



ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HERALD



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

SEPTEMBER 2020

Cathedral Parishioner and Philoptochos Member on the Front Lines



Katherine Curd is a member of the Philoptochos and grew up at Annunciation Cathedral. She is the daughter of John and Vivian Curd and the granddaughter of Andy and Effie Vellis. Katherine is a Firefighter/Paramedic with the San Bruno Fire Department. The Philoptochos is establishing a fund to aid first responders battling the California fires and victims affected by the fire's destruction. We asked Katherine how the various city firefighters respond to these large fires. – See her response on page 2.

Building Update

*interior door
installation is
in process!*

See page 7



"In California, 'Wildfire Season' had been a temporary, predictable pattern of wildland fires in the state that first responders prepared for. Presently, those fires no longer have a designated season and occur year-round, sporadically and without warning. These fires are particularly challenging because they can change at a moment's notice from wind, lightning, humidity, and terrain. Firefighters need to be especially vigilant due to the unpredictable nature of these fires. When these fires occur, State and Federal Firefighters call upon local firefighters to assist. Groups of firefighters known as "Strike Teams" travel together to a specific area and work anywhere from 14 to 21 days. In the beginning stages of these fires, firefighters will work 24-48 hours straight with no relief. While the strike team firefighters are away from their own department, their fellow firefighters back home fill in for their open shifts, also working days at a time. Despite the long hours, firefighters are always willing and ready for all emergencies that may arise."

We are so proud of Katherine for her dedication of helping save lives and property with the work she does. Axia!

Presbytera Rita Zoe Theophilos falls asleep in the Lord

Presbytera Rita, as many of us remember, was the wife of our Dean, the Very Reverend Theophilos P. Theophilos, who served the Cathedral from 1971 until 1987. Rita Zoe Theophilos was born in New York, New York on May 31, 1925. She was the first born of Greek immigrants, Emanuel and Stella Geotas who came from Thessaloniki and Larissa



respectively. In her early years, while attending Elementary and High School, Zoe worked in her father's Electronics Repair shop where she learned to repair radios, TV's, toasters and the like, finding she had a knack (something she passed on to her four children) for analyzing a problem and then implementing a means of solving the problem.

Zoe was very active in her neighborhood Greek Orthodox church, St. Spyridon located in the Washington Heights district of New York City. Zoe participated in youth events and later guided those younger than her. She even established a young women's group called "Rita's Racketeer Association"

(the RRA). Those that participated in the group remember it fondly. It was there, at St. Spyridon, that she met the man she would soon marry, Theophilos P. Theophilos. Theo had recently graduated from the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. As both were involved in the parish's youth activities, she a parishioner and he the youth coordinator, they found that they had many things in common and soon Father Theo was seen walking Zoe home after youth events. Zoe and Theo were married at St. Spyridon in a ceremony involving the entire parish on September 24th, 1944, with over 20 clergymen in attendance. To say that their marriage was blessed and fated for a long and happy life together would be an understatement. Theo was later ordained a Deacon at Holy Trinity Church in his home parish in Montreal, Quebec by the late Patriarch, Athenagoras, who at the time was the Archbishop of North and South America. Father served at St. Spyridon Church in NY for the next five years. Zoe and Theo's first two children, Panagiota (Peggy) and Panagioti (Peter) were born in New York City during that time. While Father Theophilos served at St. Spyridon, Zoe, still very active in the parish, also raised her first two children and it was not uncommon to see her climbing the stairs to their 5th floor apartment with two young children in tow while she brought up groceries just purchased for the family's meals.

In 1949 Father Theophilos was transferred to Saint Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church in Canton, Ohio. He served there for 8 years. Zoe was very active in the parish as Presvytera as a Sunday School Teacher and leader for other adult and youth groups. All this while raising four young children, Peg, Peter, Ioanna and Constantine (Dean) who were born in Canton during this time. In 1957 Father Theo was transferred to his home parish, Holy Trinity, in Montreal, Quebec Canada.

In 1966 the family moved to Los Angeles where Father Theophilos was appointed Dean of the Saint Sophia Cathedral. Then in 1971, the family moved to San Francisco, where Father and Presvytera shepherded the flock at the Annunciation Cathedral. Zoe, as she had been at St. Spyridon, St. Haralambos, Holy Trinity and St. Sophia, was very active in this community. Kids would beg to be in her Sunday School class. During her years as Presvytera, with no more than a high school education, she served and excelled as a family, marriage and grievance counselor. Like her knack for things electric, Zoe had a knack for comforting and guiding people. She was a remarkable woman. In 1987, the family moved to Palm Desert., California where they served the St. George community until Father retired in 1990. From that point forward, until Father Theophilos passed, the couple spent their retirement years in Palm Desert. After Father Theophilos passed, Zoe moved to Temecula, California where she (insisting she have her independence) lived in a modest two-bedroom house. At 95 she was sharp as a tack, with a quick wit that astonished those expecting a lady of her advanced years to be frail. She was instead bril-

liant. She could match wits with people half her age and 10 times her education all the while crocheting (the thing in her later years she loved the most) transforming skeins of yarn into intricate, multi-colored patterns that came out as beautiful blankets, shawls and the like. Her blankets are treasured items by those lucky enough to have had one made for them.

Like a cowboy who dies with his boots on, Zoe died with her crocheting needle in hand. Zoe fell asleep in the Lord on August 17, 2020. She will, by many, many people, be sorely missed. Zoe is survived by her four children, 9 grandchildren and, at last count, 16 great grandchildren with one more on the way. May her memory be eternal!



Archbishop Elpidophoros Shares Concern about our Devastating California Fires

August 25, 2020
via e-mail

The Recovery of the Holy Relics of the Holy Apostle Bartholomew

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and
The Faithful of the Metropolis of San Francisco

Your Eminence, Beloved Brother in the Lord and
Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am writing to you from the Sacred Center of our Faith, the Phanar, where I have been keeping His All-Holiness and the entire Patriarchal Court abreast of the horrendous fires sweeping through California. In the midst of the pandemic, we have yet one more disaster to overcome. I want you all to know that the prayers of all the faithful here and across the Archdiocese are being lifted up to the Throne of God on

your behalf, that you may be kept safe and sound from the devastation that surrounds you.

The sheer number and size of the blazes across the state, which now exceed the size of the State of Delaware, are cause for great anxiety and concern. This is why now, in the moments when we are feeling most afraid and vulnerable, we implore Almighty God and His Holy Mother on behalf of you all, and on behalf of the brave firefighters who are risking their very lives to protect their fellow citizens. Indeed, I write to you on a most auspicious day, when we celebrate the Recovery of the Holy Relics of the Apostle Bartholomew, the heavenly patron of our Ecumenical Patriarch. Those Relics survived the storms of the sea to arrive safely upon the shores of the Island of Lipari, traveling an incredibly great distance.

We pray for your strength and resilience during these difficult days, and that through the intercessions of Saint Bartholomew, the Apostle, the waters that bore his earthly remains to the safe harbor of veneration may be assumed into the skies over California, and rained down upon you to cool the flames and bring healing to the land.

*With many prayers and love in our Lord Jesus Christ,
Archbishop Elpidophoros of America*



Businesses Supporting the Cathedral

In addition to our committed stewards who support the church, there are also a number of supportive business that make substantial financial contributions to our Cathedral. One of these businesses is the Greek Orthodox Memorial Park in Colma, CA. Over the years, the Cathedral and the Memorial Park have a shared a longtime relationship and have a great deal of history together. The Cathedral would like to highlight the Greek Orthodox Memorial Park in acknowledgement of the wonderful support they continue to show us. If your business would like to support the Cathedral as well, please contact us and let us know!

TIME • TALENT • TREASURE



Stewardship

A WAY OF LIVING

Join our Stewardship Committee!
The Cathedral is renewing its Stewardship emphasis and efforts in an Orthodox Christian context, inspired by the questions:

Why are you here on this earth?
What is the purpose of your life?

These are perhaps two of the most difficult questions you will ask yourself during your life. St. Paul wrote several letters to the Ephesians focused on the same questions. And Mark Twain once famously quipped: "The two most important days of your life are first, the day you were born; and second, the day you figure out why."

So, how can you go about finding your "WHY?" when it comes to Stewardship? We invite you to tune into Ancient Faith Radio on Wednesday, September 2, beginning at 5:00 p.m. The link is <https://www.ancientfaith.com/radio/live>. This segment will feature two amazing Millennials, Alyssa and Niko Kyritsis. They will join Bill Marianes in discussing how they answered the call to serve Christ and His Church. We also invite you to become involved with your church by joining our Stewardship Committee, especially as we plan our 2021 Stewardship Campaign. Please contact Christo Pappademos at Christo.pappademos@annunciation.org.

*We venerate Thy
Cross, O Master, and
we glorify Thy holy
Resurrection. –Tone Six*



OUR 2019 AD BOOK WAS A SMASHING SUCCESS!

Physically Distant; Spiritually Connected: 2020 Adbook

No Festival (in real time), but Our Award-winning Ad Book will keep us all Connected

Even though we will not be able to hold our Food Festival in September, we will, nevertheless, be publishing an Ad Book, which is a big hit year after year, in addition to its being a major source of funding for the Cathedral's ministries. Entitled *Physically Distant; Spiritually Connected*, the book is being printed in this, our 99th year as a community, which we are also celebrating. In addition to your ads and sponsorship pages, the book will also contain a **directory of the parishioners and friends of the Cathedral**. We invite you to be creative: instead of the usual "best wishes for a successful festival," consider a photo or two of your being sheltered in place during this COVID-19 pandemic, along with a narrative of how you're coping, how you continue to maintain your connections with one another. Contracts will be coming to you by mail in, with a deadline of September 15. You may also complete and return the form (Facing page). As for payment, you may pay by check, credit card (noting the information on the form), or on line: list www.annunciation.org: Support Annunciation Cathedral. As the Cathedral has been especially hard hit economically, due to COVID-19, in the absence of a festival, your support, by placing an ad in the book, will help keep us afloat, financially, for the duration of 2020. Equally importantly, it will keep us connected. For the time being, we may be physically distant, but we continue, as a community, to remain spiritually connected!

Errata

We note two typos in the article entitled Hagia Sophia Reverts to a Mosque..., which appeared in last month's Herald: "ime" should be "time" and "Hagia Sopha" should be "Hagia Sophia." In addition, the date listed on the last page as the year the Rus visited was inadvertently listed as 1988 AD. It should be 988 AD.



PHYSICALLY DISTANT; SPIRITUALLY CONNECTED. CELEBRATING OUR 99TH YEAR!

Recreating the
fellowship of
our festival via
this year's
ad book!

**DEADLINE
SEPT. 15, 2020**

PROGRAM BOOK CONTRACT

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Inside Front Cover (7 1/2" x 10 1/2") \$2,250 Quarter Page (3 1/4" x 4 1/4") \$150

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Please Use Layout from Last Year

Please Use Supplied Camera-ready Art

Please Write your Ad, Message or Memorial in this area, or send your Artwork to email:
Adbook@annunciation.org (PDF file preferred & submit only JPEG file for photos)

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Philoptochos News

Greetings to you all as we prepare for the upcoming Ecclesiastical year, which begins September 1,

In light of what our world is facing right now, I extend my deepest heartfelt wishes as we begin our ecclesiastical year. I pray that this Worldwide Pandemic has a purpose. Maybe it makes us all kinder to one another and to our Mother Earth. Maybe we can replace our fear with hope, our division and judgment with love. Hopefully, we all grow in a way that makes us more tolerable of one another and willing to stand up and speak for our principles we believe in.

As Eastern Greek Orthodox Christians, we are blessed to have our faith lead us through this turmoil. As Philoptochos women, we are determined to fulfill our mission:

"help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, those with disabilities and the victims of disasters"

With this mission intact, I assure you that our Philoptochos Members of the San Francisco Annunciation Cathedral are ready and eager to help those in need.

May our continued work be blessed by the Lord.

Let us stay connected to one another in faith and love. Until we meet again!

With love in Christ's name,

Janis Petrou

Email: Philoptochos@yahoo.org

Text/phone: Janis Petrou (603.997.6677)

It Pays To Give!

The Parish Council recently raised the issue of some changes to the tax code which appear to have a favorable effect on charitable giving. On behalf of the Council, Tom Nuris reached out to Nick Tarlson of Tarlson Associates, CPA (Nick is also the Cathedral's Choir Director) and asked him to put something together addressing these changes, for the benefit of the Cathedral's parishioners and friends. Here is Nick's response:

There are several charitable giving strategies you should keep in mind, especially these days, when the Cathedral needs your support more than ever due to the COVID-19 closure.

The most recent Cares Act made a couple of changes which might benefit you:

The new "Universal" deduction allows a charitable deduction for up to \$300 per individual "above-the-line," even if you don't itemize your deductions.

If you itemize, you can deduct qualified charitable contributions up to 100 percent of your adjusted gross income. Before and after the Cares Act (for the year 2020 only), contributions are limited to 60 percent of adjusted gross income.

For corporations, the deduction is increased from 10 to 25 percent of taxable income, again, only for 2020 at this point.

There is another planning opportunity which was available before the Cares Act, but merits renewed consideration if you are over age 70-1/2 and required to take a minimum distribution ("RMD") from your retirement funds. If you are required to take an RMD, you can make a qualified charitable contribution to the Cathedral directly from your retirement account, and pay no tax on the distribution. If you already took an RMD for 2020, you can pay it back under the Cares Act, and then make the distribution to the Cathedral, avoiding tax on the distribution.

If you have any questions regarding these or other tax issues, feel free to contact Nick Tarlson at Tarlson & Associates 415-956-5700 or nick@tarlson.com Text/phone: Janis Petrou (603.997.6677)

Brethren, the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.

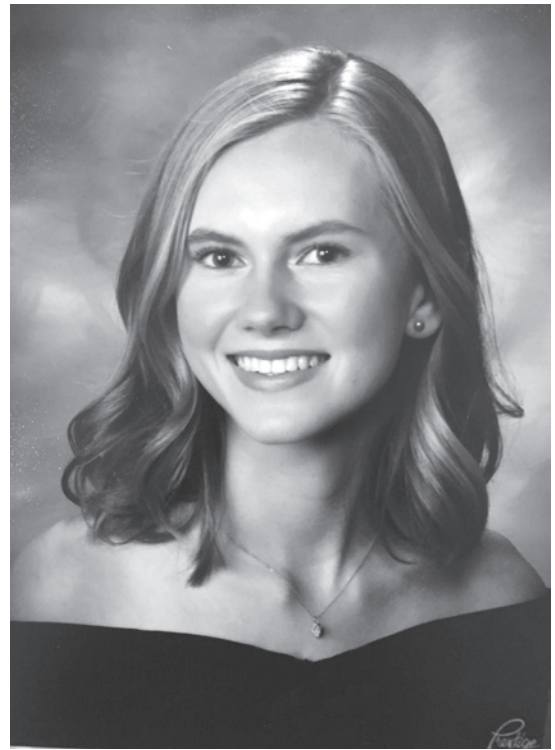
—St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, 1:18



The interior door installation is in process

Building Update

During our time apart, amidst pandemic restrictions, there is still a significant amount of work happening here at the Cathedral. The gate installation is nearing completion. Then, as soon as the gates are done, CalStone will be back on site to finish their paver work, including the grouting. The interior door installation is in process right now as seen in the photograph below. Once these projects are completed, we can then get the elevator up and running. We've tentatively scheduled a final elevator inspection for the end of September. This will enable us to open our garage, generating a source of revenue for the Cathedral. Immediately following, we will schedule the inscribing of the remaining courtyard pavers. We are pleased to report that some 100 pavers have been "adopted" to date.



Cathedral Awards Andreas and Nikki Coundouris Scholarship to Maria Morearty

In addition to the scholarships awarded by the Ladies Philoptochos, reported in the August Herald, the Cathedral announces the awarding of the Andreas and Nikki Coundouris Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 to Maria Morearty! Maria is a very involved young member of our Cathedral. She is active in Greek dance, GOYA, Sunday School, and is a willing volunteer for our Community Kitchen and other events at the church.

Maria will be attending the University of San Diego and studying in the field of Business Administration. Below are a few words from Maria from her scholarship application:

"Over the past four years that I have attended the Annunciation, I have been completely welcomed into the community, and in return I aim to serve the community.

My most prominent community service interests throughout high school are helping the less fortunate in San Francisco and raising awareness about environmental concerns. I have volunteered at the Annunciation's soup kitchens and Holy Trinity's food pantry to give food to the less fortunate. At my high school, I joined the environmental club and helped to organize film festivals to raise awareness about environmental concerns."

Bravo Maria! The Cathedral sends its support and best wishes to you as you begin this new chapter in your life!



Photo provided by John Mindala and used with permission.

The Church at Home

While our physical church is an irreplaceable place of importance to all of us, the “first church,” as taught by the early Church Fathers, is actually the home. For it is in the home where we show and teach our children the importance of a Faith-based life. We were pleased to hear from a parent here at the Annunciation about some of the spiritual discussions that have been taking place in their own home following the stream of the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. We invite you to read this parent’s experience of spiritual discussion at home:

“I’d like to share with you our post-Liturgy family discussion last Sunday.

My son, had problems with church in his early life. Thank God he overcame that. One thing that I always did, to help expose him to the Word of God in a pleasant way, was to take him to the side after church, sit him on my knee, and tell him the “Gospel story”. The “Gospel story” is what I called the Gospel lesson for the day so that it would be more palatable for my son. I would paraphrase it in a way that was comfortable for him to accept, and now, he seems pretty familiar with the teachings of the church. Last Sunday’s Gospel story was introduced with the concept of dogma. Without being 100% sure of our church’s stance on the Dormition, I told the kids that the Dormition is not dogma. Although we believe that St. Mary is with God and prays for us, I don’t see the belief in that as a criterion for salvation. What is more important is the focus on God and His teaching. I am particularly troubled when people argue more over where Mary fell asleep as opposed to what roll she plays in our lives. This brings me to my next paragraph: What is St. Mary to us, and what is she to God? I believe Mary to be the greatest of all saints not just because she was the first to

enter heaven, not just because Christ came into this world through her, but because her love for the Lord is synergistically coupled with her love for her Son. As we all know, a mother’s love for her son is especially strong. Christ clearly stressed the importance of His two commandments, and St. Mary’s love for God was augmented by the love for her Son, and her love for God augmented her love for the world. No other saint shares the power of her motherly love. If one somehow did, he or she would be a great saint too. I can’t see how anyone who claims to love Jesus can escape the necessity of loving and venerating St. Mary.

However, I cannot bring myself to believe that “no man shall come to God except he be truly illumined through her”. Isn’t that Jesus’ roll? “By her prayers ‘delivers our souls from death’” is a rather strong statement. Wouldn’t her prayers help deliver our souls from death? I’ve wrestled with these thoughts for a long time, as I would think about them especially during Holy Week services where strong statement such as these are made regarding St. Mary. I don’t consider myself that educated in the Bible and the teachings of the church, but sometimes I have trouble finding a connection between some teachings regarding the saints and the Gospel stories that I listened to over the years in Liturgy. May God bless you and your ministry!”

We responded to our parishioner’s e mail, first, by commending the family for their approach in dealing with their children’s questions, and, secondly, by offering some thoughts in answer to their own questions. A part of our response is as follows:

As we began reading your e mail (for which we thank you), we thought, “this is precisely the kind of thing we should be discussing in church school (i.e. Sunday School).” In fact, it’s

so well articulated, it should appear in the Herald, as well. You are spot on about Mary. For not being a theologian, you ARE a theologian. At the heart of not making her assumption a dogma is the Church's reluctance to impose belief for salvation what doesn't have anything to do with the saving act of God, i.e. the incarnation, the death and resurrection of our Lord, and which is not biblically supported. As you know, much of the teaching about Mary comes to us from extra-Biblical sources, as the Protevangelium of James. So, how is it, then, that phrases as "truly illumined through her" come into play? As we indicated in our brief reflection, this comes to us from St. Gregory Palamas who, we must remember, was not writing a theological treatise but, rather, a homily. He was stressing Mary's being venerated as "the greatest of saints." The bottom line is that she is the epitome of devotion, as you suggested. We should seek to be like her. On the other hand, she mediates. She is the intercessor par excellence. Recall the first miracle. Jesus was not disposed to change the water into wine, though he knew well that they had run out of wine. He did it, however, at Mary's request. There's a fine line here, which is at the basis of the Orthodox Church's refusal to do what Pius XII did. Mary, in the end, is fully human. She may hold a special place in salvation history, as being the Mother of our Lord and, as such, loving unconditionally. But, she belongs to creation. Even she needed to be saved by her son. Which is why we reject the teaching of her so-called immaculate conception. By not rushing to dogmatize everything (recall the western inculturation in things Aristotelian versus the eastern inculturation in things Platonic), the Eastern Church has handled this more sagaciously.

May God continue to bless you and your family.

Inscribing the invincible weapon of the Cross upon the waters, Moses marked a straight line before him with his staff and divided the Red Sea, opening a path for Israel, who went over dryshod. Then he marked a second line across the waters and united them in one, overwhelming the chariots of Pharaoh. Therefore, let us sing to Christ our God, for He has been glorified.

– Katavasies, Tone Eight

O three-branched Cross of Christ, thou art my strong protection. Sanctify me by thy might, that I may venerate and glorify thee in faith and in love.

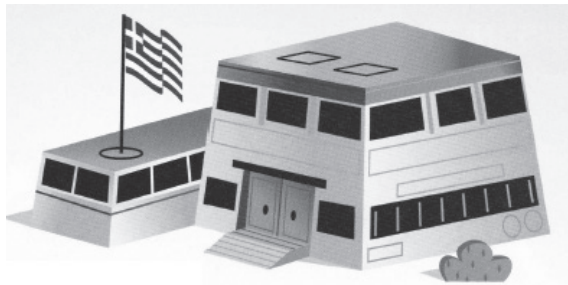
–By Emperor Leo, Tone Two



Christo Participates in OCN Interview

Last month, Father Christopher Metropulos, Director of Orthodox Christian Network and former President of Holy Cross Theological School and Seminary, invited Christo to appear on his "Let's Talk Live" Program. Christo appeared along with Yianni Magoulias, Pastoral Assistant at Annunciation Sacramento to speak about the topic of "Youth Ministry in a Pandemic". Father Christopher, Christo, and Yianni engaged in an hour long discussion about the challenges, importance, and positives of Youth Ministry during the current pandemic. What transpired was a very enlightening exchange about best practices and an optimistic hope for the future of our churches as we move through and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you would like to view the recording of this episode of OCN's "Let's Talk Live", please visit our Cathedral website at www.annunciation.org and you will find the interview posted in "Christo's Corner" under "Christo's Web Links" or you can also visit the following address: <https://myocn.net/youth-ministry-in-a-pandemic/>



σχολείο, το σχολείο, ένα σχολείο,
το μεγάλο σχολείο, το σχολείο μου

Greek School News

The 2020-2021 school year starts on Saturday, September 12, 2020. What's unique about this year is that we will be holding classes online just like we did in the spring, until further notice.

We are pleased to have most of our students returning from last year and have also welcomed a few more additions to our school. Greek school offers language classes to both children and adults of all ages.

Our curriculum includes materials from the Pappalozos publications (Geia Xara), Klik and the Archdiocese publications (Ta Ellinika Mou). Starting this year, we are also offering an online platform for most of the levels. The online platform, Ellinopoula, <http://www.ellinopoula.com>, received a gold award from the Education Leaders Awards as the best Greek online platform for kids! We are so excited to introduce an additional resource for learning Greek!

Below is the school year calendar.

If you are interested in learning Greek, check out our page on the Annunciation's website, www.annunciation.org

*O Lord, save Thy people
and bless Thine inheritance
grant Orthodox Christians
victory over their enemies;
guard Thy commonwealth
with Thy Cross.*

– Apolytikion of the Feast, Tone One

GREEK SCHOOL CALENDAR 2020 - 2021

These are the dates that Greek school will be closed:

November 28th - closed for Thanksgiving

December 26th - closed for Christmas vacation

January 2nd - closed for Christmas vacation

February 13th – closed for President's day

May 1st - closed for Greek Easter

May 29th - closed for Memorial Day

Important Celebration Dates:

- December 19th – Christmas Celebration

- March 20th – Greek Independence Day

*First day of Greek school is September 12, 2020

*Last day of Greek school is June 5, 2021

*The rod of Aaron is an image of
this mystery, for when it budded
it showed who should be priest.
So, in the Church, that once was
barren, the wood of the Cross has
now put forth flower, filling her
with strength and steadfastness.*

–Katavasies, Tone Eight



Announcing:

Virtual Sunday School!

This year for Sunday School is also looking to be like no other, as we look to conduct our enrollment process and instructional program online. We are also taking into consideration what our classes will look like when it is safe to resume “in person” at church.

If you would like to enroll your child in Virtual Sunday School please visit:

<https://annunciation.org/ministries/sunday-school>

The Sunday School will be setting up the following structure for online classes according to grade level groups:

Prior to Sunday, Sunday School Teachers will email a copy or link to the readings which are to take place during Liturgy. They will also email a link to join a video meeting via Google Meet. Students will tune-in to Liturgy via the YouTube Channel until after Christo’s weekly sermon.

At 11AM, students will join their Google Meet, and engage in discussions with their classmates and teacher regarding Christo’s sermons, what lessons they learned, and how they can apply those to their life. Each meeting will be 30 minutes.

Some teachers may choose to distribute additional materials via Google Web Sites or through emails.

Sunday School will resume on September 13th, the Sunday after Labor Day weekend.

CONDOLENCES

*The Cathedral extends
condolences to:*

*Tessa Ambus and her family,
on the recent falling asleep
in the Lord of her mother,
Melpomeni Koutsoukis.*

*Robert Balian and his family, on
the recent falling asleep in the
Lord of his mother, Betty Balian.*

*The Theophilos family, upon
the recent falling asleep of
Presbytera Rita Zoe Theophilos.*

*Αιώνια η μνήμη!
Eternal memory!*

*Σῶσον, Κύριε, τὸν λαὸν
σου κα' εὐλόγησον τὴν
κληρονομίαν σου, νίκας
τοῖς βασιλεῦσι κατὰ
βαρβάρων δωρούμενος
καὶ τὸ σὸν φυλάττων
διὰ τοῦ Σταυροῦ
σου πολίτευμα.*

*– Ἀπολυτίκιον τῆς Ἑορτῆς
τῆς Παγκοσμίου Ὑψώσεως
τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ*



Shown above is an icon representing the Elevation of the Holy Cross. To the left are Saints Constantine and Helen, Equal to the Apostles. In the center, the Patriarch of Jerusalem is depicted and, to the right, the faithful witnessing this miraculous event. According to Orthodox Church teachings, **Saint Helen**, the mother of Emperor **Constantine the Great**, discovered the **Holy Cross** on September 14, 325 AD in the vicinity of **Golgotha** (the place of Christ's crucifixion), where it lay buried in the dust of the centuries. On the spot where the Cross was discovered, there was also found a hitherto unknown flower of rare beauty and fragrance, which has been named **Vasiliko (Basil)**, meaning the flower of royalty, out of respect for the Dowager Queen who led the expedition. For the next three hundred years, the Cross stayed in the possession of the Christians in **Jerusalem**, but the city was captured by the **Persians** in 614 AD and the Cross fell into their hands. It was later recovered by the forces of the Eastern Roman Empire (or **Byzantine Empire**) and restored. September 14 is a major feast day of our Church. The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Monday the 14th and streamed, beginning at 10 a.m.