



ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HERALD



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

MARCH 2016

Τὸν Σταυρὸν σου...

March is a special month for many reasons. One, of course, is that we celebrate the great Feast of the Annunciation, on March 25. Our parish celebrates this Feast in a special way, as it is our “name day.” The other is that the Great and Holy Lent begins in March. What’s the Greek adage? *Δὲν λείπει ὁ Μάρτης ἀπὸ τὴν Σαρακοστή.* (March is always a part of the 40 day-Great Lent.) On the third Sunday of the Great Lent, which this year will be observed on April 3, the Church reminds us of the Holy Cross. The Cross is, after all, why we observe the Great Lent and its goal, which is the Crucifixion, the Death and Burial and, finally, the Resurrection of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. And, so, it is fitting that the crosses for the new Cathedral should be ready at this time.

Donate the Cross

Shown here are the two rooftop crosses, in bronze, modeled after those of the older Hagia Sophia, which can still be seen in the courtyard of Justinian’s “Great Church.” Like them our new Cathedral’s crosses are simple, restrained, elegant, and truly timeless. As the Holy Cross and the redemption it offers are the Crown of our Faith, these new crosses will crown the new Cathedral. The larger one, measuring 9 feet and weighing 500 pounds, will be placed atop atop the main dome, while the smaller one, measuring 4 feet 10 inches and weighing considerably less, will go atop the peak of the roof over the main entrance to the new Cathedral. In the meantime, we are working with the foundry to find a way to display



these new crosses in our chapel until they are ready to crown our new Cathedral. In the last issue of the Herald we asked, “Would somebody like to donate the Cross?” This is asked by way of invitation, just as the Lord Himself invites us to follow Him and, by following Him, to experience eternal life, by our relationship with God. And the invitation still stands.



Let in the Light

The Cathedral’s windows program. Some time ago, as we were considering having its 135 windows made by Pella, we weighed the cost and decided it was worth the extra expense to have these windows made, as specified by the Architect, of double pane (mostly refracted glass) windows, clad in metal on the outside to withstand the elements and warm, oiled-walnut wood on the inside for beauty. And then we put it out there: how about “adopting a window?” For a donation of \$5,000.00, an individual or family can have the added joy of knowing that one of the windows was donated by them. (The \$5,000.00 covers the cost of the window, its installation, and much of the cost of the structure surrounding the window. And windows do what? They let in the light. They serve a utilitarian purpose in this way. They also serve a spiritual purpose, as the light, shown in the photo below of the new Cathedral beginning to take shape, reminds us of Him who, in the beginning, said: “Let there be light” (Genesis 1:3). And, Scripture says, “there was light.” It is not accidental, then, that our churches face east, as noted in the Church canons. You see, the church is not just a building, but a building in which God is worshiped. And not just a place to gather, but a gathering of God’s people, who understand our calling to be “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14).



Dome window opening



Mockup test

Progress Update on the new Cathedral

The new Cathedral continues to take shape. The most recent milestone to be achieved was completing all the waterproofing for roofs (including the main dome and the Ieron half dome) - so, if you've joined the construction team in praying for just enough clear weather to get that phase finished, we can all go back to praying for rain to end California's drought. At the last minute, a local metal roof fabricator came forward and offered their services to the Cathedral at a very favorable cost (God always provides, although sometimes His timetable seems to cut it closer than our comfort zones). The firm is very experienced in this kind of work and has provided copper roofs and other metal architectural details throughout the new construction in San Francisco, including the metal cladding and detailing for several substantial new signature residential buildings here in the City. They began measuring the domes in mid-February, and fabrication will be underway soon, with the dome roofs possibly being completely installed by sometime in April. They will be made from solid metal and the color of the roofs will be integral to the metal rather than a color coating, which would have been the more feasible alternative if we had needed to stay with a large corporate fabricator another state.

With the roofs having all been waterproofed, the next phase of construction - window installation - began in late February. All the remaining 128 windows were delivered to the site in mid February and once the testing procedure was fine-tuned on a sample installation, installation began with the dome windows, which may be completed by the time you are reading this. All windows throughout the Cathedral should be installed by the end of April, with selected windows in the "worst case" locations being tested to ensure they meet the manufacturer's warranty.

Once the windows have all been installed, then preparations will

begin for the stucco that is to constitute the outer walls of the Cathedral. The exact timetable for the stucco'ing will depend on completion of window installation and testing, and the mobilization schedule of the stucco contractor. Certainly, by mid-summer, the Cathedral should be beginning to assume its final outward appearance.



Window ready for testing

At the same time, we are working closely with the prime contractor to get the parking garage finished and ready for use at the earliest possible date. As we've previously explained, the garage is currently full of temporary shoring that needed to be placed to support the construction equipment, especially the large scissors lift that OSHA requires to be kept onsite until all work on the main dome has been completed (due to the dome's height). Once the scissors lift can be dispensed with, the shoring can be reduced or removed, allowing work to go forward on the parking garage and elevator installation. Although the elevator will only go to the ground floor lobby at present, it will ultimately serve the choir loft, as well. For now, the elevator installation and the stairway and ground-floor elevator lobby have all been moved forward from Phase II (Interior) to Phase I (exterior complete) so that we can put the garage into service as soon as possible. Since the driveway cannot be used to provide ADA access (it's too steep) the elevator from the parking garage to the ground floor is required for us to be able to use the parking garage while the Cathedral is being finished.

OIKOS Lecture Series Begins

As announced in recent Sunday bulletins, OIKOS (Orthodox in Koinonia Outreach Services), under the direction of Dr. Katina Kostoulas, Ph.D., is sponsoring a series of talks aimed at informing, engaging, and edifying our parishioners in any number of areas involving individual growth, family dynamics, and parish life. The lectures will take place the first Sunday of each month, during the coffee hour. For Sunday, March 6, our speaker will be Alexander Kozak, a freelance writer and web developer, who studied classics at Harvard and King's College, Cambridge, and who has a master's degree in Greek from U. C. Berkeley. He has taught Annunciation Cathedral's Introduction to Orthodoxy class since 2007. His topic will be "What if the Fall Had Never Happened?" and he will make special reference to the thought of St. Maximus the Confessor. Future talks will feature Basil Crow, Annunciation Cathedral Chanter, Janine Economides, wife of Professor Nicholas Economides, and Steven Harris, Ph.D.

Dr. Harris, a certified Jungian Psychotherapist and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist, will speak to us on Sunday, November 13 (the feast of St. John Chrysostom). A Clinical Psychologist practicing in Newport Beach, CA, he worships at the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos Serbian Orthodox Church in Irvine, CA. Dr. Harris is also the former Clinical Director for the Center for Individual and Family Therapy in Orange, CA and was Professor at the Californian Graduate Institute and Professor and Dean of Academic Affairs at the American Behavior Studies Institute, where he also edited the Psychotherapy Integration Journal.

However, God Who made us looked lovingly down on us in His mercy. He bowed the heavens and came down. Having taken our nature upon Him from the Holy Virgin, He renewed it and restored it. Or rather, He led it up to divine and heavenly heights. Wishing to achieve this, to bring to fulfillment on this day His pre-eternal counsel, He sent the Archangel Gabriel, as Luke the Evangelist tells us, "to Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:26-27).

Monastics Visit the Cathedral

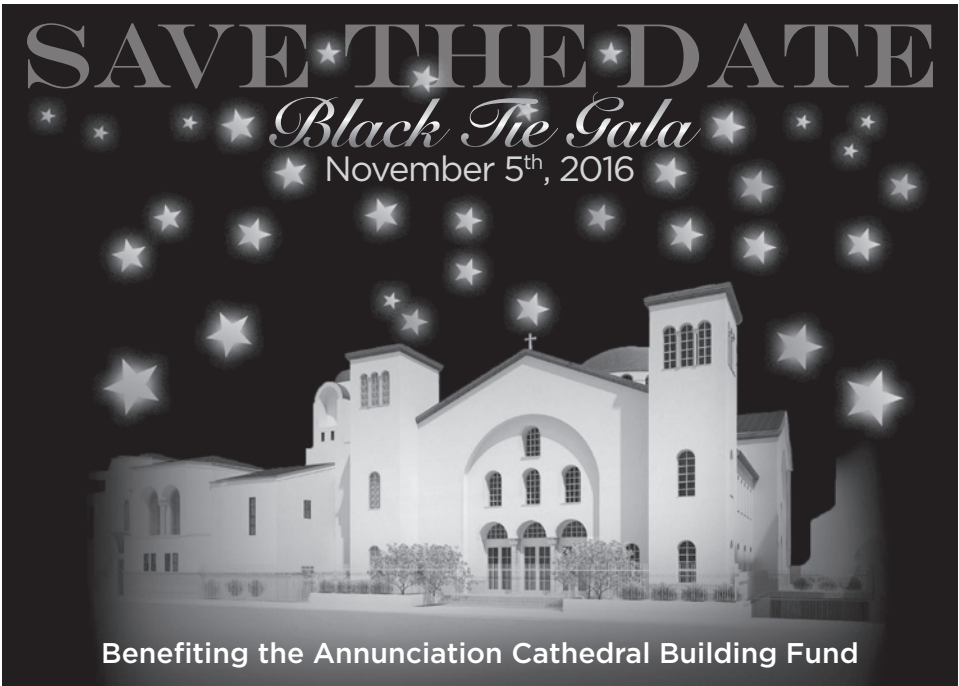
Recently, we were visited by monks from St. Anthony's Monastery, Florence, AZ and the Panagia Vlahernon Monastery, Williston, FL. They toured the new Cathedral and expressed their best wishes and prayers for its completion, even as they are now undertaking the building of their own church at the Florida monastery. Shown below are some of the brothers, with Father Stephen.



Testing the Windows

Because we want the windows (all 135 of them) to be precise, i.e. to keep out the elements, a spot testing of the windows began on February 9. Specially equipped engineers are on the job site, reviewing the installation of the windows and checking them, under pressure, so that they do not leak in the event of inclement weather. Work is progressing nicely. It is expected all the windows will be in by the end of this month.





**Gala Date:
November 5, 2016**

To celebrate our 95th anniversary and the rebuilding of our Cathedral church devastated by the Loma Prieta earthquake 27 years ago, we are holding a Black Tie Gala on Saturday, November 5, 2016. All proceeds will benefit the Annunciation Cathedral Building Fund. Come join us in supporting the rebuilding of this San Francisco landmark and home of our Metropolis Cathedral. For more information, please email cathedralgala2016@gmail.com.
 “Build me a sanctuary, and I will appear among you.” Καὶ ποιήσεις μοι ἅγίασμα, καὶ ὀφθήσομαι ἐν ὑμῖν. (Exodus 25:8)

2016 is the Cathedral’s Year to Host the IOCC Banquet

The banquet, typically held the first Sunday in November, is held at one of the Bay Area Churches. 2016 is the Cathedral’s year to host the banquet, which raises funds for the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). This inter-Orthodox fellowship begins with the celebration of Vespers, and continues with a reception, a silent auction, and dinner. Entertainment usually consists of performances by various Bay Area dance groups. As this is so close to our

November 5 Gala (either the next day or the following Sunday), we need to put together a committee of 5-6 people to begin planning. So, the question and the invitation: would you like to serve as a member of the organizing committee of the IOCC banquet at the Cathedral this November and, if so, please let Father Stephen know. We will begin meeting in March to plan accordingly.

Yet another view of the Philoptochos Board meeting January 12

As noted, the Metropolis Philoptochos held its meeting at the Cathedral on January 12. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos administered the affirmation of office to the newly constituted Board. Following, the group toured the new Cathedral site and pledged to

support the rebuilding. An initial \$10,000 donation was made by a Board member. Shown below are the members of the board following the affirmation of office.



Honor Roll of 2016 Stewards

Our February Herald featured an honor roll of stewards who, as of January 10, had made their 2016 Stewardship pledge in support of the Cathedral's ministries. Following is a list of additional 2016 Stewards, received as of February 10. This brings the total number of Stewards, to date, to 200. As it is our goal this year to exceed the 320 Stewards of 2015, a second mailing of stewardship materials will be sent, by the beginning of March, to those who have not yet submitted their 2016 Stewardship, inviting them to do so.

Toni (Antonia) Ambus	Lula and Al Ossipoff
Peter & Anne Bagatelos	Mr. & Mrs. Spiros Papadakis
Harilkia Boone	Maria Papadakis
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Flynn	Lea & George Papavasiliou
David J. & Kathi Garibaldi	Dimitrios Philiou
Stanley Glaros	Athena Sheldon
Alexia Kleinekorte	Nick Tarlson & Mauna Arnzen
Kathryn & William Mares	John & Cynthia Vlahos
Helen Morales	Evanthia Zographos

Gift Giving to the Capital Campaign

For those parishioners or friends of the Cathedral who wish to make a donation, you may consider donating funds from your stock portfolio. If you were to sell this stock on the open market most likely you will pay capital gain taxes. To avoid paying capital gain taxes, you simply donate the stock to the Annunciation Cathedral, a non-profit 501(c)3 religious corporation.

The stock needs to be publicly traded on one of the exchanges (NY, NASDAQ, etc) then you simply report it on your tax return as a noncash charitable contribution. You get the appreciated value for the donation and do not pay tax on the capital gain. Then all you will need for taxes is a letter of acknowledgment from the Cathedral, with the name of the stock, date of donation and number of shares received. For additional information regarding the transfer of stock to the Cathedral, please contact Father Stephen at fatherstephen@annunciation.org or Angie Leventis at aleventis3@comcast.net.

WHAT DOES MY GIFT TO THE BUILDING FUND REALLY AMOUNT TO OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD?

Below are some different ways to look at how you can make a meaningful gift.

AMOUNT	PER YEAR OVER 5 YEARS	PER MONTH OVER 5 YEARS	PER DAY OVER 5 YEARS	2 PERSON FAMILY-PER DAY (EACH)	3 PERSON FAMILY-PER DAY (EACH)	4 PERSON FAMILY-PER DAY (EACH)
\$100,000	\$20,000	\$1,666.00	\$54.80	\$27.40	\$18.26	\$13.70
\$50,000	\$10,000	\$833.00	\$27.40	\$13.70	\$9.13	\$6.85
\$30,000	\$6,000	\$500.00	\$16.43	\$8.22	\$5.48	\$4.10
\$25,000	\$5,000	\$416.00	\$13.70	\$6.85	\$4.56	\$3.42
\$20,000	\$4,000	\$333.33	\$10.95	\$5.49	\$3.65	\$2.74
\$15,000	\$3,000	\$250.00	\$8.22	\$4.11	\$2.74	\$2.05
\$10,000	\$2,000	\$166.66	\$5.47	\$2.75	\$1.82	\$1.36

Parking During Construction

Parking for up to 70 cars is available in the lot behind the Cathedral, at 334 14th Street and on the street. Stewards of the Cathedral are charged only \$5 to park, by showing their discount card; the Cathedral will pay \$7 of the parking cost for Stewards. To pick up a parking pass or to discuss your stewardship, please see Gus Vouchilas, our Stewardship Chairman. If you are a supporting member of the Cathedral, in other words a Steward, you get the card. Street parking is also available on Sundays, especially along the 217' construction zone in front of the Cathedral. For your convenience, an attendant is on hand each Sunday to monitor the drop off zone and direct parking to the parking lot behind the Cathedral. We kindly ask our parishioners to be considerate of those with disabilities, giving them parking preference in the spaces on Valencia Street. This relationship with the lot behind the Cathedral will end as soon as our own parking structure is up and running.

“If the conception of God were from seed, He would not have been a new man, nor the Author of new life...”

St. Gregory Palamas,
Sermon on the Annunciation



COME Meets, tours new Cathedral

As the Cathedral is the hub of activity and a focal point for the Metropolis, more and more, Metropolis ministry meetings are being held here. On February 4, the Board of Commission of and Evangelism (COME) met. Following the meeting, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and Father Stephen took the Board members inside the new Cathedral. They commented on the awesomeness of our new worship space, and how the proportions of the building—surely to become a landmark—evoke the loftiest ideals of Byzantine architecture.



“That is why neither an angel nor a man came to save us, but the Lord Himself, Who was conceived and took flesh in the womb from a virgin, while remaining unchanged as God.”

*St. Gregory Palamas,
Sermon on the Annunciation*

Cathedral receives permanent Assembly Permit

Following six months of give and take, the Cathedral has received (finally) a permanent Assembly Permit for its multipurpose rooms, namely, the Kytherian Room, the Korinthias Hall and Gym, and the Bishop Anthony Hall and Chapel. The occupancy limits for these three rooms, approved by the Planning Department and the Fire Inspection Bureau, are: 120 for the Kytherian Room, 322 for the Chapel (although we’ve posted 320), and 676 for the Gym (standing or seated), and 484 for the Gym (tables and chairs). The Gym and the Chapel, as they are adjacent the kitchen, may be used for dining purpose (and the Chapel will be used in a multi-purpose way, upon completion of the Cathedral), but the Kytherian Room may be used for assembly purposes only. Drinks may be served there, but not food. The Assembly Permit is one additional step, separate from the Certificate of Occupancy, which we received upon completion of the building over 20 years ago. Obtaining it means we will no longer need to pull special assembly permits, as we have been doing for years, for the Festival, to name one.

Introduction to Orthodoxy Class

The Cathedral’s Intro to Orthodoxy class, taught by **Alexander Kozak**, has now entered its eighth year! The class is especially intended for those who are thinking about converting to Orthodoxy and for family members and friends who would like to support them on their journey, but it is also open to people who are already Orthodox and who would like to deepen their understanding of their faith.

The class explores Christian theology and practice through reading selections of Scripture, the Church Fathers, the lives of the Saints, and other texts representative of the Orthodox worldview. These readings are the starting point for our discussions, which aim at clarifying doctrine and worship and helping us to discover (or re-discover), week after week, why we belong in the Church. If you are interested in attending the class, please contact **Alexandros Kozak** at orthodoxy-agkozak@sneakemail.com.

Chronia Polla for Namedays in March

We’re still working getting our Parish Soft data base up and running. You may recall, in past issues of the *Herald*, a list of names appeared of those parishioners who were celebrating their Name Days that given month. The lists were derived from the baptismal names given to the office. Occasionally, there were omissions and we apologize for this. We would like our data base to be up to date, and accurate as possible. Toward this end, we included a space in our 2016 Stewardship Pledge reply “card” where you can list your baptismal name. However, since we only recently engaged someone to work on this data base with Parish Soft, we are unable to reprint the names of those who celebrate their Name Days at this time. However, we can tell you that the major Feast of March is the Annunciation—*Evangelismos* (the word which gives us the term *evangelism*), and, so, we extend greetings and best wishes to everyone in the parish named Evangelos or Evangelia. *Na Zisete!*

Community Link Continues Ministering to Those in Need

Community Link, now in its ninth year of existence, is a group of Annunciation parishioners who meet once a month on a drop-in basis to visit members of our community who may be confined due to illness or age. We travel to hospitals, nursing homes and private residences. Many of those we visit no longer have family or friends to support them and just need to know there is someone who cares. A short visit

or phone call can lift one's spirits a great deal. If anyone in the community knows of any other home bound parishioners to add to our list or would like to join us for a visit, please contact Pauline Oetzel at poetzel@hotmail.com. Please keep Community Link and our home-bound brothers and sisters in your prayers!



Cathedral Soup Kitchen

Although the Soup Kitchen is a Parish-wide undertaking, we are grateful to our Young Adults for taking the lead in preparing and serving the food at our Soup Kitchen the third Tuesday of every month. This month, the Soup Kitchen will take place on Tuesday, February 16, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. In December, we had our greatest attendance ever—over 50 guests—only to be topped in January! We expect the same will be true in February, as well. The viability of our Soup Kitchen points both to the reality of hunger in our day (in the heart of one of the most affluent cities in the world—itself an oxymoron!) and to the generosity of our Young Adults, who have taken the lead on this, in spite of their own busy schedules. Shown below are some of our Young Adults on KP duty at the January Soup Kitchen, along with some of our many guests.



Won't you help Volunteer for the Soup Kitchen?

As noted, the Soup Kitchen operates the third Tuesday of every month. It involves food prep, 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. Won't you consider volunteering once in a while? All you have to do is show up. By the way, there's no age limit. We have teenagers volunteering and we have people "forever young" volunteering. It would be truly wonderful to expand our volunteer base, so we can do more. Please communicate your willingness to Father Stephen, fatherstephen@annunciation.org. He will put you in touch to those who've taken the lead and are coordinating this important ministry. Thank you.



Messinian Society Gather to Celebrate Ypapanti

Members of the Navarino Messinian Society gathered on the Feast of the Presentation of Christ to the Temple, known as Ypapanti (lit. “meeting,” i.e. the meeting of the infant Jesus with Simeon, who held him in his arms and asked, “Lord, let now your servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation....”). They celebrated an Artoklasia, following the Divine Liturgy and convened in the conference room for refreshments afterwards.



When the Prophet and Psalmist was enumerating the different aspects of Creation and observing god's wisdom in them all, he was filled with amazement and cried out while writing, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all" (Ps. 104:24). Now that I am attempting, if I can, to tell you about the manifestation in the flesh of the Word Who made all things, what fitting word of praise will I find? If all things that exist inspire wonder, and their coming out of non-being into being is something divine and greatly to be hymned, how much more amazing, divine and demanding of our praises is it for a being to become god, and not just god, but the God Who truly is? Especially as it was our nature which was neither able nor willing to preserve the image in which it was made, and had therefore been rightly banished to the lower parts of the earth. That our nature should become like God, and that through it we should receive the gift of returning to what is better, is a mystery so great and divine, so ineffable and beyond understanding, that it remained absolutely unrecognized by holy angels and men, and even by the prophets, although they had spiritual vision, and was hidden throughout the ages. But why am I speaking about the time before it was accomplished? Even now it has happened, how it happened, although not the fact that it has, remains a mystery, believed not known, worshiped not investigated, and only believed and worshipped through the Spirit. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12:3), and the Apostle tells us that it is through the Spirit that we worship and pray (Rom. 8:26).

CATHEDRAL PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Greetings from Philoptochos as we enter the month of the “God News,” i.e. the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary. March is also that wonderful month we reach out to friends and loved ones to remind them of their importance in our lives.

Annunciation Philoptochos Crab Feed – March 4

The Annunciation Philoptochos crab feed which was cancelled for January 29 will be held on March 4. We will present our delicious Dungeness crab as usual. The crab only will be purchased from the states of Oregon or Washington and we have been reassured that the quality is superb and as good as ever. You won't want to miss out so get your reservations in early and enjoy another night of delicious cuisine provided by our hardworking Philoptochos. Look for the flyer in the Herald and in the mail. Much of the proceeds will go to our ministries and to the Cathedral building fund.

Mother's Day Luncheon and Fashion Show Saturday, May 7

The Annunciation Cathedral Ladies Philoptochos invites you to its Mother's Day Luncheon and Fashion Show on Saturday, May 7, beginning at 11:30 a.m., with a reception, followed by luncheon at 12:30 p.m. The theme of this year's Fashion Show is “Breakfast at Tiffany's” and is sure to be a hit.

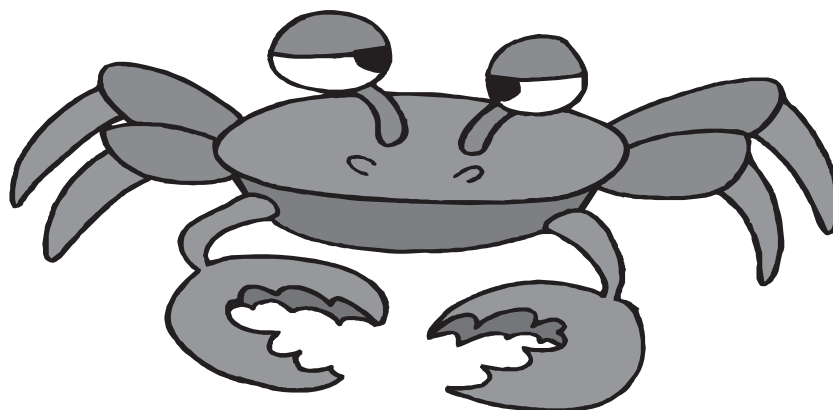
Annunciation Philoptochos Membership – 2016

Why should I join Philoptochos? We join this National organization, 28,000 strong, to respond to those in need in our Churches, in our communities and in the world. We need all women in our Parishes to join to ensure a continuing legacy of healing, peace and hope for all that occurs in this changing world. The faces of Philoptochos are many and there is a place for women of all ages. It is imperative that our chapter grows in membership to meet the changing needs of what is happening in the world. Also, our chapter needs to ensure that younger women feel an important part of the work of our chapters. Be part of Philoptochos and embrace, evolve and give to others. Join Today! We will be contacting you with further information on all of our projects and ministries. “Chosen and Appointed by God to Go and Bear Fruit”...Offering Healing, Peace and Hope

A Dating Site for Orthodox

Hardly an evening of television watching goes by without an ad or two from various dating sites reaching out to Christians. Orthodox Christians have been plugging into these and other sites, asking “is there a site out there that is uniquely Orthodox?” Well, there is. Ancient Faith Radio is featuring a talk by Subdeacon Adam Lowell Roberts, entitled “Choose Wisely—An Orthodox Christian's Guide to Courting.” Here, he joins Father Barnabas Powell in discussing the importance of finding an Orthodox mate. Subdeacon Adam is founder of Orthodox and Single, a web site designed to help Orthodox singles find one another. The program was originally aired on February 14. It is 1:31:50 in length. Here is the link: http://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/faithencouragedlive/choose_wisely

The Annunciation Cathedral Ladies Philoptochos Society presents its
34th Annual Crab Feed Friday, March 4, 2016
— Featuring Fresh Crab —
Cocktail Reception: 6:00 pm Dinner: 7:30 pm



\$60.00 per person.

Reservations will be secured only by receipt of payment.

For Reservations, Fill out and return this form to:

Annunciation Philoptochos

245 Valencia Street, San Francisco CA 94103

or E-mail: Aleventis3@comcast.net

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Please reserve _____ ticket(s) or _____ table(s)

(Maximum 10 people per table. Please include the names of all guests to be seated at the table)

Total Amount Enclosed _____

Make checks payable to: Annunciation Philoptochos, Attn: Crab Feed

Please mail completed reservation form and check by March 1 to:

Annunciation Cathedral Philoptochos

245 Valencia Street San Francisco, CA 94103

Attended Parking Available

YOUTH NEWS

GOYA News

A meeting of the parents of GOYA age children (13 to 18 years old) took place recently. We thank our parents for meeting and considering the following : 1) articulation of a vision for the Annunciation Cathedral 2) immediate programmatic needs for GOYA, and 3) consideration of volunteer/paid non-parent Youth Worker. A date for parents and children to meet for a meal, for further discussion and for election of GOYA officers, following FDF (some time in March), was also considered, as were events for our youth, moving forward. Meanwhile, we thank you, the parents, for your continued vigilance on behalf of our children, as we endeavor to strengthen this youth ministry of our parish.

Annunciation Dance Groups Perform at FDF

Our Metropolis annual Greek Folk Dance Festival (FDF) took place in Anaheim, CA February 11-14. As this was the 40th anniversary of FDF, 108 groups participated. Some 3000 people attended the grand banquet and awards ceremonies. The Cathedral was represented by 3 groups: **Spithes**, our middle & high school group, **Thisavri**, our elementary school group, 3rd-5th grade, and **To Mellon**, preschool-2nd grade group. **To Mellon** made its first appearance as an exhibition group, with 17 dancers! This bodes well for the future, as the name of the group implies. Spithes received the prestigious Special Achievement Award for its Lasithi (Crete) suite, and Thisavri came in fourth place in the Advanced Primary Category. To Mellon, while it did not compete, received medals for their participation, and the children got to dance on stage with Metropolitan Gerasimos and with other children in the same age group. We are also honored that one of our own, and a dance group parent—Michael Kasolas—received the Elios Award of Excellence at the Grand Banquet. Congratulations, Michael! Meanwhile, hats off to our parents for their ongoing support of the program and a special thanks goes to our team of dedicated directors—Irene Kyriacou, Lea Lyberopoulos and Lea Papavasiliou. While some directors throughout the Metropolis are paid for their efforts, our directors have been giving their time, some times coming to the City three and four times a week to direct, to make costumes, to arrange for workshops, to conduct research. That's dedication and that's what makes the dance program at the Annunciation Cathedral so special.

We will be accepting new members to the dance groups following FDF. For more information, please contact Lea Lyberopoulos at karthia808@yahoo.com. We have the following five groups:

Pre-K group, turning 3 1/2 - 4 in 2015, or entering PreK or Kindergarten in fall 2016
Beginning elementary group, Kindergarten-2nd grade in Fall 2015

Thisavri, 3rd -5th grade in Fall 2015
Spithes, 6th-10th grade in Fall 2015
Ekrixi, 18 and up.

FOR PHOTOS SEE
PAGES 12-13

'Like'
Annunciation
Cathedral Sunday
School!



Santa Claus in March?!

No, but we do want to share with you that the Cathedral dance groups—To Mellon, Thisavri and Spithes—as part of their Diakonia project this year, collected toys and delivered them on Christmas Eve to Lefty O'Doul's, which is located in the heart of San Francisco, at Union Square. The groups participated in Lefty O'Doul's annual Christmas Toy Drive, which brings thousands of toys to children less fortunate in our community, letting them know that they are specially remembered. Our dance groups found this to be a very moving experience, and were honored to participate in such a worthy cause. They look forward to making this an annual project.



Summer Camp at St. Nicholas

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco is proud to announce the 36th year of its Summer Camp ministry at Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, CA. Organized by the Metropolis Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, this program is a highlight of youth ministry throughout the year. All three sessions of Summer Camp are for campers ages 8 - 18.

The dates for the 2016 Metropolis Summer Camp are:
Staff Orientation Week - July 5-9

Session I - July 10-16

Session II - July 17-23

Session III July 24-30

Due to high demand, campers are now limited to registering for only ONE session of summer camp.

Pricing for 2016:

\$500 Normal Registration (March 1 - April 30)

\$525 Late Registration (May 1 - June 15)

All siblings receive a \$25.00 discount.

Online Registration

Camper Registration and more information is now available online at www.gosfyouth.org.

You can make a deposit now to lock in the "Early Registration" pricing and make payments until June 15. Summer Camp Staff Applications are coming soon and will be available online at www.gosfyouth.org

For questions, please contact Johanna Duterte, Director, Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org.

Sunday School News

The St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is coming up in March. Our upper grades (4th-High School) will have the opportunity to choose and write about one of the topics provided by the Archdiocese Religious Studies and then present their speech in front of the congregation after liturgy on Sunday, March 6th. Although, the oral presentation of the speech is optional, every student will participate in the classroom writing assignment. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to express in writing and orally their feelings and beliefs about their Orthodox faith.

Sunday School Calendar February – June 2016

February 7	Lessons of Love
February 14	No Sunday School - FDF Weekend
February 21	Oratorical Festival - Topics Handout Class Discussion (Grade 4-High School) Oratorical Work - Grade 4-High School
February 28	Sunday School Music Lesson - Conference Room
March 6	Oratorical Practice - Grade 4 - High School
March 13	Oratorical Speeches - Immediately following Liturgy
March 20	Sunday of Orthodoxy Icon Procession after Liturgy
March 27	Sunday School Music Lesson - Conference Room
April 3	Sunday of the Holy Cross Procession of the Cross
April 10	Regular Classes
April 17	God Parent Sunday
April 24	Palm Sunday - Sunday School Class Photos Sunday School Music Lesson - Conference Room
April 29	TGI Pascha - Good Friday
May 1	Holy Pascha - Easter Sunday - No Sunday School
May 8	Mother's Day - Class Project
May 15	Regular Classes
May 22	Sunday School Music Lesson - Conference Room
May 29	Memorial Holiday - No Sunday School
June 5	Last Day of Sunday School - Graduation Program

Greek School News

Greek School operates every Saturday, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Children, grades 1 through 8, have the opportunity to learn the language and culture of Greece by specially trained and skilled teachers. Greek School will not meet Saturday, February 13 (President's Day and also FDF weekend). In addition, it will not meet on Saturday, April 30 (Holy Saturday) or on Saturday, May 28 (Memorial Day weekend). The last day of the 2015-2016 school year is Saturday, June 11.

OYAA Basketball

This has been an exciting season for our Annunciation basketball teams. The boys middle school will most likely go to the playoffs; the girls middle school team also has a chance to make the playoffs. At the same time, we commend the elementary boys team for playing well throughout the season. For your information, the playoffs will be played **Saturday, March 5th** at St. Nicholas (San Jose) and the Championships will take place **Sunday, March 6th** at Ascension (Oakland).

Congratulations, teams. Go, Annunciation!

“And the virgin’s name,” it says, “was Mary” (Luke 1:27), which means “Lady.”

This shows the Virgin’s dignity, how certain was her virginity and set apart was her life, exact in every respect and completely blameless. She properly bore the name of Virgin, and possessed to the full all the attributes of purity. She was a virgin in both body and soul, and kept all the powers of her soul and her bodily senses far above any defilement. This she did authoritatively, steadfastly, decisively and altogether inviolably at all times, as a closed gate preserves the treasures within, and a sealed book keeps hidden from sight what is written inside. The Scriptures say of her, “This is the sealed book” (cf. Rev. 5:1-6:1; Dan. 12:4) and “this gate shall be shut, and no man shall enter in by it” (Ezek. 44:2). St. Gregory Palamas, Sermon on the Annunciation



Spithes, our oldest group, performing at FDF. They were awarded the prestigious Special Achievement Award for their Lasithi (Crete) suite.

Annunciation Dance Groups at FDF



Members of Thisavri, performing at FDF. The group came in fourth place in the Advanced Primary category.



To Mellon, our youngest group, 17 strong, performing at FDF for the first time.

Altar Groups in March

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 2015-2016 school year, we are very pleased to announce the altar leaders program! This year, three of the older altar servers will take 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. 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 this month is as follows:

March 6 - Group 1 (Meat Fare Sunday)

March 13 - Group 2 (Cheese Fare Sunday)

March 20 - Group 3 (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

March 27 - Group 4 (Second Sunday of the Great Lent)

Note: We also have Salutations Services Friday nights during the Great Lent, beginning with Friday, March 18 (and including March 25, through the Presanctified on April 22), as well as Great Vespers for the Feast of the Annunciation on Thursday, March 24. Evening Services begin at 7 p.m. All altar boys are invited to participate in the evening services.

Our altar groups are as follow:

Group 1- Stelios Kyriacou, Kosta Lyberopoulos, Andrew Vellis, George Tsokas, Victor Nicolacakis (Demetri Kontonis- Group Leader)

Group 2- Christopher Apostolos Percia, Panagiotis Sogotis, Yianni Sogotis, Steven Monolakis, (Niko Manetas- Group Leader)

Group 3- Niko Pezo, Demetri Rally, Steven Chiappari, Gianni Kefalas, Nicholas Shatara (Demetri Kontonis- Group Leader)

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

Nevertheless, the Archangel's words to the Virgin did contain something more, a reference to a greater mystery. "The Holy Ghost," he said, "shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee" (Luke 1:35). Why was this? Because the child to be born was not to be called a prophet or simply a man, like Adam, but the Son of the Highest, Savior, Deliverer of the human race and eternal King. When stones fall away from the peak of a mountain and go right down to the foot, many overhanging crags are left in their place. In the same way, when in paradise we fell away from the divine commandment and the blessed an godly way of life, and were brought down as far as Hades, many evils resulted. Not only did the ground yield visible thorns and thistles in accordance with the curse upon our Forefather, but we, to an even greater extent, were sown with the thorns of all sorts of evil passions and with sin's dreadful thistles. Our race did not receive just that sorrow allotted to our First Mother by the curse which concerned her to bear children in sorrow (Gen. 3:16), but almost all our life became pain and sorrow.

SACRAMENTS

Condolences on the falling asleep I the Lord of our sister **Helen A. Checopoulos**, on December 12, 2015. A trisagion was chanted on December 19. Helen is survived by a number of family members, including her children, George and Evan.

Funerals

Lambrini Arestis, who fell asleep in the Lord on February 3, was buried February 10. She is survived by her sister, Elaine Courcoumelis, and her family. *Aionia I Mnimi!* Eternal Memory!

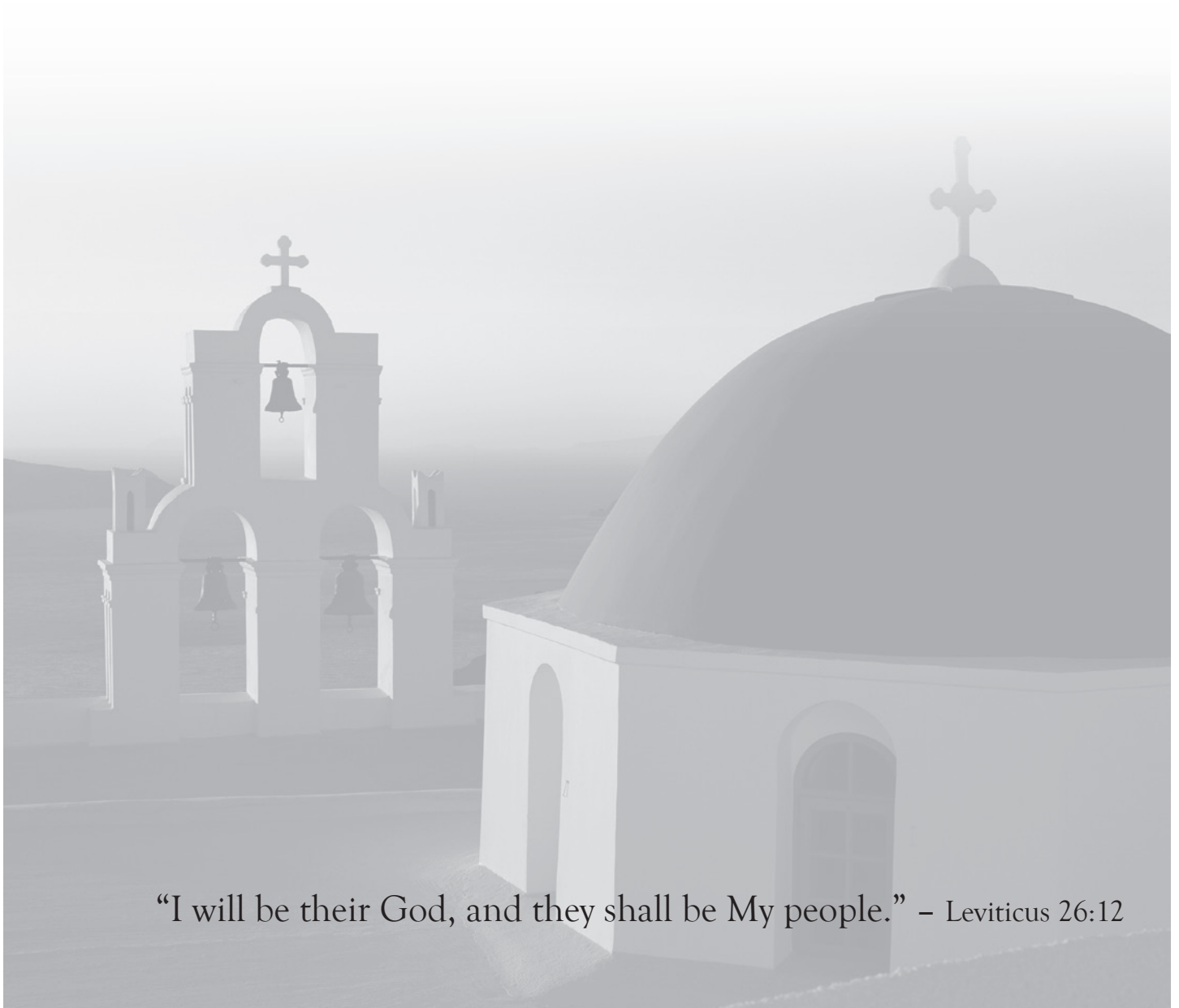
Petros Harry Haramis, who fell asleep in the Lord on February 10, was buried February 17. He is survived by his wife, Ermina, and children, Olympia, Georgia "Gina" and Harry, and their children. *Aionia I Mnimi!* Eternal memory!

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
		basketball practice 7 p.m. Metropolis Clergy Laity	Basketball practice 7 p.m.			Greek School, 10 am Saturday of Souls, Liturgy at the Cemetery Chapel, 10 am Tax Aid, 10 am - 2 pm
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Orthros, 9 am Divine Liturgy, 10:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am OIKOS Lecture Series, Alexander Kozak, Speaker		basketball practice 7 p.m.	Construction Meeting, 10 am Wednesday: basketball practice 7 p.m.	Leave for FDF		Saturday of Souls, Liturgy at the Cemetery Chapel, 10 am Tax Aid, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Orthros, 9 am Divine Liturgy, 10:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am		Soup Kitchen, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm basketball practice 7 p.m.	Wednesday: basketball practice 7 p.m. Tax Aid, 5 pm - 8 pm			Greek School, 10 am
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Orthros, 9 am Divine Liturgy, 10:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am		basketball practice 7 p.m.	Construction Meeting, 10 am Wednesday: basketball practice 7 p.m.	Great Vespers 7 pm	(Annunciation), Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am, Luncheon Following, Second Salutations 7 pm	Greek School, 10 am
27	28	29	30	31		
Orthros, 9 am Divine Liturgy, 10:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am		basketball practice 7 p.m.				

UNITED GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF
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“I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” – Leviticus 26:12