EPISODE READING OF THE DAY: This morning’s Apostolic Reading is from St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 5, Verses 8-19. It is found in our books on page 126.

The newly formed group Young Adults will practice this Tuesday, December 5, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. WELCOME, YOUR EMINENCE: This morning, we have the great pleasure of welcoming Metropolitan Nikitas of the Dardanelles, Director of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute. Representing His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, His Eminence Metropolitan Nikitas is blessing us during the Divine Liturgy and is with us for the luncheon following the Divine Liturgy, honoring Pat Aleck.

CHRISTMAS JOY LUNCHEON TODAY, HONORING PATRICIA ALECK: Today, we honor Pat with a pre-Christmas luncheon. As we are in the preparation period for the great feast of the Nativity of our Lord, the hall has been "dressed up" for Christmas. The theme of the event is JOY. Joy as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. Joy as we celebrate the spirit of service and generosity, which Pat embodies. Her love for her Church and her life-long dedication to the Cathedral—as Parish Council member, as Stewardship chair, as Parish Council President, as Philotheos member and as Philotheos President. TODAY IS STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY: Today marks the official start of our 2018 Stewardship Campaign. We note the great response so far: we’ve received back over 100 completed cards, through the mail. Many of you have brought your completed card with you and will be placing it in the collection basket at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. We are grateful to you for your continued support of the Cathedral and its ministries. Additional cards are available at the Pangari.

2017 CHRISTMAS CARD: Each year, the Cathedral prepares a community Christmas card, and invites everyone to join in and extend Christmas greetings to another one. Your donation of $25 helps offset the cost of printing and mailing the card. It also helps purchase liturgical items, as candles, Holy Water bottles, etc. We invite your participation. Please see Annette Chiappari, Annamaria Bilan, or Kalliope Fousekis following the Liturgy. Today is the last day for inclusion in the Community Christmas Card.

DANCE PRACTICE TODAY: Dance practice will take place today, following the luncheon, as well as this Saturday, December 9, beginning at 6:15 p.m. and also this Saturday, December 9, beginning at 12:30 p.m. Young Adult Dance Practice: The newly formed group of Young Adults will practice this Tuesday, December 5, beginning at 6:15 p.m. and also this Saturday, December 9, beginning at 12:30 p.m.

BASKETBALL PRACTICE THIS WEEK: Basketball practice will take place this Wednesday, December 6, and Thursday, December 7, beginning at 7 p.m., both evenings. GREAT VESPERS/DIVINE LITURGY FOR ST. NICHOLAS: Great Vespers on the occasion of the Feast of St. Nicholas will take place this Tuesday, December 5, at the Church of St. Nicholas, San Jose, beginning at 7 p.m. On Wednesday, you are cordially invited to the St. Nicholas Church, 5200 Diamond Heights Blvd., San Francisco, for services—10 a.m. Matins, 11 a.m. Divine Liturgy—luncheon following.

HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL ADVENT RETREAT: This retreat will take place on Saturday, December 9, beginning at 9:30 a.m. The speaker is Father John Takahashi, and the topic is the creation of this Orthodox community 150 years ago. Holy Trinity is located at 1520 Green Street, San Francisco.
CLOSER AND CLOSER: We’re in the home stretch. As you can see, we are nearing completion of the exterior. On December 14, we will have our hearing relative to our Conditional Use Permit. The permit will enable us to secure a third-party operator to run the parking. Tentatively, we’ve been given February 1, 2018 for utilization of our parking. As for the interior: we hope to locate a contractor by the end of 2017 for the upper interior wall installation. However, in order for us to continue, we need your prayers and your continued financial support. First, we have outstanding pledges, to the tune of $550,000. May we ask you to make good on your Building Fund pledges by the end of 2017? This will enable us to continue rebuilding. If you have not yet contributed, won’t you consider making your gift this calendar year, before December 31, as your gift is fully tax deductible, to the extent allowed by law? More importantly, you will experience the joy of giving (and to such a historic undertaking!), helping make firm our presence as a Greek Orthodox house of worship in the heart of our Great City. In this way, we will be answering the call by God to Moses, when he said “Build me a Sanctuary, and I will appear among you.” (from the Septuagint: Καὶ ποιήσεις µοι ἁγίασµα, καὶ ὀφθήσοµαι ἐν ὑµῖν). (Exodus 25:8). When everything is completed, we will be able to consecrate the new Cathedral to the glory of God. More than likely, this will take place to coincide with our 100th anniversary, in 2021. We’re in the home stretch, Annunciation!

“The Church shall be a home for Orthodox Christians from every ethnic and national background. It shall be a house of prayer for all humankind, in which the Holy Name of our Triune God shall be extolled and all of creation sanctified.”

(Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Ground breaking, November 6, 1997)