

CROSS CURRENTS – SUMMER 2017

Church of the Holy Cross ❖ 900 Alameda ❖ Belmont CA 94002-1604
650-591-4447 ❖ fax 650-508-9846 ❖ www.goholycross.org ❖ office@goholycross.org

THE HOLY SPIRIT ORDAINS AND FULFILLS

by Father Peter Salmas, Pastor

The faithful of our Holy Cross parish have been blessed to witness many an ordination both to the Holy Diaconate and to the Holy Priesthood. We have then found joy as these young men have faithfully served our beloved community. On Sunday, May 28, we prayerfully witnessed the ordination to the Holy Priesthood of **Deacon Tom Felactu**. Father Tom will be assigned to our parish community, and, I know will serve faithfully, with love and dedication, our Lord's people, our parish family here in His Vineyard.

Saint John Chrysostom shares great wisdom and insight regarding the Holy Priesthood in his writing, "*On the Priesthood*." The following framed quotes have hung in my office for many years. A great blessing gifted to me from a dear parishioner and spiritual child, I now share them with all of you as we welcome Father Tom.



“The work of the priesthood is done on earth, but it is ranked among heavenly ordinances. And this is only right, for no man, no angel, no archangel, no other created power, but the Paraclete Himself ordained this succession, and persuaded men, while still remaining in the flesh, to represent the ministry of angels...” On the Priesthood Book, 7, iii. 4

Truly, each of us, as priests of the Most High, take this great and awesome responsibility humbly and with trembling, knowing that we rely totally on our Lord's grace, wisdom, and love to serve those entrusted to us by His design. Those who serve the Lord are, in fact, above the angels, for we touch the very Body of our Lord at every Divine Liturgy as we prepare the precious gifts offered to the faithful through the Holy Eucharist.

On the day of his ordination, Father Tom had placed within his hands the *Amno*, the consecrated Host, the very Body of Christ. **His Eminence**, as he placed the *Amno* in the hands of the newly ordained said the following:

“Receive this Trust and guard it until the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ when He shall demand it of you.”

Saint John Chrysostom also states the following:

“I know how weak and puny my own soul is: I know the importance of that ministry and the great difficulty of it. More billows toss the priest’s soul than the gales which trouble the sea.” On the Priesthood, Book 8, iii, 7

We prayed on bended knees, as His Eminence placed his hands upon the head of Father Tom and ask the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete to fulfill that which is lacking in him, strengthening him for the great challenges he will face as a priest. May our prayers and the intercessions of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, whom we commemorated on May 28, strengthen, guide, and protect His newly ordained servant, Father Tom, and his family always.

AXIOS!

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

by Father Tom Felactu, Assistant Priest

Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. - Proverbs 22:6

In a sermon I delivered a few months ago, I referenced a country song by **Rodney Atkins** “Watching You.” The point of this song is a young boy wants to be like his dad, learning from watching his dad and **his actions**. He doesn’t only learn from what he is taught verbally, but from the **actual actions** of his father. Every time the boy does something, whether good or bad, the father asks where the boy learned the behavior. Each time the boy replies, “I’ve been watching you dad ain’t that cool, I’m your buckaroo, I wanna be like you!”

As I have been speaking with fellow clergy and various youth workers across America, I am astonished to see the same trend and challenges we all face. The growing demands placed on our youth from school and ultimately society. It is difficult not to fall into the trap set before us. We all want our children to have an advantage in life, to become successful and responsible citizens. However, it is difficult for me to see the number of “things” that take precedence over our Lord and His Church. We may not realize that this is the message we are giving to our youth.

I recently read an article entitled, *Losing our Religion: On “Retaining” Young People in the Orthodox Church*. It was written by **Seraphim Danckaert**, an alumnus of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. He shared the following:

Data collected and interpreted by sociologists of religion in a major project called the National Study of Youth and Religion show that there are three main factors that contribute to a young person retaining their religious tradition into adulthood: The young person’s parents practiced the faith in the home and in daily life, not just in public or churchly settings. The young person had at least one significant adult mentor or friend, other than parents, who practiced the faith seriously. The young person had at least one significant spiritual experience before the age of 17. One could therefore say that a person is most likely to retain Christian faith throughout adult life if he or she had three meaningful and healthy relationships in their early to mid-teenage years: one with faithful Christian parents, one with a faithful Christian mentor outside of the family, and one with God Himself.

This should motivate us. It shows us that it is possible to impact our children's choices. Danckaert continues:

If a young person experiences all three relationships in their childhood and especially in their early teenage years, they are far less likely to drift away from their family's faith tradition as they transition into "emerging adulthood" and beyond. In addition, while all three relationships are important, what the young person **observes in the actions** and daily life of his or her parents is the most decisive element by far. The data is clear: patterns of religious conviction and observance are set far before one's 20s or 30s.

Kendra Dean, author of *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* wrote, "One of the major findings of the National Study of Youth and Religion is that American teenagers are actually very good at practicing the faith that their parents teach them: not what parents say they believe, but what they actually believe as **evidenced by actions.**" The key to her findings, again, points to a parent's actions.

The most important sociologist of religion to develop these findings is **Christian Smith**. Smith holds a chair in sociology of religion and also directs a research center at the University of Notre Dame. In an interview regarding one of his more recent books, Smith summarizes his findings on faith and religious practice amongst "emerging adults." One of his key points in his interview speaks to:

"the importance of parents forming the religious and spiritual lives of their children. A lot of parents think that they don't matter anymore once their kid hits teenager years, but their influence still has a huge impact on their children, for better or worse. Parents have a lot of responsibility for the religious beliefs and practices of their children, even when they pass beyond the teenage years."

We need to take action! Our youth are watching us, and the priorities we set in our life. They will mirror what they see. Summer is here, it is a time of less structure. Let us show our children, that even during the summer, Church takes priority. When we are on vacation, let us lead by example, and attend whichever church is closest to our destination for Sunday liturgy. For God does not take a vacation from us, nor should we take a vacation from Him.

THOUGHTS ON ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA AND WEALTH

by Konstantine Salmas, Lay Assistant

Giving up wealth is not a new thing. Before Christ, many people gave up wealth. Saint Clement wants us to look closer at the conversation between Christ and the rich man. He says that wealth is meant to be subservient. It is meant to have a ruler. Regarding the use of wealth, he writes, "If you use it skillfully, it is skillful; if you are deficient in skill, it is affected by your want of skill, being itself destitute of blame." He then discusses what should be our focus, humans, who are meant to be in charge of things. "That then which of itself has neither good or evil, being blameless, ought not to be blamed; but that which has the power of using it well and ill, by reason of its possessing voluntary choice. And this is the mind and judgment of man, which has freedom in itself and self-determination in the treatment of what is assigned to it. So let no man destroy wealth, rather than the passions of the soul, which are incompatible with the better of use of wealth." Our work is cut out for us. We are meant to destroy the passions of the soul.

This is the work that change our mind and make it fit for wisdom. He writes, "So that, becoming virtuous and good, he may be able to make a good use of these riches." The bottom of the left column on p. 595 (of *The Nicene Fathers*) is important for understanding how Christ's instruction, "Sell your possessions," has a meaning beyond the surface interpretation. Saint Clement writes, "The renunciation, then, and selling of all possessions, is to be understood as spoken of the passions of the soul." What has to be sold are not things or money, but the passions of the soul. This is what we have to give away.

We have to get rid of possessions. But it's not external possessions, because getting rid of external possessions, doesn't help our disposition. A person can get rid of wealth and still be, "rich in passions." Our focus needs to be on those things that effect our disposition. "We must therefore renounce those possessions that are injurious, not those that are capable of being serviceable, if one knows the right use of them." Christ wants us to get rid of the things that make us poor decision makers regarding external possessions: the passions of our soul. The loss of this, 'wealth,' is the greatest thing. Notice how he has made the disposal of wealth, disposal of the passions, a wonderful thing to give away. He takes advantage of the image of giving away wealth, and applies it so that getting rid of the passions of our soul becomes a, 'giving away of wealth.'

The soul is the thing that acquires a wealth - the passions - that becomes a barrier to our following Christ. "That soul is unclean which is rich in lusts, and is in the throes of many worldly affections." Here, the word rich, is key because it has the association with wealth, the wealth, or possession, that we have to give away. He gives an example in Chapter XVI of a person who has accomplished this and who is wealthy externally. He presents as the litmus test the wealth being removed from a person who used wealth in line with the getting rid of the passions. He writes, "...even should he be necessarily some time or other deprived of them, is able with cheerful mind to bear their removal equally with their abundance." Because of their disposition to wealth - it is of God, to be given to others for salvation - then they are not distraught when it is removed. This is because the wealth had not become their heart, it had not become their identity, which is the danger. "But he who carries his riches in his soul, and instead of God's Spirit bears in his heart gold or land, and is always acquiring possessions without end, and is perpetually on the outlook for more - whence can he be able to desire and to mind the kingdom of heaven (Chapter XVII)." Selling of the possessions is the getting rid of the passions as opposed to acquiring the passions, acquiring "wealth."



CHURCH FAMILY

by Anastacia Stamates, Parish Council President

When I talk about my church family with non-Greeks, non-Orthodox, I have trouble explaining how we are "related." The explanation is always very long: "We are koumbari" followed by an attempt at a definition, or "he's the cousin of my really good friend that I went to IV with," or "our families have known each other since before I was born." So, I just say call everyone my "fake cousin" – it's much, much easier.

I bring this up because I am writing this on Sunday, Mother's Day actually, and I spent much of the day with my family and church family. Today was the 40-Day Blessing for **Paul Anthony**, my nephew, to which I brought my entire Sunday School class. Next was the Mother's Day Luncheon: food and fellowship celebrating our mothers.

How do you explain your church family to those outside of the church? These are relationships built by sharing our lives: times of joy and times of sorrow, times of hard work and times of celebration. Many of these relationships begin at birth, and others much later in life as we welcome new “cousins.”

If we are a church family then the church itself is our home. At the Mother’s Day Luncheon, as I watched my two-year-old nephew, **Constantine**, walk around and go up to people, I realized church and all the people in it are already very familiar to him, he behaved as if he were at home, because of course, he is.

In the next several months, we will be launching a campaign to undertake some much-needed capital improvements at the church: replacing the roofs on the buildings, a new furnace for the church, and more. Just like we sometimes have to undertake major projects to care for our family homes, we must do the same for our church family home.

I look forward to sharing the details of this campaign in the coming months.

PREP

by Konstantine Salmas, Lay Assistant

Get ready from now for where you want to be. Get ready. If you want to be in Liturgy more on Sundays, get ready for barriers to pop up. September is going to happen. Are you ready for it happen? Are you ready for any shifts you want to make in your activity with the Church? If so, get ready from now. If you want your kids to do some of the activities this summer with our youth programs, get ready from now. Get ready from now for your participation next year with Religious Ed, with Liturgy, with the Festival. What is it that you want to be doing? Inquire. If you want to begin participation in something, get ready from now by looking at how these things might change you. Changing our schedules always changes us because it changes the people we know and shifts our levels of exposure to the components that make up our life. Get more involved with something here next year, but prepare from now.

Preparing from now will give you time to see what barriers pop up. Barriers can be schedule barriers and also mental barriers. Here, we are preparing for next year. Prepare for next year. Prepare your family for next year. Prepare for where you want to be so next year goes well.

FROM THE JANITOR’S CLOSET

by Tyke Stamates, Facilities Manager

I can’t believe another year has flown by. A lot has happened -- we have a new President, we have a new Priest. I am older, and my grandson has a new brother and I have another grandson. The Warriors are doing great and the 49ers did not.

My brother the PHOTOGRAPHER and his wife returned from Africa and took some great photos, go to *stamates.com*, click on *Pictures* and click on *Rwanda* and look for photo Africa-146 -- that’s our cousin ... Enjoy.

George Milanos became a grandfather, congratulations George! He waited almost as long as I did for a grandchild.

The mosaics are almost completed. The new mosaics behind the choir loft are magnificent and completes the message.

In the past year, we have been busy upgrading our electrical system, we have designed and updated fixtures for better lighting and efficiencies. As an example, we will have a new light pole in the

parking lot with new LED lights that are brighter and will last for years and years. Saving on replacement costs.

With a new year comes new problems or should I say same problems but getting worse. The infrastructure of our buildings need upgrading ... repair, modifications and the furniture needs replacing. During the recent storms, we developed leaks in The Oaks, quad one sky light and the Kitchen skylight. The Oaks need painting, chairs and tables need replacing and we need two new furnaces in the Church. We need new carpeting in the church office and The Oaks. We need new floors in all the Preschool buildings. Our equipment is so old that we cannot get replacement parts for what we have, there is more but I think you all get the idea.

I believe it is time to start accepting donations specifically for renovating our buildings. The longer we wait the more expensive it will get to bring our Church up to date.

At our Spring General Assembly, we learned of the committee, "Operation Facelift." They have started meeting and the ball is rolling. Everyone including our Hierarchs realize that the Lord's house must be strong. We must be responsible stewards. Let us be generous with our time, talent, and treasure! It is going to be a great year!

ORDER OF RESPECTED ADULTS

by Daisy Fernando, O.R.A. President

Our organization, ORA, has recently entered our 38th year. What began with a few senior parish members in 1979 has grown to 121.

We are now well into 2017 and would like to extend an invitation to all Holy Cross parishioners 55+ to please come and join us on the first Tuesday of each month for fellowship and a catered hot lunch. The annual dues are \$15.00.

Each year we begin with our Vasilopeta Luncheon and follow each month with a theme luncheon ending the year with our Annual Christmas Luncheon.

During the year, we have guest speakers, and on June 6, we travelled by invitation to meet the Annunciation Seniors in Sacramento for a day of fellowship and lunch.

At our Mother's and Father's Day Luncheon on May 2 our members welcomed **Father Tom Felactu** a few days after his ordination to Deaconate. *Axios!* We were blessed to participate at the Ordination Luncheon celebrating Father Tom's ordination to the Holy Priesthood and offered him a gift on behalf of our organization.

On behalf of our Board, Vice President **Virginia Coppock**, Secretary **Helen Valavanis** and Treasurer **Cathy Zamenes**, we invite you to come meet old and new friends and share the fellowship and fun.



PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

by the Philoptochos Board

It truly has been a very busy spring for the ladies in the Philoptochos. In March, we had a wonderful **Women's Health and Wellness Retreat** where we welcomed nearly 100 women. We were enlightened

by knowledgeable keynote speakers who shared information on how a healthy brain can promote a healthy body, how homes may not always be safe havens for families, how we can identify and live with diabetes, and how we can use mindful movement to become healthier. These were just a few of the topics we learned about. We also enjoyed a breakfast buffet, a delicious lunch, and a wine, chocolate and cheese tasting!



For Easter we once again decorated the **Epitaphio** with beautiful flowers through the generous donations received from our parish. As always it was so lovely with red and white roses and gardenias. Thank you to all who participated.

Only two weeks after Pascha, we had our annual **Fashion Show**. This year we enjoyed *Mystery on the Orient Express*. The room was decorated with a beautiful backdrop and wonderful travel cases filled with vintage style treasures as centerpieces. The luncheon prepared by **Chris Tsardoulis** and his chefs began with an amazing papaya and shrimp salad followed by a delicious London broil entrée. We were entertained by the *After Eight Singers* and there was even a command performance by **Her Royal Majesty Virginia Coppock**. The Board extends its appreciation to all who took part in the show, including the beautiful models and talented performers in the show and all the wonderful ladies of our parish who came to lend a hand.



On **June 6** the Philoptochos will hold a **general meeting** where a new Board will be elected for the next two-year term.

Before we enjoy a little down time in the summer, we held a special coffee hour for the recipient of the **Philoptochos Church and Community Service Award** (congratulations **Jonna Hohenthal!**) and **Religious Education Graduation** and will hold another coffee to honor our Dads on **Father's Day**.

Have a wonderful summer!

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

by Maria Johnson, YRE Director



Good Friday Retreat - On Good Friday, we were blessed to have about seventy-five students join us for a religious education retreat. The day began with the Royal Hours Service, after which the students were split into groups by grade. Throughout the day, they participated in discussions about iconography and its purpose as a means of instruction, storytelling, art, and spiritual support, focusing particularly on the Crucifixion and Resurrection icons.



Konstantine Salmas led the students in a tour of the iconography of our church, while **Eva Canellos** taught hymns that the children would be singing during the Paschal services. The students also had the chance to paint their own icons centered on the theme

of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, which were then hung as a spectacular collage in the gymnasium. Finally, all of the students participated in stewardship projects, some preparing the candles for *Anastasi*, some cleaning the sanctuary, and other decorating the icons with gorgeous flowers.

The retreat also marked the culmination of our religious education Lenten stewardship project: collecting shoes and donations for “My New Red Shoes,” a non-profit organization that serves youth in our local community. Because of your generosity, we raised about \$800, donated several pairs of shoes, and made 150 cards for the children! Moreover, our youth had the opportunity to give back to their community and experience Lent more fully. Thank you again for supporting us in this endeavor! We couldn’t have done it without you!



After a delicious, fasting-friendly lunch prepared by **Thomy Iuppa** and her team, this beautiful and meaningful day concluded with a group photograph and our return to church for the Descent from the Cross. It was with some sadness that I noticed several of the students were not present to participate in the afternoon service, and I hope that next year, all of the children at the retreat will then be able to attend the services, remembering that this is a necessary component – even the purpose – of our fellowship, stewardship, and experience of church life.



Commencement - The students have learned so much throughout this wonderful year, with all of the Sunday School lessons informing them of their own pivotal role within our Church community to give them the tools to actively participate in the services, with the intention of empowering them to actively pursue a relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I pray that you will continue to reinforce

these lessons in your homes, especially as the family is the ultimate image of Christ's love for His Church.

On June 4, we celebrated Pentecost, along with Commencement from Religious Education for our youth. This was also a Singing Sunday, and we listened to the beautiful voices of our children. We congratulate our graduates and thank our teachers for this meaningful stewardship.

A Fond Farewell - It has been such an honor and a pleasure to serve as your Religious Education director this year. I have loved getting to know you all better and having this opportunity to work with you. Thank you for all of your support, encouragement, and communication throughout the year. I shall step down in order to take maternity leave next year but look forward to working with you all again in the future. Until then, I am thrilled to announce your Religious Education teaching staff for next year:

Preschool—**Nektaria Tsiglieris**

1st Grade—**Olivia Bagis** and **Gina Schmidt**

2nd Grade—**Eleni Baxter** and **Zaf Kyriakis**

3rd/4th Grade—**Anastacia Stamates** and
Allison Virsik

5th/6th Grade—**Irene Ritterman**

7th/8th Grade—**Athena Kozar**

High School—**Xandra Nemchik**

Have a spectacular, fun, and safe summer! We look forward to seeing you next year!

[NEWS! We celebrate with **Alan** and **Maria Johnson** the birth of a newborn son! Να σας ζησει!]

GREEK SCHOOL

by Katina Mandas, Greek School PTO

So much has been going on at our Greek School! Most importantly on October 1st, the Greek School celebrated its 50th anniversary! A gala was held at the church and there was dinner and dancing. Honorable guests included **His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos**; **Mr. Dimitrios Xenitellis**, Consul General of Greece in San Francisco; **Ambassador Eleni Kounalakis**, former United States Ambassador to Hungary; **Father Peter**; and, of course, **Mrs. Theodora Kounalakis**. A fun time was had by all especially the kids! The gala made the cover of the National Herald for Greek Americans as well as the Archdiocese's "Orthodox Observer." On behalf of the gala committee and the PTO Board, I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for supporting our 50th anniversary celebration. You devoted your time to helping us set up day and night to make the event a huge success, you solicited and/or donated auction items, you bought tickets, sponsored the event, brought your kids, ate and danced the night away and in the end, we had a fabulous time marking a truly incredible milestone. The fact that our school is now getting NATIONAL RECOGNITION is a testament to the strength of our school and community and is the icing on our 50th Anniversary cake! More details can be found at: <http://sanfran.goarch.org/news/belmont-greek-school-celebrates-50th-anniversary>





Speaking of celebrations, the Greek Independence Day celebration lunch took place on March 26. The students from all three programs did a fantastic job. The sold-out audience enjoyed watching the children, sing, recite poems, dance and celebrate. It was truly a beautiful show and we were very proud of all those who participated and helped make the event such a success. Thank you!

The annual Learn-a-Thon also just wrapped up. The students showed off their Greek language skills while raising money for the school. The money goes to a special teacher fund as the tuition fees do not cover all the expenses. It is not too late to donate! Please consider sponsoring a child – any amount is appreciated. Congratulations to all those who participated.

After 34 years with our Greek School working as teacher, Assistant Director and Director, Mrs. Theodora Kounalakis will be retiring. It is bittersweet for all of us here at the school. Words cannot properly express our gratitude. She has given of her time, energy, and heart to this school. She is the force behind all things little and large for our school. Under her leadership, the school grew from 1 to 3 programs, became the center of the Certificate of Attainment testing center, expanded to include a Pre-K program, and began our May Day field trips. She was also the President of the Hellenic Education and Culture Committee and the director of the Saint Nicholas Ranch Camp. We wish

her all the best in her retirement. She will be missed!

Last, but not least, our summer school camp will be the week of June 19th! Back by popular demand, the week will be devoted to making



and enjoying traditional Greek dishes! The kids will all do crafts, sing, dance, and most importantly immerse themselves in the Greek language. As I write this there are only 5 more spaces available. Please contact Theodora at theodorakounalakis@gmail.com to enroll.

Happy Summer to all!

HOLY CROSS DANCE PROGRAM

by Paul Flocas, Dance Program Director

This year's Folk Dance Festival (FDF) was held in San Diego in February. FDF is a great opportunity for all dancers to experience Faith, Dance and Fellowship, with their fellow dancers from all over California.

Holy Cross was very well represented sending 5 groups and close to 100 dancers to FDF. Our dance groups ranged in age from Pre-K to High School and beyond. All the groups had amazing performances and we are so very proud of them.

I would like to especially recognize the following groups who came away with some special awards:

- *Nea Zoi* – Third Place (Junior Category) and
- *Thavma* – Founders Special Achievement award for their excellent improvisation of *Rethymnon* suite (Advanced Junior Category)

Congratulations to all!



Donation to the Holy Cross Dance Program by the Order of AHEPA

Who is the Order of AHEPA you may ask? The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) was founded in 1922, in response to the evils of bigotry and in order to combat discrimination, and to assist Greek immigrants assimilate into American society.

The mission of the AHEPA family is to promote Hellenism, education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence.

AHEPA president, Leo Maheras, presented the Holy Cross dance program with a donation of \$500.

On behalf of the dance program I would like to thank the Order of AHEPA for their very generous donation to the Holy Cross dance ministry and for continuing their goal of promoting Hellenism.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Order of AHEPA please contact Leo Maheras.

2017 BELMONT GREEK FESTIVAL – IT’S A BIG DEAL!

by Mary Clay, Chair

A new year is a time for reflection. It’s a time of appreciation and planning and praying for happiness and good health. It’s a time to remember all the successes – and shortcomings – from the previous year. It’s time to set goals and get ready to do it again and do it better.

As one of the Festival chairpersons, and new to the process, I must say 2016 taught me a lot. I realized what I loved most about being a Festival chair in 2016, is connecting with all the people who make the Festival happen, and getting to know more people in the parish. COMMUNITY. Many, many people work hard for many months. I also realized that there really is only a couple of months in which we take a rest from Festival preparations and planning. During the rest of the year there are tasks to complete, forms to fill out, orders to submit, permits to obtain, and so much more. PROSPERITY. Believe it or not, it is that time again! LEGACY.

Mike Orth and I are dedicating another year to co-chairing 2017 BGF. Our goal is to give another try in raising our profits even higher.

Some facts from 2016:

- 44% profit or \$177,000
- Belmont Greek Festival Facebook Page:
 - 768 likes and counting – the activity doesn’t stop
 - At least 10 different posts reached over 1,500 people each (some reached over 4,500 people)
- Flickr – did you know there are Festival pictures posted on Flickr? You can access through the Church’s website. (See the small Flickr icon , top right.)

Moving into the future, 2017:

- Improve on the changes from 2016.
- Secure more **SPONSORSHIPS**, driving our profits higher than ever before.
- Fund Raise!
- Utilize social media more to our advantage.
- Continue with Festival meetings throughout the year.

Stay tuned for more information on the following:

- Kitchen Prep Schedule (see below)
- Festival Meetings / Updates – be sure you are receiving our e-mails. Let us know by e-mail if not.
- New marketing and sponsorship packages.

Mike and I can be reached via festivalchairs@goholycross.org. Suggestions and feedback from 2016 are welcomed and encouraged.



The Belmont Greek Festival – It’s a big deal!

WE NEED YOU FOR FESTIVAL COOKING AND BAKING! Please call any of the chairs below if you can lend a hand (no experience necessary). We still need a chair for **Paximadia**. Recipes and supplies (and help if you need it) will be provided – please call Marian at 504-8136 if you can help.

Dolmades	6/23-24	Sat-Sun	Soula Stathopoulos 592-5771 / Amalia Tragas 873-8084
Koulourakia	7/13	Tuesday	Othonia Makris 593-2537
Galaktoboureko	7/15-16	Sat-Sun	Tanya Spirtos 279-9776 / Marian Peris 504-8136
Spanakopita	7/21-23	Fri-Sun	Othonia Makris 593-2537
Tiropita	7/21-23	Fri-Sun	Niki Dakis 345-0104
Moussaka	7/29-31	Sat-Mon	Thomy Iuppa 408-737-7291
Melomakarona	8/1	Tuesday	Kathy Polychroniou 593-7425 (baking)
Baklava	8/7-8/9	Fri-Sun	Emmy Denton 415-987-3130 / Marian Peris 504-8136
Kourambiedes	8/10	Thursday	Terry Smith 595-4363
Yuvetsi	8/12	Sat	Chris Canellos 529-0180
Pastitsio	8/21-22	Mon-Tues	Kathy Polychroniou 593-7425 / Father Peter Salmas
Kataifi	8/25	Fri	Marian Peris 504-8136
Melomakarona	8/29	Tuesday	Kathy Polychroniou 593-7425 (syrup)
Kardithopita	8/30	Wed	Marian Peris 504-8136

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BAPTISMS & CHRISMATIONS

October 29, 2016 – Athanasios Christos, son of Konstantinos and Ioanna Kollias; Kevin Rafael McNalley, sponsor

December 10 – Ava, daughter of Arthur and Alysia Krupsky; Stephanie Hook & Alexis Parlantos, sponsors

December 17 – Emilia, daughter of Georgios and Annette Margaritis; Nikolaos Chalikiopoulous & Vasiliki Margariti

February 12, 2017 – Ava, daughter of Arash and Harikleia Aryana; Ornela & Flutra Hasa, sponsors

April 22 – Marietta Theodora, daughter of Diamantis Kourkouzelis & Tina Bratis; Georgia Kakali & Ioannis Konstantakopoulos, sponsors

May 13 – Theodore Stanton, son of Scott & Melissa Kaiser; Elias Kozanitas, sponsor

May 13 – Alexander Nicholas, son of Scott & Melissa Kaiser; Elias Kozanitas, sponsors

May 20 – Jaxon Cash, son of Christopher & Cristina Simmons; Jordan Janet Newell, sponsor

June 3 – Charles Angelos, son of Dionysios & Erin Kakoliris-Kekos; Tom George Stavropoulos, sponsor

FUNERALS

Pete Boubare, who fell asleep in the Lord, October 8, 2016

Vula Stamos, who fell asleep in the Lord, December 28, 2016

Vasiliki (Vaso) Kounalakis, who fell asleep in the Lord, January 19, 2017

James Elias Gavros, who fell asleep in the Lord, January 21, 2017

Bessie Deppen, who fell asleep in the Lord, February 8, 2017

Art Longinidis, who fell asleep in the Lord, March 6, 2017

Richard Gedymin, who fell asleep in the Lord, March 27, 2017

Bessie Korpontinos, who fell asleep in the Lord, April 4, 2017

Vasiliki Bess Husmas, who fell asleep in the Lord, May 29, 2017

Please let the church office know if we are missing your sacrament or have incorrect information.

COMMUNITY CARDS

We missed including some names in the Community Christmas and Easter Cards. We include them here along with our hopes that you and your family continue to have a blessed, healthy, and prosperous year.

CHRISTMAS:

Mary Anagnostou
Karim, Kristen, Bendely & Elias Azar
The Bangs Family
Gary & Arleen Brenner
Steve, Irene, Lexi & Lia Chapralis
Betty Gagianas
James & Yvonne Gavros
Michael & Melinda Glafkides and Family,
Conner, Juliana & Nick
Mr. & Mrs. David Iuppa
K. & M. Kolokithas
Tom & Alexia Laris
Marjorie Mandanis
John Maris
Evelyn Pappageorge
Kathy Polychroniou & Family
The Andrew Salis Family
Mary Speros
Anastacia Stamates

Patricia K. Stratigos
Edward Taylor
The Thodos Family
Xenophon & Carlene Tragoutsis
Greg, Annette, Andrea & Justin Vlahos
Ted & Cathy Zamenes

EASTER:

Mr. & Mrs. Harry Breeze
Emmy Denton
Alexandra Fotis
Tony & Katy Haldezos
Ioannis Kanellakopoulos
The Melas Family, in memory of Dimitri E.
Melas
The Peros Family
Pete, Stacey & Vicki Samaras
Maraki Vlasis

DEAR STEWARDS OF HOLY CROSS,

With 2017 nearly half over I offer my profound thanks to all of our Stewards who have made their yearly financial pledge offering supporting our community as we preach the Word of God and minister to many including the welcoming of new families to Holy Cross.

It is with excitement and joy that I thank you for making such a sacrificial and important gift. I also ask that you take a few moments to pray and think about the monetary pledge you make for our parish, either through our website, or by filling out the pledge form you received by mail, pledging in faith your financial commitment to Holy Cross for 2017. It represents you and your love for our Lord and His Church of the Holy Cross.

Yes, all of us feel the challenge to meet our daily obligations. But we also do so as we witness our Lord's miraculous and lifesaving interventions daily. Placing our church parish at the top of our financial priority list tells God that we consider His love and care most important. For it is through the stewardship that we are called by God to offer, that we express our genuine love and dedication to Him. In so doing, we continue to receive His grace, mercy, and abundant and compassionate care a hundred-fold.

I encourage those families who still have not made their financial pledge to Holy Cross to do so today. It is important for you, your family, and your parish family. We all collectively make our parish strong and vibrant.

Thank you for your prayerful commitment that helps sustain our parish and collectively strengthens our commitment to serve Him who has sacrificed so much for us.



Thank you to the over 250 parishioners and parishioner families who have sent in their 2017 pledge cards. If you haven't done so yet, please consider sending in your pledge for 2017. Use the pledge form and return envelope that were sent to you in April, or send in your Stewardship Pledge, Stewardship, and other donations **on-line** at our website. Visit www.goholycross.org and click on the "Stewardship 2017" banner at the top. Thank you for your support of Holy Cross Church!



ALSO . . . If you are NOT currently receiving news from the church **by e-mail** (like *Cross Currents* or Father Peter's "For Consideration") and would like to help the church save money, time, and resources, please allow us to keep you up-to-date via e-mail by e-mailing us a "YES" from your "family" e-mail address (or the one you read most often). Thank you!

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS

900 Alameda

Belmont, CA 94002-1604