



In this age of cutting-edge technology, it seems a bit ironic that we all seem to still experience disconnected or dropped phone calls. At least every day, for one reason or another, we will be talking on the phone with someone when all of a sudden one side cuts out, and leaves the other person asking “Hello? Hello? Can you hear me? Are you there?”

How often God probably asks us these same questions. Reaching out to us, trying to connect with us, yet His voice seems to fall on deaf ears. He calls out to us, yet our signal is less than receptive, until the call is “dropped” all together.

We all know that a connection with God belongs at the forefront of our lives, but where does He end up really? After work, school, family, sports, social outings, God sadly becomes not a focus but an afterthought in our lives. And what we have here is a mix-up in priorities.

So it is very helpful that we have the important Feast Day of the Dormition of the Theotokos on August 15th to reconnect us with both God and the Theokos as we return from summer travels and vacations. Too often the Theotokos is not given the proper priority in the grand scheme of things. And interestingly enough, the Gospel passage of the Feast teaches us a lesson in prioritizing what is most important in life.

In the world of marketing, they say that people need to hear some-



thing seven times before it sticks with them. This is why companies air the same commercials over and over again because it will take people many times of seeing the same thing before the message will be internalized. Perhaps this is why on all the feast days of the Virgin Mary—August 15, September 8 (Nativity of Virgin Mary), November 21 (Entrance into the Temple), and October 28 (Holy Protection of the Virgin Mary)—we hear the same Gospel passage, the story of Mary and Martha. A story of Martha full of distractions, and of Mary, focused on the one needful thing. It seems that we need to be continually reminded of the one thing that is truly needful—a relationship with Christ.

In our Gospel passage on the Dormition, we hear Christ tell us that only “one thing is needful.” The Virgin Mary focused on the one “needful thing” that Christ is referring to

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## August Schedule of Services

**Wednesday August**

2, Paraklesis 5pm

**Friday August 4**

Paraklesis 5pm

**Sunday August 6**

Orthros and Divine Liturgy of Holy Transfiguration

**Monday August 7**

Paraklesis 10am

**Wednesday August 10**

Paraklesis 10am

**Tuesday August 15**

Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the Dormition of the Theotokos

### MEN'S FELLOWSHIP *See page 3*



for her whole life. Her early years were spent being raised in the temple. It was announced to her when she was 14 or 15 that she would bear the Son of God. By age 15 or 16 she was a mother. She first raised a son, then supported and encouraged His divine mission. She stood loyally by Him when He was condemned. She watched helplessly at the cross as He suffered and was put to death. And after the Resurrection, she helped the Apostles establish Christ's Church. **Her whole life was about the needful thing—saying YES to the Lord to whatever He called her to do.**

The one needful thing for us as well is **to always say yes when He calls to us.** The Theotokos' life is a sterling example for all of us about maintaining our focus on the needful thing. That doesn't mean we shouldn't work, or enjoy a home or get married or raise a family. Rather we can do all these things under the umbrella of faith in God and service to other people. Indeed it's possible to have a Mary heart of focus in a Martha world of distraction.

Often times in America, we tend to forget about the importance of the Theotokos as the Mother of God. In Greece, the feast of the Koimisis tis Theotokou is the second biggest celebration of the year outside of Pascha. Their ties to the Theotokos are alive and they hold her in high honor. But for some reason we tend to forget how meaningful she is to our faith in the states. So it would be helpful to hear just how important she is from Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in his homily on this Feast Day of her Falling Asleep, Saint Gregory says: "Who can describe in words your divinely resplendent beauty, O Virgin Mother of God? Thoughts and words are not enough to define your attributes, since they surpass mind and speech. Yet it is proper to chant hymns of praise to you, for you are a vessel containing every grace, the fullness of all things good and beautiful, the tablet and living icon of every good, and all uprightness, since you alone have been deemed worthy to receive the fullness of every gift of the Spirit. You alone did bear in your womb Christ in Whom are found the treasures of all these gifts and did become a wondrous tabernacle for Him; hence you did depart by way of death to immortality and you are translated from earth to Heaven, as is proper, so that you might dwell with Him eternally in a heavenly abode. From there on you continue to care diligently for your inheritance and by your unending intercessions with God, you show mercy to all.

To the degree that you are closer to God than all those who have drawn near to Him, by so much, have you been deemed worthy of greater audience. I do not speak of men alone, but also of the angelic hierarchies themselves. Isaiah writes with regard to the supreme commanders of the heavenly hosts: "And the seraphim stood round about Him" (Isaiah 6:2); but David says concerning the Theotokos, "at His right hand stood the queen" (Ps. 44:8). Do you see the difference in

position? From this we see also the difference in the dignity of their station. The seraphim angels are round about God, but the only Queen of all is near beside Him. The Theotokos is both wondered at and praised by God Himself, proclaiming her, as it were, by the mighty deeds enacted with respect to God, and saying, as it is recorded in the Song of Songs, "How fair is my companion" (cf. Song of Songs 6:4), **she is more radiant than light, more arrayed with flowers than the divine gardens, more adorned than the whole world, visible and invisible. She is not merely a companion but she also stands at God's right hand, for where Christ sat in the heavens, that is, at the "right hand of majesty"** (Heb. 1:3), there too she also takes her stand, having ascended now **from earth into the heavens.** Not merely does she love and is loved in return more than every other, according to the very laws of nature, but she is truly His Throne, and wherever the King sits, there His Throne is set also. And Isaiah beheld this throne amidst the choir of cherubim and called it "high" and "exalted" (Isaiah 6:1), wishing to make explicit how the station of the Mother of God far is far higher than that of the celestial hosts."

May the Theotokos, the Mother of God, intercede on our behalf as she stands beside God. And may they always remain at the forefront of our lives, and may we remember what is really needful.

*Please Join us Tuesday August 15th for Divine Liturgy as we celebrate The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos or in Greek, Κοίμησις τῆς Θεοτόκου. Also sometimes referred to as the Assumption, this Feast Day commemorates the falling asleep, resurrection, and glorification of Christ's mother. It proclaims that Mary has been "assumed" by God into the Heavenly Kingdom in her spiritual and bodily fullness.*

## SACRAMENTS

### BAPTISMS

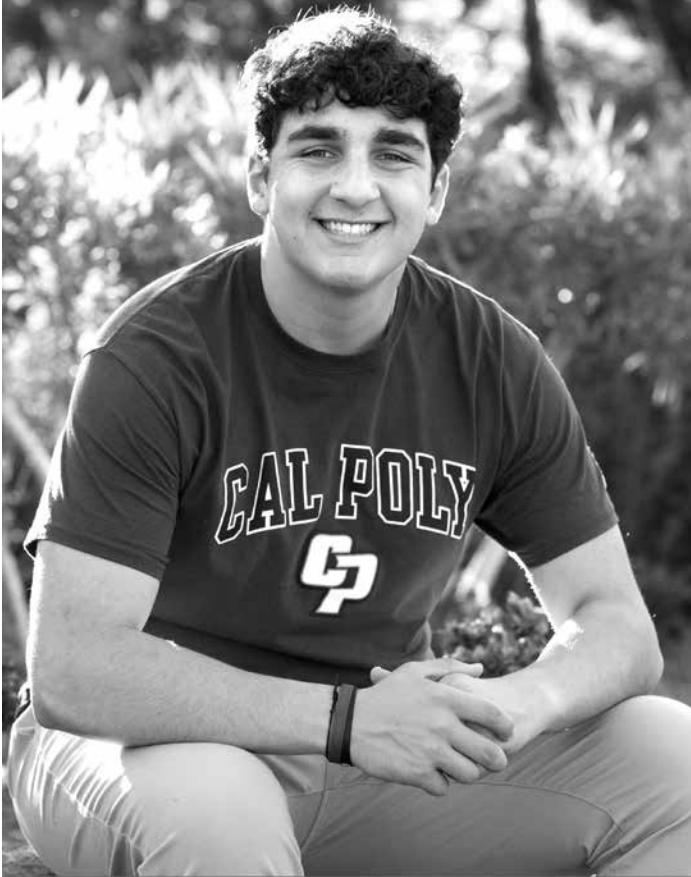
THE ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL EXTENDS ITS HEART-FELT CONGRATULATIONS TO CHARLES AND DANA SPILIOTIS ON THE OCCASION OF THE BAPTISM OF THEIR SON LUKE WHICH TOOK PLACE ON JUNE 3RD HERE AT THE CATHEDRAL.

### FUNERALS:

ON JUNE 7TH WE HELD THE FUNERAL SERVICE OF OUR LONGTIME MEMBER AND SISTER FROSSO STATHOUDAKIS. MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL! ΑΙΩΝΙΑ Η ΜΝΗΜΗ!



## Congratulations Graduates



*Victor Nicolacakis graduated from Acalanes High School and will be attending Cal Poly SLO.*

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP:

### History, Current Status, and Future

Following a Strategic Plan meeting with the purpose of revitalizing our community, all 30 or so parishioners present agreed that the first and most important area our community needed to emphasize was our Faith.

With this in mind, a Revitalization Committee was formed, and their first plan of action was to create a Men's Fellowship Ministry where men could gather for two reasons: to talk about their faith and enjoy one another's *parea*.

With this new mission to come together and learn more about faith, the program enlisted the talents of **George Papageorge**, our Family Wellness Director for the Metropolis of San Francisco, to guide spiritual discussion and every meeting of this new ministry.

## Bible Study:

We have been approached by several members to bring back our Bible Study group. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and learn more about our faith.



Please respond to **Christo.pappademos@annunciation.org** if you are interested in joining in virtually after Church on Sundays in Person. We would love a volunteer to help with inviting and coordinating.

## Parish Council Update:

- Mother's Day Luncheon and Father's Day Brunch were a great Success!! Congratulations to the recipients and to the Philoptochos for a job well done!
- Our Roll up Door in the back alley is being replaced. It is not repairable.
- An updated Alarm system for our Church is underway.
- All Members of Parish Council and volunteers that work with children in our Parish, have completed or will do so shortly, have registered with Youth Protection Training. This is a program adopted by the entire Metropolis.



What began as a gathering just shy of 20 men at the first meeting has grown into a group of well over 30 participants who come to enjoy the discussions, fellowship, and of course delicious food that is prepared for dinner at each gathering. Our last meeting on June 1st even featured a full pig roasting on a souvla prepared by our Parish Council Vice President **Tasso Mavroudis**.

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This new ministry has generated a lot of excitement and enjoyment both spiritually and socially. Our gatherings will resume after the summer and we look forward to expanding it by inviting men from other parishes around the Bay Area.

If you are interested in attending or getting involved in Men's Fellowship, please contact **Jim Rakos** at [jim.rakos@annunciation.org](mailto:jim.rakos@annunciation.org)



## Philoptochos Honors Chris Kyriacou as Father of the Year

On Sunday, June 18, 2023 our Ladies Philoptochos hosted a Father's Day Brunch honoring Chris Kyriacou as Father of the Year!

Over 130 parishioners gathered in the church hall to enjoy a toast of Mimosas and a delicious Breakfast Brunch to celebrate all Fathers and to honor Chris. Joining in the celebration was Metropolitan Gerasimos, Bishop Ioannis, Father Stephen Kyriacou and Presvytera Aliko.

The Philoptochos applauds Chris' many years of service to our Community and wishes him, his wife Irene and their sons, Stelios, Vlasis and Thanos all the best – AXIOS!





### Father's Day Brunch Team:

Liberty Nuris (Chair), Jan Petrou, Vivian Curd, Meena Vellis, Grace Koutoulas, Mariam Arsinoos, Foula Vasilogiorgis, Despina Poulos, Kalli Vellis, Panagiota Koutoulas, Alex Georges.

### Kitchen Crew:

Jack Spachis (Lead), Tom Nuris, Jim Rakos, Niko Rakos, Manoli Nuris, Matthew Nuris, Gus Koutoulas.



### Chris Kyriacou:

Stephen Christopher Kyriacou was born February 22, 1974 to Father Stephen & Presvytera Alike Kyriacou in Teaneck, New Jersey. The middle child to older sister Erika, and younger brother, Justin, Chris was always driven and ambitious, a born leader.



Growing up in Rhode Island, Chris developed a passion for sports, playing both basketball and baseball, fueling his love for New England Sports Teams, which is still alive and well today. Although, he is a Warriors, Giants, and 49ers fan as well...

In 1987, Chris' life would be forever changed when Father Stephen was assigned to the Annunciation Cathedral in San Francisco. The seasons in the East Coast were quickly replaced by the San Francisco fog. In 1989, he met the love of his life, Irene, at the Annunciation Cathedral festival, and the rest is history.

Chris graduated from Lowell High School and received his college education at UC Berkeley majoring in Economics. From there, Chris attended UC Hastings College of the Law, graduating with honors. He started his legal career as an associate attorney at the Howrey, Simon, Arnold & White law firm, specializing in intellectual property law for 7 years before transitioning as in-house counsel to technology giants Apple and Intel. He is currently the Assistant General Counsel and Director of IP Litigation and Licensing at Marvell Semiconductor in Silicon Valley.

Chris became involved in the Cathedral's programs as a young teen, playing on the basketball team, and was a member of GOYA, the dance groups, and an altar boy. In his early 20's, Chris was asked to serve on the parish council. He has held several offices on the board over the past 24 years. Most importantly, he served as President for 7 consecutive years, including during the very challenging COVID years. Chris has been involved in the athletics program at the Cathedral, not only playing well into adulthood, but also coaching many Cathedral basketball teams throughout the years. He was also part of the rebuilding of the Cathedral's dance program in the late 1990's, co-directing the Arete dance group for several years, with Irene and her sister Lea. Chris has been a proud member of the Philoptochos for a number of years, always helping to support this special ministry. Chris also co-chaired the food festival multiple times.

Chris and Irene were married at the Annunciation Cathedral on December 29, 2001, an anniversary which they are honored to share with Fr. Stephen and Presvytera Alike. They also baptized all 3 of their sons at the Cathedral.

In addition to church life, Chris has also given back to the local community, volunteering to coach his boys' recreational soccer, little league, and basketball teams.

Though he keeps very busy with all his commitments, Chris' favorite job is being a dad to his 3 boys – Stelios, Vlasias, and Thanos. Married for 22 years, Chris and Irene instill their love of the church and giving back to the community with their children.

# Festival Donations

As we head into summer we have started the planning for our upcoming Festival in September. Before we know it, summer will end and we will be in the mad scramble to prepare the food.

The Festival accounts for about 25% of our total operating budget for the Cathedral so it is a critical way for us to pay the bills. It is also the central community gathering we host for the many Greek families in the bay area and for the broader community in the mission district.

There are many ways you can contribute - you can help prepare food, you can volunteer to work at the festival, you can buy an ad in the festival ad book, you can be on one of the festival committees and help us organize the event.

Finally a great way to contribute is to make a donation to help underwrite the ingredients we need to make the wonderful dishes we serve the community. Of course you can do all of the above!

Donations are a great way for you to contribute. Here is a list of some of the items that we need donated. Of course we will accept any monetary or the actual food donation. If you would like to make a donation please call Dean Nicolacakis at 330.283.4986 or send an email to [dean.nicolacakis@annunciation.org](mailto:dean.nicolacakis@annunciation.org).

All donors will be published in the Herald, on social media and in the Festival Ad Book!

Item	Approx Cost	Donated By:
Greek Coffee	\$100	_____
Metaxa	\$200	_____
Olives	\$200	_____
Yogurt	\$200	_____
Eggplant	\$250	_____
Potatoes	\$300	_____
Coffee	\$300	_____
Cucumbers	\$400	_____
Green Peppers	\$400	_____
Walnuts	\$400	_____
Ouzo	\$400	_____
Green Beans	\$500	_____
Pita	\$500	_____
Flour	\$500	_____
Tomatoes	\$600	_____
Olive Oil	\$750	_____
Decorations	\$750	_____
Bread	\$1000	_____
Butter	\$1000	_____
Pilafi	\$1000	_____
Gyro Meat	\$1500	_____
Feta Cheese	\$1500	_____
Cheese for Tiropites	\$1500	_____
Chicken	\$2000	_____
Soda	\$2000	_____
Wine	\$2000	_____
Beer	\$2000	_____
Lamb	\$4000	_____
Paper Goods	\$6500	_____

# Annunciation Cathedral

## *Greek Food Festival • 2023*

**Co Chairs:** Grace Koutoulas  
Deno Konstantinidis

**Volunteer Coordinator:**  
Denise Yeilding

**Décor:**

**Food Mgrs:**  
Front of House: Pat Hillas  
Back of House: Evange DeKaristos  
Jack Spachis

**Taverna:** Nick Svetcoff  
**Asst:** Mike Sarikakis

**Gyro:** Chris Contos

**Lamb:**

**Pastries & Greek Coffee:** Jan Petrou/Philoptochos

**Loukamades & Frappe:** Erika Roberts

**Cash Room:** Phillipe Athanasiades

**Raffle:**

**Kids Area:**

**Vendors:** Foula Vasilogiorgis

**Souvenir Book:** Pres. Aiki

**Donations:** Dean Nicolakakis

**Set Up/ Break Down:** Deno Konstantinidis & Tasso Mavrodīs

**Website/email blasts:** John Lampros

**Marketing Chair:** Irene Melitas

**Social Media:** Allyson Montgomery

**Bulletins/announcements:** Christo Pappademos

**Silent Auction:**



### **Food Festival Meetings:**

All are welcome to be involved and get excited with us in the planning and executing of the Food Festival. For an invitation to the virtual meeting, please contact [grace.koutoulas@annunciation.org](mailto:grace.koutoulas@annunciation.org)

**July 11 7pm**

**July 25th 7pm**

**Aug 10th 7pm**

**Aug 24th 7pm**

All of these are virtual meetings on Google Meet

UNITED GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF  
SAN FRANCISCO, THE ANNUNCIATION  
ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL  
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**Annunciation Greek Food Festival**

Volunteers needed! Come support our parish, we need your help!  
Sept 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>

Bring your **Kefi!**

Festival Chair related question please contact  
[deno.konstantinidis@annunciation.org](mailto:deno.konstantinidis@annunciation.org)  
[grace.koutoulas@annunciation.org](mailto:grace.koutoulas@annunciation.org)

Interested in volunteering  
Please contact [DENISE.YEILDING@ANNUNCIATION.ORG](mailto:DENISE.YEILDING@ANNUNCIATION.ORG)  
415 310 5890

*"Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action.  
These actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud." – Helen Dyer*