



MISSION NEWSLETTER

From the Heart of Fr. Costas

My dearest ones,

May God bless you,

We find ourselves getting closer to Holy Week and on April 11th we will celebrate the last of the Salutations to the Theotokos, also known as the Akathist Hymn. The week which follows is called *Koufe Evdomada* or “Deaf Week.” This means that it is a week of liturgical inactivity to give Orthodox Christians a week “off” to collect their thoughts and strength prior to the intensive experience of Holy Week during which we have services every day and sometimes twice a day.

Many people have been attending the Lenten services and I am certain they enjoyed them. I would like to thank all those who came and assisted with the services, especially the choir and chanters, the young Liturgical Readers and the altar boys. If you have not been attending the Lenten services, it is not too late either in time or effort since there is plenty of room for spiritual improvement in each of us. Do you remember the parable of the Lord about the workers who came to work in the fields at different hours of the day? Some came from the beginning, others in the middle of the day and yet others at the very end of the day but each received the same wage at the end. This means that God accepts us all, even if we turn to Him late. Come and participate in what remains of Lent and then Holy Week and you will see how much more meaningful Pascha will be for you.

No Church has more beautiful services than the Orthodox Church. It begins with the Saturday of Lazarus, April 19th. After we enjoy the Divine Liturgy, we will have a breakfast and make palm crosses. Confessions will also be heard that afternoon. The following day the Philoptochos will offer a fish luncheon after we celebrate the Lord’s magnificent entrance into Jerusalem.

Then the mood of Holy Week changes as we begin the week with three “Bridegroom Services.” The Lord is the

Bridegroom but we follow His steps on the way to His crucifixion and resurrection. On Holy Tuesday we hear the beautiful hymn of Kassiane and on Holy Wednesday we receive one of the seven major sacraments, that of Holy Unction for healing, health and the remission of sins. On Great and Holy Thursday morning we celebrate the most important Divine Liturgy of the year, in which we remember the Last Supper and we prepare the Holy Communion which will be taken to the sick during the entire year. That night we witness the Holy Passion of our Lord and His crucifixion, highlighted by twelve gospel readings and many extraordinary prayers and hymns. On Great and Holy Friday, we have the Service of the Unnailing from the Cross in mid-afternoon and the Burial of Christ in the evening with the singing of beautiful lamentations and a solemn procession around the church. The extraordinarily beautiful Divine Liturgy of Great and Holy Saturday morning is called “the First Resurrection,” and then late that night we meet again for the midnight Resurrection Service. The week concludes with the Agape Vespers on Easter Day in which we read the gospel in as many languages as possible.

Please take the free booklets we are providing for you which explain Great Lent and Holy Week and follow the services every day. If you want to know more about the Lord’s trials and crucifixion, you can listen to Presvytera Jeannie’s explanations on Ancient Faith Radio. Go to ancientfaith.com, then to “podcasts” and find her program, “Search the Scriptures.” You can click on the arrow to hear the lesson on demand at any time that is convenient. You can also download the lesson and put it on a CD and listen in your car. Her site has already received more than 3,000 hits!

Wishing you a very spiritual and meaningful Holy Week, I remain, the happiest priest, † Fr. Costas

Steering & Operations

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*Executive Committee Member

Mission Statement

“To establish a Greek Orthodox Church in South Orange County which follows, preserves and continues our timeless religious beliefs and traditions and emphasizes our Hellenic heritage, customs and values.”

Please email r.henning1@juno.com with any monthly newsletter in-put suggestions by the last week of the month preceding publication.

Now for the Good News
President's Letter

I am honored to be President. Although my family was not living here when our community first started, we have been here since our church was a *Single Purpose Parish* (SPP) getting together for the single purpose of celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Today, we are a Multi-Purpose Parish (MPP) embodying GOYA, YAL Ladies Auxiliary, Dance Groups, a Social Club, Sunday School, Greek School. Our tremendous growth and continued momentum is attributable to our positive proactive Greek Orthodox community members. Let's carry the zest we get on Sunday with us throughout the week by putting negativity in its place with three easy steps. The next time you hear someone say something negative try this:

1. *Question the source's credibility?* First, do not accept what is being said no matter how persuasive the source might be. Ask "Why is this person saying this?" Are they trying to: discourage me from doing something they wish they had the initiative or discipline to do; manipulate me through guilt or fear; falsely persuade me to believe a doable task is not doable just because they do not want to do it?
2. *Develop rational positive counterpoints?* Think of positive counterpoints for each, if possible, negative point raised by the source. Try changing your thoughts more toward a positive point of view. Don't exaggerate the positive—be rational. An unrealistic positive statement is as far a departure from the truth as an unrealistic negative statement.
3. *Weigh the credibility of the two competing positions?* Now weigh the negative point of view against the positive point of view and consider which is the more credible, realistic and valuable position to adopt.

Act upon the position you find to be most trustworthy. Don't be surprised if you find it to be the positive position almost every time.

To "put on Christ" we must be positive because Christ is positive. In purging sin this Lenten season let us make a special effort to purge the sin of negativity.

Before Christ's Resurrection, the cross was a symbol of torture. Today, a cross is not just an electrical symbol for "positive" - it is the most positive symbol on Earth.

May God continue to bless us all this Lenten season,
Sam Konugres

Wish List as of March 30, 2008

Build an Altar Table	Donated
Two More Icons	600.00 Donated
200 Chairs	2,100.00 Donated (500 so far)
Books for Week Day Matins	500.00 Donated
Books for Week Day Vespers	600.00 Donated
Books Explaining the Divine Liturgy	400.00 Donated
Table for Artokloasies	500.00 Donated
Tables for Memorials	500.00
Five Walls	500.00
Three Doors	1,500.00
One Window	400.00
Curtains and Rods	500.00
Three Stands	500.00 Donated
Venetian Blinds for Altar Area	500.00
Other Service Books	500.00 Donated
Refrigerator	Donated
15 Tables	750.00
Round Tables for Little Children	200.00
Carpet (s)	500.00
A Bookcase (Library)	500.00

Palm Sunday Luncheon and Bake Sale

On April 20th the Philoptochos will host the Annual Palm Sunday Luncheon and Bake Sale following the Divine Liturgy. Fare Includes: Fish, Rice, Vegetables, and Salad. Cost: Adults \$12.00; Seniors and Children \$6.00. Please plan on joining your friends at this wonderful event!
Seating is Limited. First Come, First Served.

Greek Orthodox Mission
of South Orange County
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METROPOLIS OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Sunday Liturgies:

Orthros (Matins)	8:45 a.m.
Liturgy	10:00 a.m.

JSerra High School Chapel
26351 Junipero Serra Rd.
San Juan Capistrano

Directions: From I-5 take the Junipero Serra Road exit. Go west on Junipero Serra Road. Just past the Shell gas station on your right, make a right into the next driveway. Proceed to the north end of the property (signs are posted).

Office and Greek School: 28570 Marguerite Parkway #223
(just north of Avery Pkwy)
Mission Viejo

Telephone: (866)350-1933; Father Costas' Cell Phone (949)365-6339

Bible Class: www.ancientfaith.com/searchthescriptures

Website: www.gomsoc.org

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