction at various degrees of exposure to the Greek language, ranging from Greek as a second language to Greek as mother tongue. The adult classes are offered at the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels.

Enrollment for all programs continues to the end of October. For detailed information about our Greek School please look at our website: <http://belmontgreeksschool.com/>

We extend a warm welcome to all the new and returning families, to our returning and especially to our new teachers.

It is our obligation to offer the best to the development of the new generation. We wish them a productive and enjoyable school year!

EVENTS

FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1

The following is the proposed agenda for the next General Assembly meeting. Join us on **Sunday, November 1** immediately following Divine Services. All active members of the Church of the Holy Cross are encouraged to attend.

1. Call to order & Opening Prayer
2. Selection of GA chair
3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting *
4. Pastor's report – Fr. Peter
5. President's report – Jim Smith
6. Treasurer's report – Chris Canellos
7. Committee Reports
 - A. Stewardship – Tanya Eleftheriades & Leo Maheras
 - B. Festival – Gary Brenner & Mark Simon
 - C. Audit – Cathy Zamenes
 - D. Technology – Nick Peros

8. Old Business
9. New Business
 - A. 2010 Budget * – Chris Canellos
 - B. Nomination Committee
 - C. Election Committee
 - D. Selection of Auditors
10. Adjournment & Closing Prayer

* copies will be available in the Narthex

AHEPA PAST PRESIDENT'S LUNCH - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7

by *George Fonti*

Save the date. On **November 7** the AHEPA is hosting a lunch from 11:30 AM-1:30 PM at the Holy Cross to honor **Leo Maheras** as the past president. Menu is a half chicken, rice pilaf, grilled vegetables, green salad with Italian dressing, decaf coffee and vanilla ice cream. All this for \$25 including wine. All are invited to attend. More details to follow.

GODPARENTS BRUNCH - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

by *Kathy Roque*

Remember to make your reservations for our Annual Godparents Brunch which will be held on **Sunday, November 8** after Divine Liturgy in the Gym. A delicious Brunch including French toast, eggs, fruit and more will be served. As a special treat our dance groups will be performing at this event.

Also, all of our dancers, directors and parents are once again hard at work preparing for the Greek Orthodox Folk Dance and Choral Festival which will be held in San Jose over the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend, **January 14-18**. This will be the 34th annual FDF. Typically, this event, which draws over 2,500 young people and their families and friends,

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is held over the Presidents' Day weekend. However, because Pascha in 2010 will fall on **April 4**, FDF will be held approximately one month earlier.

Our adult dance group, *Enomenoi* directed by **Peter Kalafatis** practices on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 PM. *Epitihia* our high school group directed by **Maria and Lia Farantos** practices on Tuesday evenings at 6 PM. *Dynami* directed by **Andreas Najjar and Irene Koulouris** practices on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 PM and *Ta Pedakia* directed by **Gabby and Xandra Nemchik** practice on Tuesday evenings at 6:45 PM.

SERVICES

subject to change - please check your Sunday Bulletins

Sunday Services are (regular schedule) 8:30 AM, Orthros, 10:00 AM, Divine Liturgy; (summer schedule) 8:15 AM, Orthros, 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy; Saturday Vespers are at 5:30 PM

Friday, October 23 – Saint Iakovos - 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, October 24 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, October 25 – 6th Sunday of Luke – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

Monday, October 26 – Saint Demetrios – 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, October 31 – 5:30 PM, Great Vespers

Sunday, November 1 – Cosmas & Damianos – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

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

Sunday, November 8 – Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Michael & Gabriel – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

Monday, November 9 – Saint Nektarios – 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

Friday, November 13 – Saint John Chrysostom - 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

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

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Sunday, November 15 – *Nativity Fast Begins*

Sunday, November 15 – 8th Sunday of Luke – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, November 21 – Entrance of the Theotokos, 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

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

Sunday, November 22 – 9th Sunday of Luke – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, November 25 – Saint Katherine - 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy; *Thanksgiving services TBA*

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

Sunday, November 29 – 13th Sunday of Luke – 8:30 AM, Orthros; 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

Monday, November 30 – Saint Andrew - 8 AM, Orthros; 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

MEETINGS

Please check your Sunday Bulletins for the dates and times of all meetings.

Weekdays - Preschool

Weekdays - Greek School

Mondays - 10 AM, Bible Study

Mondays - 7-8 PM, College Night

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

Tuesdays - evenings, Dance

first Tuesdays of the month - 11 AM, ORA

first Tuesdays of the month - 7 PM, Philoptochos Board

second & fourth Tuesdays - evenings, Hope/JOY

second Tuesday of the month - 7:00 PM, Youth Council

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

Wednesdays, 7 PM - Studies in the Faith

First three Wednesdays of the month - Choir

Thursdays - 7-8:30 PM in The Oaks - BLAST (starting 9/17)

first Thursdays of the month, Daughters of Penelope

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

every other Saturday, after Vespers - Young Professionals

NEWS

THE SPIRIT OF STEWARDSHIP AWARDS

- Tyke and Ella Stamates Honored by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos

by *Eva Canellos*

Congratulations to longtime Holy Cross leaders and parishioners **Tyke and Ella Stamates**, who received a special “Spirit of Stewardship” award from **His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos** at a recent event sponsored by the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco and the Metropolis Philoptochos.

The awards dinner, held at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in San Jose, honored faithful stewards of the Metropolis on the occasion of the feastday of St. Gerasimos. In all, 25 stewards from ten Northern California parishes were recognized for the immeasurable support they provide to their church.

The evening’s entertainment was provided by a youth and young adult choir made up of singers from Holy Cross and St. Nicholas Churches. They sang “Lord of the Powers,” the St. Gerasimos apolytikion, “O Blessed Virgin Mother” and “Our Faith Is Marching On,” a song acknowledging the award recipients sung to the tune of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.”

The program at the awards dinner contained a tribute to each of the honorees, including the following about Holy Cross’ Tyke and Ella:

Constantine “Tyke” and Ella Stamates are true heroes of our parish and exemplify the spirit of stewardship to the highest degree. Tyke and Ella are extremely faithful, loving and hard-working stewards. They hold lead-

ership roles, but they also stuff envelopes, answer phones and clean-up at the church.

This beautiful couple came to our parish in 1966 and got involved immediately. Both are longtime Parish Council members, and Tyke served as President from 1977-1979, when we broke ground on new buildings. Ella served as President of the Philoptochos from 1979-1981 and President of the Parish Council from 1997-1999, and she continues to serve on the council today.

Together, they chaired our Belmont Greek Festival for many years, overseeing its tremendous success and growth. Today, Tyke ensures the grounds are spotless, while Ella oversees vendors and volunteers. Our 2003 Festival was dedicated to them because of their leadership.

Tyke, strong and humorous, works tirelessly as the church's Facilities Manager to see that everything is functioning properly. Ella, always smiling, has sung in the choir since she was a teenager, volunteers in the church office, and works on the Outreach Committee. They have received numerous awards, both from the church (including the prestigious Medal of St. Paul), and also from the civic community. Nothing stops them, and they inspire all of us.

They raised three wonderful children, **Anastacia, Mary and Christian**, and we always know our Godparents Luncheon will be a success when Tyke and Ella arrive with their pack of godchildren!

by Tyke and Ella Stamates

We wish to thank Father Peter and the Church of the Holy Cross Community for selecting us to be honored at the recent Spirit of Stewardship Awards, hosted by **His Eminence Gerasimos**, at Saint Nicholas Church in San Jose. It was truly a lovely evening that we enjoyed along with **Father Peter, Presvytera Nikki, Father Pete and Presvytera Angie** and other friends in the parish as well as in the Metropolis. We saw friends from many, many years ago and enjoyed a delicious dinner in the new hall at Saint Nicholas.

The program included an interlude of beautiful choral music by a choir consisting of young people from the Metropolis led by **Eva Canellos**. *Bravo!* They were delightful! Highlighting the program was the

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The Stamates' receive a special award from Metropolitan Gerasimos at the recent Spirit of Stewardship Awards Dinner.

Youth and young adults from Holy Cross and St. Nicholas Churches sang beautifully at the Dinner. Front row, from left: Ghythe Haddad, Niko Manetas, Christian Canellos. Back row, from left: Analysa Thomas, Saba Gebremedhin, Gabby Nemchik, Xandra Nemchik.



presentation of the awards. A plaque replicating the invitation was presented by **His Eminence** to each awardee and pictures were taken to memorialize the event. (We also want to add that the program moved swiftly and we were home by 10:30 PM that evening. That is awesome!) We certainly hold a very dear and humble memory in our hearts of the great meaning behind this award and also realize that the work of the church is ongoing and never finished in our lives because of our love of God. Deepest appreciation to everyone for this great honor.

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS INFORMATION WE ALL NEED TO KNOW

Each and every baptized Orthodox Christian must make some effort of active commitment to his or her Church. Some serve by participating in the Choir; some do so by joining the Philoptochos Ladies Society; others assist whenever the Parish sponsors a community activity; and others participate in the life of the Church by serving as members of the Parish Council.

Being a member of the Parish Council is truly a responsible task that must be served by an individual committed to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The role of a Parish Council member is a holy and spiritual one. In assisting in the administrative responsibilities of the Church, a Parish Council member acknowledges the importance of strengthening the earthly ministry through God's Church. Being a member of the Parish Council should not be for social reasons or status in the Community; but rather an act of humility and conviction to Christ our Lord.

In accordance with the 2005 Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, all candidates wishing to serve on the Parish Council must attend a PARISH COUNCIL SEMINAR organized by the current Parish Council and under the guidance of the Parish Priest. The purpose of the Seminar is to prepare candidates for the Parish Council, as well as making them aware of the sacred responsibilities expected of a Council member.

This year's PARISH COUNCIL SEMINARS will be scheduled and announced in the **November** Sunday Bulletins (available in church or

on-line at our website). As in previous years, two meeting times will be scheduled (we will meet at 7:00 PM in the Contos Library) but ALL potential Parish Council members, **INCLUDING THOSE SEEKING RE-ELECTION, MUST ATTEND** one of the two seminars.

In order to be placed on the ballot, one must complete the PETITION FOR CANDIDACY form and return it to the Church Office before **Wednesday, December 9**, at 7:00 PM. If a petition has not been turned in by the ascribed date and time, the person will be ineligible to run for the Parish Council. These forms will be available in the Narthex in **November**, and online (see the link on the home page). Elections are **Sunday, December 13** following Liturgy.



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.

Also, check your mailboxes for NEW Stewardship
packets for 2010 - coming soon!

ALL Holy Cross parishioners
are invited to our

Annual Godparents' Brunch

as we honor our *GODPARENTS*
for their love and guidance.



Sunday,
November 8, 2009
following
Divine Liturgy
in the Fellowship Hall!



- - - Proceeds to benefit our Youth Programs - - -

Make reservations TODAY following Liturgy,
or call Kathy Roque at 650-571-6876,
or the church office at 650-591-4447.