



MISSION NEWS-

From the Heart of Fr. Costas

My dearest ones,

Rejoice in the Lord.

February is the month of preparation for Great Lent. We should never lose sight of our struggle for our salvation. The Good Fight of Christ continues with more intensity and zeal, because that's what Great Lent is. It is starting February 19th.

In the old times February was the month of purification and expiation. For Christians it has been the month of welcoming and receiving Christ into the temple of the hearts with the feast day of "Ypapante" on February 2nd.

Then comes the feast day of St. Photios on February 6th, one of the wisest and greatest saints of our Church, whom our Christian brothers, the Catholics and Protestants still consider a heretic. This is one of the biggest problems among the Christian churches, because the 8th Ecumenical Council is at stake. What we consider as the 8th Ecumenical Council is not the same one for other Christians.

On the 10th of February we celebrate the feast day of an old saint, St. Haralambos of the 2nd century, who performed a mighty miracle in the early 1940's in the city of Filiatra, Peloponesos. The Nazis spared thousands of people that they were about to kill because of a miracle by St. Haralambos.

On the following Saturdays, February 10th and 24th (evening of the 23rd), we will conduct the memorial services for the Saturdays of Souls: "Psychosavvata" remembering our loved ones. Each family should boil wheat (kollyva) and bring it to the Church for these Memorials. It should not be elaborate or fancy, but simple with sugar, a cross made of raisins or almonds. Saturdays were the days for the dead, never Sunday. Nowadays we move memorials to Sundays because people will not come unless it's a Sunday. Great Lent preserved this tradition.

I am very sorry that we can not have too many weekday services right now. We are not able to have all of the services we should because of the lack of our own facilities. But God willing, that may change soon.

Finally, remember that we must begin the preparations for Great Lent, which certainly can be a great spiritual experience. Make it even more special this year. Decide to fast and come to Church more often.

Yours in Christ
The happiest Priest,

Fr. Costas

Steering & Operations Committees:

REV. DR. COSTAS CONSTAN-
TINOU
Pastor

STEVE DAFNIS*
Chairman

IRENE BASDAKIS
Vice Chairperson
Operations

EJ CONSTANTINE*
Capital Formation and
Genesis Program Chair

GEORGIANN ELLIS
Treasurer

ANDREW KERATZIDES

MICHAEL SELBERIS*

REGGIE SELLAS

EMMANUEL SFAKIANAKIS

*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

Please email r_henning1@juno.com with any monthly newsletter in-put suggestions by the last week of the month preceding publication.

Our Mission has been very fortunate to have such a number of talented individuals volunteering their time to participate on the Steering Committee. This year, we welcome a number of new members that include Reggie Sellas, Andrew Keratzides, Emmanuel Sfakianakis and Sam Konugres (Secretary).

In addition to directing the future of our mission, your Steering Committee is responsible for coordinating a number of activities during the year. From handling such minute details such as making sure the chapel is prepared and staffed at each liturgy on Sundays and holidays to determining when and what types of fundraising efforts should take place.

Keep in mind that your Steering Committee is not here to make decisions based solely on its own agenda, but to be instrumental in implementing ideas and/or suggestions raised by members of our community. I urge each of you to support our Steering Committee members.

If you have any worthwhile ideas or suggestions, please share them with us. If you are new to our community or have been with us but have yet to volunteer your time, please step forward and get involved now.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to those Steering Committee members who have faithfully served on our Steering Committee in the past. They include Chrys Cutrone, Deme Lewis, Joe Nollar and Ron Madura. We were very fortunate to have had them on the committee and look forward to their lasting commitment to our mission. Please join me in thanking them for all of their tireless efforts on the committee.

Bible Class

We will be studying the most important and most spiritual book of the Bible:

“THE HOLY GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN”

According to St. John Chrysostom

with introduction to the various related
topics, issues and customs.

YOU WILL ENJOY IT TREMENDOUSLY,
AND LEARN MUCH ABOUT YOUR ORTHODOX FAITH
AND THE BIBLE

Join us Sunday mornings 9:00 am. at the J. Serra High School Chapel (2nd floor), where the Sunday School class takes place. Everybody including teachers and parents are welcome. The class will be taught by Presvytera Eugenia, a New Testament Professor at the University of San Diego and a Holy Cross Seminary and Harvard University graduate, who has taught Bible Class for 30 years.

MAKE IT A PART OF YOUR LENTEN OBSERVANCE

SATURDAYS
ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΑ
February 10th (Morning)
& 24th (Evening of 23rd)
NAMES OF YOUR
DEPARTED
LOVED ONES

+

Reflections on Greek Dance and FDF

I only recently started attending FDF. The family would go for one day to see the dancers. If you are not participating, you would not go for the three days; it sure is a lot of fun to be a one-day attendee. FDF sells day passes for those who want to watch. I want to welcome everyone from our Mission to come on one day, enjoy the dancers, and support our groups.

For most of our dancers, this experience is a first of hopefully many more to come. ATHANATI, for example, has been practicing three times each week for the past few weeks. They are continuously learning new dances with less than one month before the competition. Their commitment is commendable.

On Sunday, February 11, Fr. Costas will invite the dancers after church to come up and receive his blessing. This will show our Mission's support for our children and let all know that these children will be representing us to the Greek community at large. A luncheon on that day will help to defray the expenses of our dancers.

It is the wish of our dancers to buy costumes on behalf of the Mission. One costume alone can cost \$1,000. Not only does each family pay dues to learn Greek dancing, they must also pay the FDF competition fees, meals, hotels, and costume rentals which can cost several hundred dollars. Some donations have been received. All donations will be welcome.



Our Mission is proud to be able to send not one but two dance teams to this year's Folk Dance Festival. We have dedicated dance instructors and they have worked hard to teach the best Greek dances to our dance teams.

The dance teams are **ANASTANRIDES** (younger group), directed by Senior Dance Instructor Cathi Halfhill. This group is comprised of the following dancers: Spiro Basdakis, Alec Bertok, Rosa Domingot, Sophia Ellis, Mitchell Jennings, Nicholas Jennings, Ariana Selberis, and John Stavrou. **ATHANATI** (older ages) is directed by Yianni Xilikakis and Yeoryia Selberis (Junior Director). This group is comprised of the following dancers: Caroline Basdakis, Samantha Cutrone, Zachary Ellis, Constantina Konugres, Yanni Konugres, Yanni Parissis, Yeoryia Selberis, Anastasia Selberis, Nicholas Stavrou, and Athena Wilson.

Through the medium of Greek Dance, these young dancers will be able to forge bonds of friendship which can last a lifetime among themselves and with other dancers that they meet at FDF. Just as important, the dancers will carry on with them the Greek culture and traditions of which we are proud. We are very happy to be able to field these teams and to be able to transmit this important part of our Hellenic heritage on to the next generation.

The 31st Annual Greek Orthodox Folk Dance & Choral Festival will take place February 15th - 18th 2007 in Ontario, California at the Double Tree Hotel and the Ontario Convention Center. All dance competition and evening activities will take place at the Ontario Convention & Visitors Bureau. Friends and Supporters of our

The Lenten Triodion

Since last month (January) marks the beginning of the period known in Orthodoxy as the Triodion, it is a good time for us to review the origins of this period of time and what it represents.

This year the Lenten Triodion began on Sunday, January 28th – the Sunday of Publican and the Pharisee. This part of the ecclesiastical calendar is set aside to prepare the Orthodox for the Great Pascha of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is comprised of a series of services and other variable portions of the Liturgy that is compiled into a book. As already stated, the Lenten Triodion starts with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee. It finishes with the Great Saturday of Holy Week. During this spiritually fruitful time, Great Lent, which begins this year on February 19th, provides many opportunities for the Orthodox to enrich themselves with additional services. It does not include the Pascha of the Lord, as its purpose is to provide a series of illuminating events and readings that will culminate just before the celebration of the Glorious Pascha, which this year falls on April 8th.

The Lenten Triodion is named such because the Canons of the season use only three odes or hymns instead the usual nine odes. The usual canon of nine odes is that which we most commonly use at the Orthros Service (or Matins) which directly precedes the Divine Liturgy. It is believed that St. Andrew of Crete introduced the use of the canons. Other authors of Canons are Melodos, St. John of Damascus, and St. Theodore of Studion.

In modern times, it has become difficult for many to experience all of the beautiful and moving services or hear the readings that occur during this special time, as there is so much else that competes for our attention. More is the pity, since the totality of the experience adds so much to our understanding and appreciation of the final triumph of the resurrection. However, much if not all of the Lenten Triodion period can be experienced by many if we organize our priorities in a manner that includes these exercises. We should therefore, right now, at the beginning of the Lenten Triodion, re-dedicate ourselves to pursuing the spiritual benefits that will certainly derive from our setting aside the time to participate in as many of the opportunities that the Triodion season provides.

Glory be to God in all things!

Notice

Concerning the Church Office

We have been having some difficulty with the GOMSOC office email and voice mail systems. Some messages may have been lost as a result.

If you have not received a reply to a message you recently left on these office systems, please call Fr. Costas directly on his cell phone at (949) 365-6339.

If you wish to email Fr. Costas please do so at this time using his personal home email constantinoufamily@sbcc.net.

We hope to soon have a land-line in the office that will allow us to have a phone that rings in the office and a permanent email address for Father to replace the simple an-



Church Services for February 2007



SUNDAY MORNINGS
8:45 am—Orthros
9:00 am—Bible Study
10:00 am—The Divine Liturgy

SATURDAYS OF SOULS
- February 10 -
(Also for St. Haralambos)
8:45 am—Orthros
10:00 am—The Divine Liturgy
11:00 am—Memorials
- February 23 -
8:00 pm—Memorial Service Following Salutations

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY
- February 18th -
There will be a brief service following The Divine Liturgy

SALUTATIONS
- February 23rd -
7:00 pm—First Service of Salutations (Heretismoi)
to the Most Holy Theotokos

Announcements

Steering Committee News

Please join us in welcoming the following new members to the Steering Committee: Andrew Keratzides, Reggie Sellas, and Emmanuel Sfakianakis. We greatly appreciate their willingness to volunteer and help lead our Mission in reaching our goals.

2007 Pledge Cards

If you have not already done so, please fill out a new Pledge card for 2007 so that the Mission can plan to meet its financial obligations and plan for our future in 2007 and beyond. Pledge cards are available in the narthex or on our website. Thank you for continued support. Pledge cards were also mailed with member's contribution statements for 2006 and are included in this month's Newsletter.

Philoptochos News

Questions, comments or concerns? Philoptochos has a box upstairs in the Fellowship Room that you can use to relay any questions you have. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number so someone can contact you with a response or action. **Membership Renewals.** Philoptochos membership fee renewals are due soon. Please look for the letter in your main and reply promptly. Thanks! **Next Regular Meeting.** The next regular meeting of the Philoptochos will be on 18 February. Please plan to attend this important meeting.

Choir

The Choir always welcomes new members. If you are interested in singing with them, please mention it to any Choir member who will be happy to provide details on the regular practice schedule and location. This month the Choir will rehearse at 6:30 pm on February 8th and 22nd. These practice dates are on Thursday and as such are different than their usual practice day of Tuesday. They will meet at the church office. Since Great Lent and Pascha are fast approaching, these practice sessions will



Greek Dance Luncheon
February 11, 2007
Immediately Following The Divine Liturgy



\$10

- * Tasty Pastichio by Penny Marutsos
- * Scrumptious Salad, Bread, and Beverages

per Adult, \$5 per Child

All proceeds will benefit the Greek Dance teams of the Mission

**Greek Orthodox Mission
of South Orange County**

P.O. Box 1214

San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693

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METROPOLIS OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Sunday Liturgies:

Orthros and Bible Study	9:00 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

Website: www.gomsoc.org

Email: info@gomsoc.org