



ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HERALD



245 VALENCIA STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103 • 415 864-8000 • FAX 415 431-5860 • WWW.ANNUNCIATION.ORG

DECEMBER 2019



His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and
the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos
joyfully invite you to attend
Light the Path
a Christmas Luncheon in support of the
**BISHOP ANTHONY PHILOPTOCHOS
STUDENT AID ENDOWMENT FUND**

11:00 am
Saturday, November 23, 2019
Saint Paul's Greek Orthodox Church
Irvine, California

Saturday, December 7, 2019
Annunciation Cathedral
San Francisco, California

\$75 per person

Call: 415.431.2600 • email: office@sfphiloptochos.org • visit: www.sfphiloptochos.org

*"Your word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."
Psalm 119:105*



Light the Path Luncheon, December 7

One of the most important annual events in our Metropolis is the Light the Path Luncheon. Sponsored by a local chapter each year, this is usually a sell-out event. One event is held in northern California, while another is held in southern California. The northern California event this year will be coordinated by our own Annunciation Cathedral Philoptochos. Our multipurpose hall will be transformed into a winter destination, complete with Christmas trees and holiday trimmings. You won't want to miss this. The date is Saturday, December 7, beginning at 11 am for a reception and followed by lunch and the program. As the event raises money for the Bishop Anthony and Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund (the only fund of its kind in the entire Archdiocese), the event is a must attend occasion. The Fund helps defray the cost of educating our future priests, at Hellenic College

and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, in Brookline, Massachusetts (our only seminary). Jan Petrou, our Philoptochos President, looks forward to a record attendance at this year's event on December 7. The donation is \$75 per person and reservations may be had by calling 415 431-2600 or office@sfphiloptochos.org. You may also visit www.sfphiloptochos.org. Meanwhile, Jeannie Ranglas, President of our Metropolis Philoptochos Board, writes:

"Greetings to all in this new ecclesiastical year! I hope this message finds you well and enjoying God's blessings in your life. In our continued support of the Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund, it is my joy and honor to invite you to join me for LIGHT THE PATH, Saturday, December 7, 2019 at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 245 Valencia Street, San Francisco, beginning at 11

see page 2

from page 1

a.m. The Metropolis of San Francisco is proud to be the only Metropolis, at present, that supports our Seminarians and Students in a tangible way through the Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment fund. Our mission is to significantly decrease the debt of those Seminarians and Students within our Metropolis upon graduation. It is a privilege to serve and invest in the future of our church! Thank you for your continued generosity, steadfast prayers, and love. I hope you will join me for this beautiful afternoon of joyous celebration to welcome the holiday season and support this worthwhile ministry."



***Ecumenical Patriarch:
"It is unacceptable that
representatives of religions appear
as preachers of fanaticism"***

*Message from His All-Holiness at the
International Conference on Religious Diplomacy
held in Athens November 11*

"Peace between religions is a fundamental prerequisite for peace between peoples and cultures," the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew pointed out in his recorded message to the International Conference on Religious Diplomacy, on the topic "Religion in the Modern World: Challenges and Prospects for Dialogue and Peace," co-organized by "Foreign Affairs: The Hellenic Edition" magazine and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens that began Monday, November 11, in Athens.

In his message, His All-Holiness pointed out, among other things, that "religions must develop their peacekeeping function more effectively," and reiterate that 'violence and war in the name of religion and God is violence and war against religion and God.' Religions must cease to give welcome arguments to the opponents of faith and to those who seek to identify religion with its negative aspects. It is unacceptable for representatives of religions to appear as preachers of fanaticism, to ignite the flame of hatred, and casually allow religion be used by unscrupulous people for dissimilar, non-peaceful purposes."

His All-Holiness reiterates that "in view of the outbursts of religious fundamentalism, of brutal violence, the destruction of religious monuments, the impending or even ongoing 'clash of civilizations,' persecution of religious minorities, and the widespread violation of religious freedom, the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, 2016) condemned these morbid expressions of religiosity and praised the importance of interfaith dialogue and its contribution to peace."

"It has been rightly said that 'the Gordian knot' of peace is not untied by the sword of Alexander the Great. Peace is an eternal challenge and a task that is never fulfilled, it is never guaranteed forever, and it requires constant struggle. We are 'destined' to struggle and suffer for peace. After all, Our Modesty praises and supports any sincere initiative for peace, and continuously strives for the dialogue of religions and for the strengthening of their contribution towards reconciliation and solidarity," said the Patriarch.

Following is the full text of the Message of the Ecumenical Patriarch to the International Conference on Religious Diplomacy on "Religion in the Modern World: Challenges and Prospects for Dialogue and Peace":

The Honorable Mr. Lukas G. Katsonis, Editor-in-Chief of Foreign Affairs Magazine: The Hellenic Edition, beloved in the Lord son of Our Modesty, may the grace, peace and blessing of God be with you.

We have experienced for the last decade a reassessment of the role of religion in the lives of individuals and in society. Religion is dynamically returning to the forefront, appearing to be an important factor in the present and future of mankind. No analysis of the present situation is complete unless there is a reference to the influence of religion. In this

*Vespers Troparion, Tone 6:
Thou has shone forth from a
Virgin, O Christ, Thou spiritual
Sun of Righteousness. And a
star showed Thee whom nothing
can contain, contained within
a cave. Thou hast led Magi
to worship Thee, and joining
them we magnify Thee: O
Giver of life, glory to Thee.*

discussion, four important functions of religion are highlighted: the first has to do with the meaning of human life. Religion gives vital answers to our deep existential problems and a steady orientation to human existence. Secondly, religion provides identity to peoples and cultures. Therefore, those who know the religion of the other have access to the characteristics of his or her culture. Thirdly, the most important cultural achievements of man, his highest and most important intellectual and artistic works, are related to religion. The fourth function of religion relates to its contribution to peace. Peace between religions is a fundamental prerequisite for peace between people and civilization.

Regarding the last point, which is your conference theme, there has been criticism of religion over the fact that it does not seem to be working effectively against violence in the name of God.

In view of the explosion of religious fundamentalism, of brutal violence, the destruction of religious monuments, the impending or even ongoing 'clash of civilizations,' persecution of religious minorities, and the widespread violation of religious freedom, a Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, 2016) condemned these morbid expressions of religiosity and praised the importance of interfaith dialogue and its contribution to peace. In the Encyclical of the Council, the following points are noted: "Today We are experiencing today an increase of violence in the name of God. The explosions of fundamentalism within religious communities threaten to create the view that fundamentalism belongs to the essence of the phenomenon of religion. The truth, however, is that fundamentalism, as "zeal not based on knowledge" (Rom 10.2), constitutes an expression of morbid religiosity. A true Christian, following the example of the crucified Lord, sacrifices himself and does not sacrifice others, and for this reason is the most stringent critic of fundamentalism of whatever provenance. Honest interfaith dialogue contributes to the development of mutual trust and to the promotion of peace and reconciliation." (§ 17).

And we also emphasize that religions must develop their peacekeeping function more effectively, and reiterate that "violence and war in the name of religion and God is violence and war against religion and God." Religions must cease to give welcome arguments to the opponents of faith and to those who seek to identify religion with its negative aspects. It is unacceptable for representatives of religions to appear as preachers of fanaticism, to ignite the flame of hatred and and casually allow religion to be used by unscrupulous people for dissimilar, non-peaceful, purposes." Never in the history of mankind has peace been an inexplicable condition, but it has always been the result of inspired initiatives, of bravery and self-sacrifice, of the righteousness of men and women. In our day, many expect that the end of the "Cold War," the rise of the standard of living, the advancement of science and technology, the information society and global literacy will contribute significantly. But there are new initiatives, cultural conflicts, religious fun-

*Vespers Tropario (by Anatolios):
What shall we offer Thee, O Christ,
who for our sakes hast appeared
on earth as a man? Every creature
made by Thee offers Thee thanks.
The angels offer Thee a hymn. The
heavens a star. The magi, gifts.
The shepherds, their wonder. The
earth, its cave. The wilderness,
the manger. And we offer Thee
a Virgin Mother, O pre-eternal
God, have mercy upon us.*

damentalism, the struggle for the preservation of popular representation, terrorism, the arms industry and a variety of other economic interests, social problems and injustice, operating today in the context of new violent conflicts and the restriction of freedom and human rights.

It has been rightly said that "the Gordian knot of peace is not untied by the sword of Alexander the Great. Peace is an eternal challenge and a task that is never fulfilled, it is never guaranteed forever, and it requires constant struggle. We are 'destined' to struggle and suffer for peace." After all, Our Modesty praises and supports any sincere initiative for peace, and continuously strives for the dialogue of religions and for the strengthening of their contribution to reconciliation and solidarity.

The Orthodox Church emphasized and emphasizes the connection of peace with justice. Concern for peace means the creation of a society of justice and freedom, for the protection of human rights. Fundamental justice in peace is the highest universal good, the true cause, the "bearer of the good," for human beings, for people, for mankind. The Church must promote the philanthropic traditions and values of the Orthodox tradition, to contribute to the edification of a peaceful human being, who will see in the person of a fellow human being his brother, and not someone who threatens his life and freedom, not "hell."

With these thoughts, congratulations to the organizers and other contributors to this international conference, with its impressive theme, and wishing you success in all things, we convey to the eloquent speakers and other delegates and other participants, our Patriarchal blessing and we beseech for you the grace and mercy of the God of peace, justice and love.

November 4, 2019.



Stewardship 2020

As we've often said, Stewardship defines our Orthodox Christian way of life. It begins by recognizing that everything is given to us by God. God gives us not only our life and our material possessions, but God also gives Himself. For, God give us His Son. Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. Our response to God, then, is giving back. Giving back everything. Our life, in the form of discipleship. And those gifts with which God has endowed us: our Time, our Talents, and our Treasure. In this way, we make known to others the goodness which we have been shown. In this way, we invite others to join us in our way of life. As we all share in the greatest of all gifts—eternal life. The Church is the vehicle God has given us which unites all of us in relationship to God. The fullness of this relationship is made known to us in the Divine Liturgy. This is why it is so important for us to support the work of the Church. The Church is at the same time universal and, at the same time, local. We relate to the universal Church through our local Church. Which is why it is vital that we support our parish. And, so, the call for your 2020 Stewardship support has gone out. A brochure has gone out. Together with a Stewardship pledge card and a return envelope. And, being the faithful people that you are, you have begun responding. In the first 10 days of our Stewardship campaign, we heard from 43 of you. That's about 10% of the total numbers of stewards we're counting on for the year 2020. And that's great! It speaks volumes about your commitment to the Annunciation Cathedral. It says a lot about your faith. May God bless you for it.

A couple of practical things, though. While we received 43 responses in the first 10 days, not all of you signed a pledge card. A few of you simply wrote a check. And we thank you. In this case, we wrote out a card for you so that we have a card file for our stewards as well as an electronic file in Quick Books (the accounting program we use to track stewardship). In a couple of cases, we received cards with just your name and "same as last year." Well and good, EXCEPT for when you are asking us to charge your credit card. We cannot charge your credit card without your expressed signed authorization. And, so, we are asking you. When you submit your stewardship, please do so by filling out your stewardship pledge card. If you are asking us to charge your credit card, please provide the credit card number, the expiration date of the card, and please be sure to sign your card. So, thank you for your kind cooperation, as we endeavor to better serve you.



December 3: Final Fire Inspection for Garage

December 3 is the anniversary of Father Stephen's ordination to the Priesthood. He was ordained on December 3, 1972, 47 years ago. This year, the Final Fire Inspection for our garage has been scheduled for December 3rd. The hold up all this time, as far as we can understand, has to do with the fact that some of the electrical work in the garage had not been completed. In San Francisco, when the fire inspection takes place, the electrical permit must also be signed off. As this issue of the Herald went to press, we learned that the requisite electrical permit has been satisfactorily completed, and that the final fire inspection has been scheduled for December 3rd. Assuming the inspector grants approval, the next step is to obtain the approval of the local police department, a pro forma process, as we see it. This means that, within about a month, our garage should be up and running. We've stated previously how the garage will be run. Golden State Parking has been approved as the operator, under our conditional use permit. They will operate it, initially, under a 6-month trial contract. Based on our experience, that is, utilization of the garage, we will negotiate a longer-term contract. Meanwhile, the final gates will be installed the beginning part of December, along with the base granite, as well as the lobby doors. Meanwhile, the lobbies and the stairs leading to and from the garage have been carpeted. And, later on in the month, the elevator will be inspected, thus completing the clear path of travel requirements. And our garage will be up and running. Thank you, Lord. At long last!

*Thy Nativity, O Christ
our God, has shone upon
the world with the light of
knowledge. For, thereby,
they who adored the stars*



Philoptochos 2019 Christmas Party December 12

As one can readily see, Philoptochos is very active. In addition to our regularly scheduled meetings and philanthropic endeavors, our Chapter has been entrusted to host this year's Light the Path Luncheon to benefit the Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund. This is a most important event, and we are confident that you will be supportive by buying a ticket and being present on December 7. Then, as you can see, we are baking our Vasilopita breads just before Christmas and making them available to you for your Vasilopita celebration at home as well as for our community Vasilopita, which will be celebrated at a special coffee hour on January 5, the Eve of Epiphany, which falls on a Sunday this year. And, of course, our Crab Feed, which will take place on Friday, January 24, 2020.

Meanwhile, we will hold a Philoptochos Christmas party on Thursday, December 12 (St. Spyridon's Day), at OREXI, located at 243 West Portal Avenue, San Francisco, 12:30 pm until 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$65.00 per person and includes Appetizers: House made Spreads and Greek Salad; Entrees: Choice of Chicken, Salmon, or Meatless Moussaka; and Dessert: Galaktoboureko, Baklava, Yiaourti me Meli; and Coffee. Beer and wine are sold separately. For reservations, see or call Kathy Dermitzakis 1 650 580-8325 or Joanne Glafkides, 1 650 697-0244.

through a star were taught to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, Glory to Thee.

Community Christmas Card

For as long as we can remember, Annette Chiappari of blessed memory, Kalliope Fousekis and Annamarie Balian set up a table during coffee hour and took your name(s) for the community Christmas card (the card that is sent to some 1,000 households, bearing your greetings for Christmas and the New Year. Just two months ago, Annette was called home to be with the Lord. Kalliope Fousekis and Annamarie Balian, meanwhile, will continue to receive your names. The Christmas card table will set up during the month of November, through the first Sunday in December. Please do stop by. To help defray the cost of printing and mailing the card, we ask you for a modest donation of \$25 per line. We're certain you will want to be included as we greet one another with the great news of the Birth of Christ!



Ring in the New Year and order our delicious, Traditional Vasilopita!

Order by Sunday, December 22, 2019
 Pick-up: Saturday, December 28th
 (from 10am-12pm only) and
 Sunday, December 29th after Divine Liturgy
 (until 1:30 pm)

\$20.00 Each

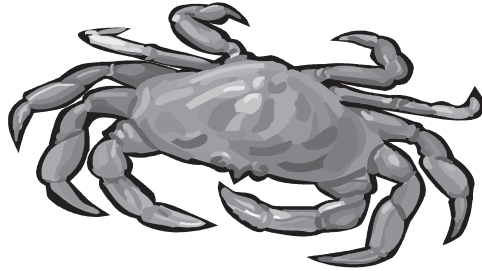
Order forms can be picked up in the Narthex
 Note: Vasilopita Coffee Hour, hosted by Philoptochos, will take place on Sunday, January 5, 2020, immediately following the Divine Liturgy and the Blessing of the Waters.

The Annunciation Cathedral
Ladies Philoptochos presents its...

Annual Crab Feed

Friday, January 24, 2020

Cocktail Reception: 6:00 p.m. - Dinner: 7:00 p.m.



\$60.00 per person

RSVP by January 15, 2020

Reservations will only be secured by receipt of payment

Valet Parking or
Parking lot available at:
344 14th Street, S. F., 94103

✂-----✂

Print Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

\$60.00 x _____ number of guests: \$ _____

\$600.00 x _____ number of tables: \$ _____

Check Enclosed for Total Amount of: \$ _____

Maximum 10 people per table

Please print name of each person on the back of this form

Mail completed reservation form and check payable to Annunciation Philoptochos to:
Annunciation Cathedral, Attn: Crab Feed, 245 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94103

For additional Information and Reservations

Call 415.864.8000 or email Sophia Makras at annunciation2020crabfeed@gmail.com



Archbishop Elpidophoros of America to Visit Annunciation Cathedral

As announced, we learned that our new Archbishop of America, His Eminence Elpidophoros (shown above on the left) will visit San Francisco and will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral on Sunday, January 26.

We will hold a luncheon following the Liturgy, welcoming His Eminence, 30 years since the earthquake, which compelled us to rebuild the Cathedral and its ancillary facilities. The Archbishop's visit will be a historic marker in the history of our community, as it will focus national attention on our community and its future, especially as we about to celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2021. During the luncheon, Annunciation's award-winning dance groups will present a brief preview of their 2020 FDF performances. In order to be able to accommodate the luncheon, the Divine Liturgy on the 26th of January will begin at 10 a.m. sharp (rather than at 10:30 a.m.). Invitations are being mailed out, along with a reply card.

In order to properly prepare for the luncheon, reservations are required. We will not be able to accommodate walk-ins. We would suggest that, as soon as you receive your invitation, you complete and return it so that your seating is guaranteed. As stated, seating will be open. To ensure that you are seated with your parea, we would encourage you to purchase a table of ten and then try to fill it. We anticipate a lot of people will want to be present. We will take reservations until January 19 or until the room capacity is reached, whichever comes first.



Pangari Schedule

Serving on the pangari is a privilege, not only for Parish Council members, but for anyone who would like to be a part of the team of those who extend welcome to our services, especially for those who are visiting us from out of town and also people new to the community. The following teams, created so as to match up with their respective children, who will be serving in the altar on those days, consists of Parish Council members. Duties include the passing of the collection plate(s) and the seating of guests.

Team #1

Deno Konstantinidis
Philippos Athanasiades
Christopher Kyriacou
Dean Nicolacakis

Team #2 (Second Sunday Please)

Paul Sogotis
George Ambus
Mike Sarikakis

Team #3

Nicholas Rally
Nicholas Svetcoff
John Lampros

Team #4

Manoli Nuris
Peter Cazanis
George Gavros



*His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos
of San Francisco*

and

*The Annunciation Cathedral
Cordially Invite You*

To

A Luncheon in honor of

His Eminence Archbishop ELPIDOPHOROS
of America

Sunday, January 26, 2020

Following the Divine Liturgy

Korinthias Hall • 245 Valencia Street • San Francisco

\$30 per person • \$15 (18 years and under)

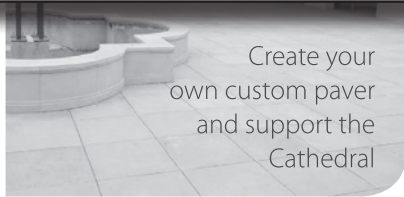
During the Luncheon, four of the Cathedral's dance groups
will present a preview of their 2020 FDF performances.

Please note: The Divine Liturgy on
January 26, 2020 will begin at 10:00 a.m.,
preceded by Orthros at 9:00 a.m.

We estimate the luncheon will begin at 12:30 p.m.

Adopt a Paver

It's quite simple. For a gift of \$2,000.00 to the Building Fund, parishioners and friends of the Cathedral may have their name(s) inscribed in one of the courtyard pavers. The pavers will accommodate up to 25 letters per line (including spaces and commas). Up to 3 lines may be inscribed. No logos. Initially, 750 pavers will be available for this purpose, all located in the courtyard. As this issue went to press, we had 71 pavers "adopted." We began inscribing on September 14. Unfortunately, the color used is too pale. The inscriptions will be recolored when the company comes out to inscribe the next group of pavers. Please refer to the graphics below for additional information on how you, too, may "adopt" a paver.



The Annunciation Cathedral is excited to announce the "Adopt a Paver" program.

Show your support and love for the Annunciation Cathedral Building Program by having your name and message permanently inscribed onto the paver and become a unique and historical presence on the Cathedral grounds.

Inscribed pavers will be permanently placed throughout the main courtyard of the Cathedral for all to see from generation to generation. This wonderful once-in-a-lifetime treasure will celebrate your family's legacy, remember loved ones, or simply show your support for the new Cathedral when you reserve your custom engraved paver today.



A one-time tax-deductible donation of \$2,000 per paver.

PAVERS WILL NOT BE INSCRIBED UNTIL FULL DONATION IS RECEIVED.

THE LOCATION OF YOUR PAVES WILL BE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED. THE INITIAL 750 PAVES WILL BE PLACED IN THE CATHEDRAL COURTYARD, AND WILL BE INSCRIBED FROM THE WEST FACING EAST.

Logos may be added to your paver for an additional cost. Ask for details.

ALL PAVES MESSAGES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE CATHEDRAL.

Join our community's collective voice:

I, _____
 want to Support our **Annunciation Cathedral Building Program** by "Adopting an Annunciation Paver". Contribution will be added to my Annunciation Cathedral Building Program Pledge Contribution, for tax purposes.

By check for \$2,000 or By 2 checks for \$1,000 each
 Payable to "Annunciation Cathedral Building Program"

By \$2,000 credit card charge

Name on credit card _____

Card: Amex Visa Mastercard

Acct # _____

Valid thru Date ____/____/____ Security Code _____

Write your message below. PRINT each letter separately and legibly. Spaces are counted as one (1) character. There are up to 25 characters per line totaling 75 total characters. Please refer to the sample below for additional direction. The print will be in capital letters.

SAMPLE

				T	H	E		P	A	P	P	A	S		F	A	M	I	L	I						
J	O	H	N	,	E	L	E	N	I	,	T	O	M	,	C	A	R	O	L	,	B	O	B			
W	E			L	O	V	E			T	H	E		A	N	N	U	N	C	I	A	T	I	O	N	

I confirm that the above PRINTED letters and spaces are correct.

Signature _____

Date _____

Please complete the above form and make your checks payable to:

Annunciation Cathedral

245 Valencia St. ♦ San Francisco, CA 94103

Or make your payment online at "Adopt a Paver":
www.annunciation.org/the-new-cathedral/donations

PAVER DETAILS

750

2 FT. X 2 FT.

PAVERS WILL BE PLACED IN THE CATHEDRAL COURTYARD.

You may inscribe up to 3 lines of text with 25 letters or spaces per line. Each paver will be block text engraving in dove gray.



Celebrating our 100th at the Fabulous Fairmont: Save the Date: Sunday, October 10, 2021

Look closely at the above photograph. It was taken nearly 100 years ago, in the grand ballroom of San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel. It was taken on May 17, 1921. That day was a Tuesday. The purpose of the banquet was to celebrate the creation of the Cathedral. Two days later, on May 19, 1921 this was formalized at a meeting of community leaders, under the presidency of Archbishop Meletios Metaxakis. He had been the Archbishop of Athens, but was removed from office by the Greek monarch as a result of a dispute between him and Eleftherios Venizelos. Metaxakis came to the United States and gathered Greeks who shared his views; together, they created four dioceses: San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, and New York. The minutes of the first meeting in San Francisco, dated May 19, state: "The community of San Francisco has been designated to become the Seat for the Diocese of the Western States. It is for this reason that the Church to be established has been given the name Cathedral, as it comprises the center of spiritual worship for the surrounding parishes. ...the establishment was necessitated by...the fact that the City of San Francisco has 5-6 thousand Greeks... for the time being, two Churches in San Francisco are not a lot..." In addition to the banquet shown above, two other banquets were held at the Fairmont the same year. One was

held on April 21; the other was held September 22. The first was held to welcome the Archbishop; the second was held to bid him farewell, as he left San Francisco. After establishing the remaining Dioceses (actually, two dioceses and the Archdiocese), in November of that year he was named Ecumenical Patriarch. Venizelos became the Prime Minister of Greece.

In thinking through our 100th anniversary celebratory banquet, the committee thought it a no-brainer, to return to the place where we were first established, the fabulous Fairmont! The exact date in 2021 is Sunday, October 10, 2021. As it is a Sunday, a 5 pm reception is being planned, followed by dinner at 6 p.m. We must say, we were fortunate to find this date, as other dates were considered but the hotel was fully booked. Meanwhile, the committee, comprised of those who returned their reply forms stating how they would like to be involved, as well as other members of the community, will sit down to plan the details, not only of the banquet, but of other events which will be held in 2021 to mark our 100th anniversary. To celebrate what we've accomplished as a community these last 100 years, yes. But also, and more importantly, to rejoice at what God has in store for us for the next 100 years, and beyond!



Christmas is All About Christ

It seems obvious, doesn't it: there is no Christmas without Christ. Yet, as we busy ourselves this month, buying gifts, attending "holiday" parties, tallying up our income and expenses for the year so as to prepare for the ensuing tax year, let's pause and give thought to the reality around us, the reality we are called to address, as people of faith. On the one hand, we have had another bout of wildfires, to the point where some commentators are telling us "this is the new reality; get used to it." Homelessness is another. It's a glaring reminder of human suffering and of the growing disparity between the haves and the have nots. The most recent year for which we have statistics, 2018, indicates California alone had 129,972 homeless people (up 11,000 from 2017). Of these, 89,543 people were unsheltered (again, about 11,000 more than in 2017)! As there is no sign of an abatement of natural disasters, like fires, or of social disasters, like shootings, there is no sign of an abatement of homelessness. Indeed, it has been characterized as an epidemic of our time. Sadness, worthlessness, hopelessness—these things describe a growing number of the population, affecting those with means as well as those without. God knows the human condition and, at just the right time, some 2,000 years ago, gave us a Savior. He sent us His Son—Jesus Christ—to give us hope and joy, to renew in us a sense of worth and of joy. We know of no more powerful message than this, a message addressed to the human family in our time and for all time. There is hope. Eternal hope, the kind portrayed in the film entitled "Same Kind of Different as Me," based on a true story, which portrays how one individual's dream can make a difference in the lives of so many.

Echoing the timelessness of this message of joy and of hope, the Church provides us with a visual of the significance of the event of the birth of Christ. The visual is an icon. An icon is not a photograph, but a reflection, gleaned from Scripture and from the Tradition of the Church. Let us look at the icon. Notice all the craggy hills, as a background. The background is an inhospitable world, the world as it has been since the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. In the center is Mary, the Bearer of God (this is what the term "Theotokos" means). She is central, resting in a cave, and Jesus, as a baby, is portrayed lying in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. These represent the submission of Christ to various strictures governing the human race. The earth, as the appropriate hymn puts it, provides the cave. The animals watch in wonder. The manger is not only the feeding trough for the animals; it looks ahead to the grave which will contain him, wrapped in a burial shroud. Notice the star overhead. It guided the Magi to the cave, but it also represents the light from heaven, pointing to Christ as the Savior. As stated in the Christmas troparion, by the star, "those who worshiped the stars [the Magi] were taught to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You as the East [whence the sun rises] but on high." The women at the bottom are midwives, indicating that Jesus came into the world as any child would, "born of a woman," (Galatians 4:4). Now, look closely at Mary. She looks at Joseph as if trying to overcome his doubts and temptations, represented by the old man speaking to Joseph. Meanwhile, the truth comes from the Virgin. Although she is not the most important figure in the icon, she the most dominant. She is, after all, the new Ark of the Covenant, the vehicle through which God enters human history, in the flesh. The angels, meanwhile, are glorifying God, announcing the Good News to the shepherds.

The icon is meant to lift us up. To have hope and to believe. To dispel doubt and fear. To see that our journey is, in the end, not about ourselves. It is about reaching out to others, despite the challenges, to reach out especially to others who suffer, to those who have given up hope. Christians are invited, especially at Christmas, to put Christ back into Christmas, to proclaim the message: Χριστός γεννάται, δοξάσατε! Christ is born: give glory! If we don't do it, who will?

Ἀπολυτίκον τῶν Χριστουγέννων:

*Ἡ γέννησίς σου, Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ἀνέτειλε τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ φῶς
τὸ τῆς γνώσεως. Ἐν αὐτῇ γὰρ οἱ τοῖς ἄστροις λατρεύοντες ὑπὸ
ἀστέρος ἐδιδάσκοντο, σὲ προσκυνεῖν τὸν Ἥλιον τῆς Δικαιοσύνης,
καὶ σὲ γινύωσκειν ἐξ ὕψους ἀνατολήν. Κύριε, δόξα σοι.*



Technology Corner: (Once Again) Gone Phishing

As noted in last month's issue, Father Stephen's e mail, www.annunciation.org was compromised by recipients receiving a request, ostensibly from him (but with a different reply e mail), asking for things like gift cards. Something similar occurred by people using Father Stephen's cell phone (which is available when you call the Cathedral and receive a message, after hours, in the event of an emergency. We checked with both the phone service provider and also with our tech support and learned this kind of activity, called "phishing" is becoming increasingly common. Even if the e mail address is changed and the cell phone number is changed, those malevolent individuals who use these means to defraud others can easily obtain the new information. Father Stephen sent out the following message to the Cathedral's parishioners and friends, also posted to our web site: <https://www.annunciation.org/38-latest-news/350-featured-4>, as to how to best handle the situation in the event they receive bogus e mails or texts:

Dear parishioners and friends of the Cathedral,
*I recently learned of a fraudulent e-mail from an individual, posing as myself, asking the recipient to purchase gift cards. If you receive or have received such an email, please flag the e-mail as spam and DO NOT respond. It has never been the Annunciation Cathedral's policy to solicit funds, for any reason, through e-mails. For reference, my valid e-mail address is fatherstephen@annunciation.org - please do not reply to any other address that appears to have originated from me. The kind of **phishing** displayed here, unfortunately, is not uncommon in today's world. The Cathedral regrets any inconvenience and wishes you a blessed day.*

Introduction to Orthodoxy

Introduction to Orthodoxy" Class Welcomes New Members to the Faith

The new Annunciation cathedral recalls the beauty and majesty of other churches more than a millennium old, such as Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Those who have been fortunate enough to witness its construction know that, like those older churches, it is being built to last, and one can imagine it serving the needs of the faithful, God willing, centuries from now. The building is an impressive, outward sign of our community's conscious outreach to the city and the world. By building a sanctuary for God, we are simultaneously expressing a gesture of welcome to all future generations of Orthodox Christians.

Some of them will be born into our families, while others will marry into the faith. Still others will come to us simply because they are astounded by the beauty of our worship, the richness of our theological traditions, and our special emphasis on the mystery of our intimate encounter with God. Whether future parishioners are drawn into the fold by love for its members, for their resilient, ancient faith, or by a mixture of the two, we must continue to be prepared to accommodate incoming Orthodox Christians of every background.

The Cathedral's "Introduction to Orthodoxy" class aims to facilitate the spiritual journey of those considering joining our Church. We prepare adult inquirers for their baptisms and chrismations, and we explore the richness of our faith through discussion of Holy Scripture, the theology of the Church Fathers, and the lives of the Saints. The goal of the course is to provide people with acculturation in the Church prior to their becoming full members in it.

The class meets two times a month. The meetings take place in the Cathedral's conference room, locate on the second floor, adjacent the elevator. The times are 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Classes will take place on Sunday, December 8 and on Sunday, December 15.



Dementia Caregiver Support Group News

Our Dementia Caregiver Support Group has been growing in numbers. This means it addresses a need. The need for caregivers to receive support in caring for their loved ones. As the general population is aging, and as we are living longer and longer, we are all subject to the impact of cognitive issues. The Cathedral is pleased to partner with and host the Alzheimer's Association monthly support group meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 11am-12:30pm. The group meets in the Cathedral's conference room, which is located on the second floor, to right of the elevator. We invite your attendance, as you encounter loved ones affected by memory loss. Meet others who are going through exactly what you are going through. There is no cost to attend, and the support you receive is not only helpful; it can also be life-changing. The October meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 3. For more information, please contact Heather Gray, Family Program Manager, at 1.800.272.3900 or email her at hgray1@alz.org.

Parish Council Elections December 15

Our Parish Council, as defined by the Archdiocese Uniform Parish Regulations and our own Parish By-Laws, consists of the Dean and 15 elected lay members. We meet once a month, typically on the third Sunday of the month, and, together, administer the affairs of the parish, including finances, construction, and management, including technology, equipment, and personnel. Elections are held once a year for one-half of the Parish Council, for 7 members one year and 8 members the next. This year, 8 members will be elected, to a two-year term. We are always looking for dedicated church people who wish to offer their services and expertise. One requirement is that those who wish to run for Parish Council are members in good standing with the Church. This means, among other things, that they are Stewards of the parish for at least one year prior to the elections. Also, those who have not served on the Parish Council before will also attend a seminar offered by our Dean. If you are interested in running for Parish Council, please contact Father Stephen, fatherstephen@annunciation.org. As this issue went to press, we had four candidates running: Anastasios (Tasso) Mavroudis, Thomas Nuris, Paul Sogotis and Nicholas Svetcoff. Meanwhile, a Parish Assembly was scheduled for November 24. It is likely some additional candidates will emerge there. What happens in the event we have fewer candidates than there are openings? Elections will still be held and those candidates will automatically be voted (assuming they've received at least one vote). Then, when the Parish Council meets in January to elect its officers, it will also appoint from among the parishioners in good standing, the number of candidates needed to fill any vacancies.

The Lord said unto Me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee (Psalm 2:7)

The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool (Psalm 109:1)

The Lord shall send Thee a rod of strength out of Zion (Psalm 109:2)



Community Kitchen

The Cathedral's Community Kitchen, which began under the name "Soup Kitchen," operates the third Tuesday of every month. The volunteer work involves food prep, cooking, hall setup, serving the meal and---so important---cleanup. We also have a food pantry, so a few awesome volunteers come early to bag up canned/non-perishable goods for our guests to take with them. Some volunteers arrive earlier, but the typical timeframe is 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Shown above are just some of our Young Adults, who spearhead the Community Kitchen ministry. Won't you join them? Following each Community Kitchen, after cleanup, the Young Adults gather in the second-floor conference room for wine and cheese. They get to know one another better. They welcome new members. They address topical issues. And, of course, they plan for the following month's Community Kitchen. Following this month's Community Kitchen, a regrouping meeting will take place, followed by the usual wine and cheese get-together.

Our guests count on us to provide them with a hot meal, and fellowship. May we, in turn, count on you? It is a commit-

ment; it does take a few hours of your time. But, think about how much good you can do for others by showing up and volunteering for a couple of hours.

Meanwhile, Community Kitchen enjoys the support of our Ladies Philoptochos. Our women's organization has taken on Community Kitchen as part of its local mission, underwriting the monthly Food Bank bills and additional purchased food products, as well as paper goods--table cloths, plates, plastic ware, cups, napkins, storage containers, baggies, foil, etc. In addition, Philoptochos recruits volunteers to assist the kitchen staff. Community Kitchen recently received a grant from A&T. We are grateful for the support, as it is another encouraging affirmation of the good work that is being done to combat hunger, isolation and, indirectly, homelessness.

In December Community Kitchen will take place on Tuesday, December 17, 5:30 p.m. for set up and 6:30 p.m. for serving. We look forward to your participation.



Cool dudes! Taken at the November 16th Elios Charity Ball. Shown, left to right, are: Panayioti Sogotis, Christo Pappademos, Yianni Sogotis, and Stelios Kyriacou.



Youth Developments on the Horizon

JOY: A wonderful ministry throughout our Archdiocese is Junior Orthodox Youth or, JOY. This program is for kids from 6th to 8th grade and is designed to bring them together to prepare them for GOYA one day. This middle school-aged group will come together for fun social activities, simple service projects, and of course helpful faith-based lessons.

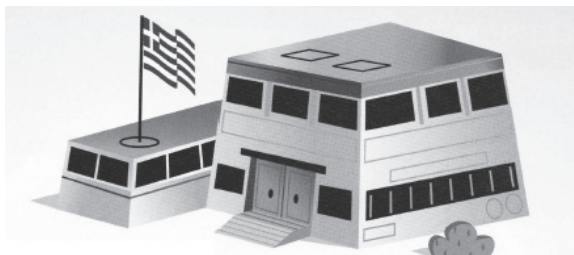
We have a healthy group of middle school children here at the Cathedral and it would be wonderful to bring them together to form our own JOY. JOY can instill in kids from a young age a sense of belonging in a community that will hopefully stay with them throughout their high school and college years.

Middle school parents be on the lookout for an email from Christo to schedule a parents gathering/meeting to glean your input regarding a JOY program here at the Cathedral. Christo is excited to hear from you!

GOYA: Christo recently returned from southern California where he was asked to lead a brief workshop on the theme of “Loving Your Neighbor” for high school kids. This event was a very positive experience that resulted in many new friendships and connections for the kids involved. So now Christo would love to replicate this workshop in northern California at the Cathedral! This half-day retreat/workshop will be for our GOYA kids and we will be inviting GOYA kids from all over the Bay Area to join us with the intent of connecting with new friends under the setting of the Church.

Be on the lookout for a date sometime in mid-January for this event! We will begin with a meal, then move on to several social activities, followed by a faith-based discussion, and a fun wrap-up!

Young Adults: We have a very healthy group of Young Adults who come regularly for our Community Kitchen every month. The Young Adults come together for service, and now we would like them to come together for fellowship! Christo will be planning various casual social activities designed to give our Young Adults the opportunity to come together and enjoy παρέα with each other!



σχολεί-ο, το σχολείο, ένα σχολείο,
το μεγάλο σχολείο, το σχολείο μου

Greek School News

Greek school is well underway and students of all ages are learning Greek! We are currently practicing for our Christmas celebration which will be held on Saturday, December 14. Our performance will include reciting Christmas themed poems and singing traditional carols, Τα παραδοσιακά Κάλαντα Χριστουγέννων and Τα Κάλαντα της Πρωτοχρονιάς

We offer three different classes, all taught on Saturday mornings:

- Greek language for children
- Performing arts class for children which includes culture and language
- Greek language for adults



Dance Group News

Our dance groups have begun intensive practices, in preparation for our participation at the Folk Dance Festival, and in anticipation of the visit of Archbishop Elpidoforos a few weeks earlier, namely on January 26. We recognize that being in church all day on Sunday is a bit challenging, especially our younger participants, but we must stress, once again, that dancers of all ages are encouraged to attend Sunday School on Sundays. (Please refer to the special letter from Father Stephen that was recently distributed to all youth groups—dance, Sunday School, Greek School, basketball, GOYA, and JOY.) Those registered to serve in the altar as acolytes are invited to serve in the altar and also attend Sunday School, in accordance with the schedule found elsewhere in this *Herald*. Meanwhile, should you wish information about our program, we invite you to contact Lea Lyberopoulos at karthia808@yahoo.com. Our groups, as presently composed, are as follows:

To Mellon: Pre-K-1st grade
Directed by Irene Kyriacou and Katerina Sarikakis

Revmata: 2nd-5th grade
Directed by Katerina Sarikakis, Trina Misthos and Eleni Taptelis

Thisavri: 5th-8th grade in
Directed by Irene Kyriacou, Lea Lyberopoulos, and Lea Papavasiliou

Spithes: 9th -12th grade
Directed by Irene Kyriacou, Lea Lyberopoulos, and Lea Papavasiliou

Atithasi: Young Adults
This group is in the process of being activated,, so that it may participate in FDF during President’s Day Weekend in 2020.

Sunday School News

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder. His name shall be called the Angel of Great Counsel, for I shall bring peace upon the rulers, peace and health by Him. Great shall be His government, and of His peace there is no end. His peace shall be upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order and establish it with righteousness and judgement, from that time forward and unto ages of ages. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this." Isaiah 9:5-6, Orthodox Study Bible

Every December we remember the birth of the one whom this prophesy was written nearly 700 years before the birth of Christ. As part of Sunday School's tradition of remembering our Savior's birth with all the children of the parish, we perform the Christmas Pagent. This year the Pagent will be on December 22nd, right after Liturgy. In preparation for the Pagent, all regular Sunday School classes are cancelled and all Sunday School students meet for rehearsal in the Kytherian Room during Sunday School, 10:30-11:30, this will be on December 8th, 15th, and 22nd.



We still need parent volunteers to help with the luncheon to follow after the Pagent. We need parents to prepare the hall before the luncheon, to cook the meal for the luncheon, and to clean up afterwards. We also need a volunteer to help with shepherding the students through rehearsals to maintain focus.

Thank you so much for your service to this program! It is not possible to put on the Pagent & Luncheon every year without the help of the Horio (the village)!



How does one become an Orthodox Christian? The answer is, through Baptism and Chrismation. People (including children and adults) who have never been baptized (or not baptized in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) are received through Baptism. This is followed by the administration of Chrismation. On the other hand, those who have been previously baptized in, for example, the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, or Methodist churches are received, after study and preparation, by confession of Faith and the administration of Chrismation. Their baptism is recognized κατ'οικονομίαν (utilizing the principle of economia). They are typically not re-baptized. Shown above is Tyler (Iakovos), professing the Faith on November 3, prior to the administration of Chrismation.

Serving in the Altar

Serving in the altar is a wonderful way for our young people to participate in the worship of our church, and learn more about our faith. For the present school year, we are very pleased to announce the altar leaders program! This year, three of the older altar servers have taken on the responsibility of coordinating the groups during services each week. We hope to add several more to their ranks in the coming years!

If any families are interested in their boys joining an altar group, who are above the age of 10, feel free to contact Father Stephen at fatherstephen@annunciation.org or Christo Pappademos, Pastoral Assistant, at Christo.pappademos@annunciation.org. Thank you also to Nektarios McKnight for guiding and instructing our altar servers each Sunday. As always, if anyone has any questions or suggestions, feel free to let us know. Thanks!



Our altar schedule for December is as follows:

December 1	-	Group 1
December 8	-	Group 2
December 15	-	Group 3
December 22	-	Group 4
December 25	-	All Groups
December 29	-	Group 1

Our altar groups are as follow:

Group 1- Stelios Kyriacou, Kosta Lyberopoulos, Andrew Vellis, George Tsokas, Victor Nicolacakis, Justin Perez, Christian Kleinekorte

Group 2- Christopher Apostolos Percia, Panagiotis Sogotis, Yianni Sogotis, Steven Monolakis, Matheos Zarou, Andonis Ambus

Group 3- Steven Chiappari, Gianni Kefalas, Nicholas Shatara, Michael Kamenis, Vlasis Kyriacou, Thanos Kyriacou, Nathanael Shatara (Micahel Kamenis, Group Leader)

Group 4- Nathan Tesfai, Bobby Kontonis, Hari Manetas, Alexander Kasolas, Matthew Nuris (Jonas Tesfai- Group Leader)

Don't see your name here? Would you like to join us? We would like you to. Report for altar duty any Sunday morning, prior to 10:30 a.m., and Nektarios will make the appropriate arrangements. Meanwhile, it is also imperative that you attend Sunday School. Ecclesiarch Nektarios notes: We have two Permanent Leaders in the Altar, and they are Nathan Tesfai and Michalis Kamenis. We anticipate a maximum of six additional servers in the Altar; any more than six will need to attend Sunday School. Altar servers are required to be vested and ready to serve by 10:30 a.m. Late comers will need to attend Sunday School if they cannot arrive early enough to serve.

Interested in forming a group of girl altar servers, beyond the Myrrh Bearer's (Angels) program that we have during Holy Week and Pascha? Please contact Evangelia Raptis-Zarou, erz.raptiszarou@gmail.com

Sacraments and services

Chrismation

Tyler James, son of James Donehoo Wilson and Pamela Ange Wilson, was received into the Orthodox Church through the Sacrament of Chrismation on November 3. He was given the name James (Iakovos), by his Sponsor, Alexia Marinos Bender.

Na mas zisoun! Long life!

Funeral

Koula (Kyriaki) Meletis, who fell asleep in the Lord on October 18, was buried October 24. She is survived by her sister, Madeline Spona, and nephew George Fonti

Aionia I Mnimi! Eternal Memory!

D E C E M B E R C A L E N D A R

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Orthros 9 am Liturgy 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Dance Practice 12:30 pm		Dementia Support Group 11 am	Church Basketball 7 pm	Church Basketball 7 pm	St. Nicholas, Liturgy at St. Nicholas, 5200 Diamond Heights Blvd., SF, 10 am	Greek School, 10:30 am Light the Path Luncheon
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Orthros 9 am Liturgy 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Dance Practice 12:30 pm Philoptochos 12:30 pm			Church Basketball 7 pm	Church Basketball 7 pm		Greek School, 10:30 am GOYA Event
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Orthros 9 am Liturgy 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Dance Practice 12:30 pm Parish Council 12:30 pm Parish Council Elections			Church Basketball 7 pm	Church Basketball 7 pm		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Orthros 9 am Liturgy 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Dance Practice 12:30 pm		Christmas Eve: Great Hours 9 am; Vesperal Liturgy 10 am	Christmas: Orthros 9 am; Divine Liturgy 10:15 am		Vasilopita Bake 9 am	
29	30	31				
Orthros 9 am Liturgy 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Dance Practice 12:30 pm						

UNITED GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO, THE ANNUNCIATION
ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL
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"Lord, bless the founders and benefactors of Your Church." (From the Divine Liturgy. Though we have far to go before we complete the interior and consecrated it to the glory of God, look at what you, the Annunciation Cathedral parishioners and friends of the Cathedral, have accomplished: a magnificent complex, right in the heart of the City, all built as the result of the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. The Cathedral is emerging as the visible manifestation of our Greek Orthodox Faith. Let us prove worthy of this Faith, by continuing to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and by continuing to do good works by helping one another. This is what we mean by "commending one another and our whole life to Christ our God," as we intone in the Divine Liturgy.

