



# ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HERALD



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FEBRUARY 2013

## Cathedral Parish Council Elects Officers for 2013

On January 13, the newly elected officers of the Parish Council were sworn in by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos for the 2013-2014 term. Following the oath of office, the council elected officers for 2013, which are as follows: **President- Dean Nicolacakis, Vice-President- Thomas A. Nuris, Esq., Treasurer- James D. Vorrises, Assistant Treasurers- Nicholas Rally and Patricia Aleck, and Secretary- Gus Vouchilas.** The remaining members of the 2013 Parish Council are **George Ambadiotakis Ambus, Deno C. Konstantinidis, S. Christopher Kyriacou, Perri Tsougarakis Nager, Nikolas M. Stathopoulos, Nicholas Svetcoff, Constantine Tsagaris, and George Vlahos.** In addition, **Philippos Athanasiades** was elected by the Parish Council to complete the term of **John Coundouris**, who has relocated to the East Coast.

We wish each of our Board members good strength and guidance. May the Lord bless their efforts for the growth and well-being of our community.

## ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HAS STARTED LIST SERVER

A list server has been created for the Cathedral. It will allow the Cathedral to communicate effectively via email to our parish and to the general public. A link to sign up to the list server has been included on the home page of our web site, [www.annunciation.org](http://www.annunciation.org). Since December 2013 the Cathedral has started sending the Sunday bulletin, the Herald, and any pertinent parish announcements through the list server. The Sunday bulletin in paper form and the monthly Herald will continue to be mailed out, for those parishioners who wish to continue receiving it this way. We invite those parishioners and friends of the Cathedral who wish to receive these things electronically, as well as (or instead of) paper copies, to sign up! Simply go to the web site, [www.annunciation.org](http://www.annunciation.org), Click on Email list server and subscribe. You'll be glad you did.

## Theosis? What are you? (Part 1 of 2)

by Marcelo P. Souza

St Paul and the other apostles used many images and analogies when speaking of our redemption, and one concept that became central to the Fathers since New Testament times was that of *deification*.



Christ has shared in our poverty so that we may share in the richness of his divinity: for our sakes He became poor, so that through His poverty we might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9); Christ prayed that we might share in the perichoresis of the Trinity, “that they may be one, just as We are one – I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfectly one” (John 17:22-23); we have been made “partakers of his divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

If humans are to share in God’s glory, they are to become by grace what God is by nature, i.e., we are to be deified. As St Athanasius put it,

“The Word was made man in order that we might be made divine [also translated, that we might become god]. He displayed himself through a body, that we might receive knowledge of the invisible Father. He endured insult at the hands of men, that we might inherit immortality.”

This is only possible because we are mystically and ontologically united to Christ through faith, in the Holy Spirit; therefore, our redemption and deification is only possible if Christ is fully God and fully human, and if the Holy Spirit himself is also fully God. In fact, this became central in the Father’s arguments for the deity of Christ and of the Holy

*continued next page*

## 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<br>OVER<br>5 YEARS | PER MONTH<br>OVER<br>5 YEARS | PER DAY<br>OVER<br>5 YEARS | 2 PERSON<br>FAMILY-<br>PER DAY<br>(EACH) | 3 PERSON<br>FAMILY-<br>PER DAY<br>(EACH) | 4 PERSON<br>FAMILY-<br>PER DAY<br>(EACH) |
|----------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| \$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                                   |

*continued from page 1*

Spirit in the fourth century. No one less than God can save humanity, and so Christ must be fully God; but only if He is truly human, as we are, can we humans participate in what He has done for us.

Scripture states that human beings have been created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26). Most of the Greek Fathers made a distinction between those two terms, arguing that the image of God refers to our intellectual capacities and our freedom of will, while the likeness of God refers to our conformity to God according to virtue. Our image has not been lost in the Fall for we retain our reason and human free will; but what Adam failed to do, and that which we must attain through the grace of God enabling our efforts – the *synergia* of God and man – is likeness to God. To become like God is to acquire divine likeness, to be assimilated to God through virtue, and therefore, to be deified, to become a second god, a god by grace.

Adam and Eve were created in the image and likeness of God, but they still had to mature and progress to a greater likeness. Thus, human beings before the Fall were perfect not so much in an actual but in a *potential* sense, for, having the image, they were called to acquire the likeness by their own efforts, assisted by the grace of God (cooperation, *synergia*). As St Irenaeus put it, Adam was in a state of innocence and simplicity, in need of growth unto perfection.

“Above all, pray for your spiritual family.”

– Father Porphyrios

### Sin, Grace, Free Will

After the Fall the likeness is not something with which we are endowed from our first moment of existence; it is a goal for which we must aim, something we can only acquire by degrees. However sinful we may be, we never lose the image, but the likeness depends upon our moral choices, upon our virtue, our cooperation with the grace of God – and conversely, this likeness is destroyed by sin.

The Orthodox Church rejects any account of grace that might seem to infringe upon human freedom; therefore, we, as “fellow workers with God” (1 Cor. 3:9) must make our contribution to this common work – although always recognizing that what God does is of immeasurably greater importance than what we do. There are two unequal but necessary forces that cooperate: divine grace and human will.

The paradigm and supreme example of this is seen in the Theotokos, who said “may it be done according to thy will.” We cannot merit salvation, but we must work it out in fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12-13), for faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:17). Sin has restricted the scope of our free will but has not destroyed it.

### Acquire the Holy Spirit!

St Seraphim of Sarov taught that “the true aim of the Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit.” Vladimir Lossky argues that this “sums up the whole spiritual tradition of the Orthodox Church.” The acquisition of the Holy Spirit is nothing other than deification. The final goal at which every Christian must aim is to become god, to attain theosis; for Orthodoxy, our salvation and redemption mean our deification.

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Just as the Persons of the Trinity inhere in one another in the divine perichoresis, we also are called to dwell in the Trinitarian God, to share in the life of the Trinity, and to dwell in one another in an unceasing movement of love. This idea of personal and organic union between God and humans – God dwelling in us and we in Him – is often highlighted in the gospel of St John[7] and the epistles of St. Paul;[8] again, St Peter speaks of our sharing in the divine nature.

*“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”*

(2 Peter 1:3-4)

#### **A Fourth Member of the Trinity? Essence and Energies.**

It is important to note that the idea of deification must always be understood in the light of the distinction between God’s essence and His energies, as St Gregory of Palamas stated, viz., union with God means union *with the divine energies, not the divine essence*. The latter remains transcendent, inaccessible to creation ontologically, as well as intellectually – thus the need of apophatic theology.

Union with God’s essence would constitute pantheism (or panentheism) which the Orthodox Church rejects. In the mystical union of God and man through deification, the Creator and the creature are not fused into a single being, but remain distinct. Human beings fully retain their personhood even after attaining deification, and their union with God is the analog of the Trinity, where there is unity in diversity. Of course, the distinction being that in the Trinity the Persons share the same numerical nature, whereas human persons only share their specific nature with other humans, and remain human even while participating in the divine nature.

We remain creatures while becoming god by grace, as Christ remained God when becoming man by the Incarnation. We do not become God by nature, but created gods, gods by grace or by status. Nonetheless, deified saints, according to St Maximus, are those who are worthy of God and have one and the same energy with him. Saints do not lose their free will, but when deified they voluntarily conform their will to the will of God in love.

*Part 2 will be included in the March Herald*

“He who clothes himself with patience will see victory and glory.” –St. Nicholas the Serb

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## **Community Link Continues in 2013**

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, please contact Pauline Oetzel at poetzel@hotmail.com. Upcoming Community Link dates for 2013 are: February 16, March 16, and April 20.

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## **WEEKLY CRETAN MUSIC & DANCE WORKSHOP, RIZITES**

Mission Statement: A Cretan dance, instrumental, & song hobby group/ para, where those who want to learn more in general and for the popular Cretan Glendia they participate in regularly during the year throughout California and the U.S. and Crete, can meet to apply and develop their skills confidently and in an authentic way that maintains strong roots.

Content: The study and style execution of Cretan dances and music from the original provinces in Crete they came from.

Moderator/Teacher/Director: **Petros Papageorge**  
petros@athertonappliance.com

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## **MESSINIAN GLENDI**

The 2013 Messinian Glendi will take place Saturday, February 2 at the Annunciation Cathedral. This event has been very successful in the past, with a delicious dinner, dancing to the music of the Mythos Band and fellowship. The proceeds will go to the Cathedral Building Fund. No-host cocktails will begin at 6:30 pm, followed by dinner at 7:30.

For additional information, please contact Kalliope Fousekis at 650 591-5409 or Niki Kastoras at 415 337-7819.

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## **HAPS Luncheon February 10 in Oakland**

The Hellenic American Professionals Society (HAPS) will be holding its 36th annual commemoration of Greek Letters Day, to be held at Ascension Cathedral in Oakland on February 10 at 1 pm. The guest speaker of the luncheon will be

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Dr. Linda Katehi, the Chancellor of the University of California, Davis. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos will also be in attendance. Tickets to the event are \$50. For more information, please contact Jason Bezis at jbezis@yahoo.com.

### Consider joining an OCMC



### Orthodox Mission Team in 2013

Consider joining an OCMC Orthodox Mission Team in 2013. Mission Teams serve our Holy Orthodox Church's unending mission effort that all people may come to know the saving love of our Lord. Be a living witness as a family on a Family Outreach Team in Albania, take part in stewardship training in Uganda, or offer your talents on other OCMC Teams in 2013. Team applications and details are available online at [www.ocmc.org](http://www.ocmc.org) or call the OCMC at 1.877.463.6787 (ext 142) for more information.

### Ionian Village and Spiritual Odyssey 2013

The dedicated staff of the Youth and Young Adult Ministries department of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese has been hard at work these past few years growing the wildly successful Ionian Village program. The following are two programs that have been organized for summer 2013:

#### Ionian Village

Ionian Village, the summer camping ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, is now accepting registrations for its summer 2013 programs. Operating from a beautiful seafront campsite on western Peloponnesus in Greece, Ionian Village brings its campers and staff into close contact with their faith and heritage as they travel throughout the country to sites of cultural and religious importance. Ionian Village offers two camping sessions: Summer Travel Camp and Byzantine Venture. Registration is open to Greek Orthodox youth who have completed grades 7 through 12.

#### Spiritual Odyssey 2013: Cyprus and Crete

While in Cyprus, participants will experience our faith and culture first-hand, visiting sites where the Apostles once preached, also learning about the Cypriot struggle and ongoing division of the island. Participants will also explore the beautiful beaches, food, and culture of the island of Cyprus. Participants will then travel to Crete where they will marvel at the ancient ruins in Knossos and experience the island's rich religious heritage.

**Spiritual Odyssey is an Ionian Village program for young adults, ages 19-28**, giving them an opportunity to travel to sites of both historical and spiritual importance, while exploring their faith with other people their age.

This fun and exciting pilgrimage gives its participants an opportunity to do more than just travel; it allows them to experience the sites of Orthodox and historic importance with other young adults, and most importantly, it allows them to grow together as a group, experiencing their faith and culture with each other and as a family. **Total Cost** (includes airfare) is \$2750.00. All forms and payments are due by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

For more information about any of the Ionian Village programs, or to participate in this summer's programs, visit [www.ionianvillage.org](http://www.ionianvillage.org) or contact the Office of Ionian Village at (212) 570-3536.

*"The spirit of this world makes wolves out of lambs,  
while the Spirit of God makes lambs out of wolves."*

– St. Nicholas the Serb

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

As we enter February, Philoptochos wishes our Annunciation Family members a happy hearts month to all! May your hearts be filled with happiness, good health and good will!

Our Loukomathes Sunday, held on December 23, and Vasilopita Sunday, held on Sunday, January 6 were both successful. We thank all of you who participated in both events. We especially thank those who purchased the breads that the ladies baked. Know that the hands that prepared did so with love and care. We thank Pat & Deedy Aleck who helped underwrite the brunch portion of the day in memory of their parents Jennie & John Pappas. It is our hope that those who won the coin will have a happy and prosperous year. Congrats! The funds raised from the events were sent to St. Basil Academy and to the National Emergency Relief Fund. Our list of ministries that we support is long but with your joining our events we are able to support all of them.

### **"Chosen and Appointed By God to Go and Bear Fruit" : Offering Healing, Peace and Hope**

This slogan of the Clergy Laity Congress and Philoptochos helps us to understand the mission of Philoptochos. January and February are membership months for the Annunciation Philoptochos chapter. When you join as members you are part of a worthy organization that is filled with compassionate giving. As members of this national organization we lead the mission to meet critical needs, and we reach out to those in need in our immediate communities, in addition to the national and Church levels. The faces of Philoptochos are many. Both seasoned and young women take part and work together under God's grace to bear fruit in the lives of oth-



Our Philoptochos ladies at the parish Vasilopita, January 6.



“Some of our ladies attending a tea put on by Mrs. Andreadis at the Greek Consulate.

ers. We need you to ensure our legacy of healing, peace and hope to continue the vision set some eighty years ago. Join us as we move into the future and help us grow and change to ever meet the changing problems in our world. Whether your role is active or supportive you are an important part of Philoptochos that embraces, evolves and gives to others. Call the Philoptochos at 415-864-8000 and join today!

### Go Red Sunday – February 3, 2013

National Philoptochos dedicates a Sunday to promote awareness of heart disease, the number one killer of American women. This is a call to women to take charge of their well-being and live longer. We are asking our Philoptochos members and parishioners to wear red to Church. Information will be available for all on this disease. Make red your color for the day and promote knowledge for healthy and happy living.

Patricia Aleck  
Philoptochos President

“The soul of man is by nature Christian.”  
– Tertullian

## Marriage and Family Retreat at Annunciation During Great Lent 2013

On a Saturday during Great Lent of this year, the Annunciation Cathedral will be hosting a marriage and family retreat from 10 am – 3 pm. **Mr. George Papageorge**, a marriage and family therapist and wonderful presenter will be the keynote speaker of the event. George has made several presentations for the Metropolis of San Francisco as well as other parishes in recent years. Lunch will be provided.

Tentatively, the retreat is scheduled for April 13. Please stay tuned for more information.

## YOUTH NEWS

### Sunday School Korner

February starts with a lesson on the Presentation of the Lord and continues with classic Bible stories and God’s love. We will celebrate a family Liturgy on Sunday, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> in our chapel with the entire community. This is a great experience for all as we are taught something new about the Divine Liturgy or reminded about what we have forgotten. We begin our Lenten lessons in March. We encourage parents/grandparents to bring their children to Sunday School at 10:30 am.

Annunciation Oratorical Festival will be held March 10, 2013 immediately following the Divine Liturgy in the chapel. Please encourage your children grades 5 – 12 to participate. The subjects for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade through 12 grade are on the Archdiocese website, [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org) The website is a fantastic resource. Our classes have started working on their speeches. Please give our youth encouragement to participate. It’s a valuable and fun experience.



Some of our young adults at this year’s Metropolis Young Adult Winter Retreat in Lake Tahoe.

Volunteers are needed to help judge our Oratorical Festival in March. Can you help motivate or teach our children how to write a speech? Attorneys, teachers and public speakers: please help! Be a guest in the classroom, a judge, or a time-keeper to help our young speech writers. Volunteers, please email [dyeilding@yahoo.com](mailto:dyeilding@yahoo.com).

Please see our Spring Schedule for 2013 for important dates.

Denise Yeilding  
Sunday School Principal

### January Youth News JOY Meets at Sogotis Home

On January 14, our Cathedral JOY group met at the Sogotis home in Foster City, and a wonderful time was had by all. In addition to games, dinner, and dessert, there was a group discussion with the kids and Father Niko using clips from the movie "Kung Fu Panda" and Bible stories about the importance of faith. There was also a special cutting of a *Vasilopita*, and an explanation of the significance of this tradition in our faith and culture.

Next month JOY will take a break due to the Folk Dance Festival in which many of the youth of our parish are involved. We'll resume the program in March.

*\*\*JOY (Junior Orthodox Youth) is open to all children grades 3-6 and typically meets the second Monday of each month.\*\**

### Cathedral Young Adults Hold Discussion and Dinner

On January 31, our Cathedral young adults held a discussion about "Faith and the Work Place," led by guest speaker **Tom Papageorge**. Given the nature of San Francisco and the many young professionals who move to the city for work,



Two more of our young adults with Father Niko at the winter retreat.

it was a very relevant topic and a great time was had by all. Dinner was provided. Many thanks to Mr. Papageorge for offering his time for this beautiful ministry.

*\*\*Our Cathedral Young Adult group is open to all young adults ages 22-35, and typically meets the last Thursday of each month.\*\**

## Altar Group Schedule for February

The schedule for the month will be as follows:

February 3- Group 1

February 10- Group 2

February 17- Group 3

February 24- Group 4

The altar group rosters are as follow:

**Group 1- Niko Pezo, Demetri Rally, Stelio Kyriacou, Kosta Lyberopoulos, Andrew Vellis**

**Group 2- Anthony Obester, Demetri Kontonis, Bobby Kontonis, Niko Manetas, Hari Manetas, Matthew Nuris**

**Group 3- Steven Flynn, Clint Flynn, Tony Selianitis, Taumaoe Selianitis, Dimitri Selianitis**

**Group 4- Anthony Tadesse, Jonas Tesfai, Nathan Tesfai, Steven Monolakis, Panagioti Sogotis, Yianni Sogotis**

If any families are interested in their boys joining an altar group (and they are above the age of 10), feel free to contact **Father Niko Bekris** at [fatherniko@annunciation.org](mailto:fatherniko@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!

## Services & Sacraments

At The Cathedral

MARRIAGE

**Nicholas Antonio Aviles Ramos and Johanna Medrana** were united in holy Matrimony on January 12. Their sponsor is **Christopher Ramos**.

*Na Mas Zisoun! (Long Life!)*

# F E B R U A R Y C A L E N D A R

| SUNDAY  | MON.                         | TUESDAY   | WED.   | THURS.  | FRIDAY                       | SATURDAY  |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|---|------------------------------|---|
|   |                              |   |  |   | 1                            | 2   |
|   |                              |   |  |   |                              | Presentation of the Lord, Orthros 9 am,<br>Divine Liturgy 10 am,<br>Messinian Glendi, 6:30 pm |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                     | <b>5</b>  | <b>6</b>   | <b>7</b>  | <b>8</b>                     | <b>9</b>  |
| Orthros at 9:00 am<br>Divine Liturgy at 10:30 am<br>Sunday School 10:30 am<br>Dance Practice 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm                                 |                              | Dance Practice 6:30 pm - 9 pm<br>Adult Greek Class 7 pm - 9:15 pm | Basketball Practice, Boys C, Girls C 7 pm - 8:30 pm                                | Basketball Practice, Boys B, 7 pm - 8:30 pm                                     |                              | Greek School 10 am<br><br>Historical Society meeting 10 am                                    |
| <b>10</b>   | <b>11</b>                    | <b>12</b>   | <b>13</b>  | <b>14</b>   | <b>15</b>                    | <b>16</b>   |
| Orthros at 9:00 am<br>Divine Liturgy at 10:30 am<br>Sunday School 10:30 am<br>Dance Practice 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm                                 |                              | Dance Practice 6:30 pm - 9 pm<br>Adult Greek Class 7 pm - 9:15 pm | Basketball Practice, Boys C, Girls C 7 pm - 8:30 pm                                | Folk Dance Festival, Anaheim<br><br>Basketball Practice, Boys B, 7 pm - 8:30 pm | Folk Dance Festival, Anaheim | Folk Dance Festival, Anaheim<br><br>Community Link, 9 am (NO GREEK SCHOOL)                    |
| <b>17</b>   | <b>18</b>                    | <b>19</b>   | <b>20</b>  | <b>21</b>   | <b>22</b>                    | <b>23</b>   |
| Folk Dance Festival, Anaheim<br><br>(NO SUNDAY SCHOOL)<br>Orthros at 9:00 am<br>Divine Liturgy at 10:30 am<br>Dance Practice 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm | Folk Dance Festival, Anaheim | Dance Practice 6:30 pm - 9 pm<br>Adult Greek Class 7 pm - 9:15 pm | Basketball Practice, Boys C, Girls C 7 pm - 8:30 pm<br><br>Parish Council, 7:30 pm | Basketball Practice, Boys B, 7 pm - 8:30 pm                                     |                              | Greek School 10 am  |
| <b>24</b>   | <b>25</b>                    | <b>26</b>   | <b>27</b>  | <b>28</b>   |                              |   |
| Orthros at 9:00 am<br>Divine Liturgy at 10:30 am<br>Sunday School 10:30 am<br>Dance Practice 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm<br><br>Teaching Liturgy         |                              | Dance Practice 6:30 pm - 9 pm<br>Adult Greek Class 7 pm - 9:15 pm | Basketball Practice, Boys C, Girls C 7 pm - 8:30 pm                                | Basketball Practice, Boys B, 7 pm - 8:30 pm                                     |                              |   |

UNITED GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF  
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“IN THE END, VICTORY AND GLORY BELONG TO THE RIGHTEOUS.  
THEY NEED ONLY TO ARM THEMSELVES WITH  
FAITH AND FORBEARANCE.”

ST. NICHOLAS THE SERB