



# MISSION NEWSLETTER

## From the Heart of Fr. Costas

My Dearest Ones:

Rejoice in the Lord Jesus.

The month of March is a special month in our church calendar. It's usually the beginning of great Lent, an excellent preparation time for Pascha, Easter. It is also the month which includes the great feast of the Annunciation of His birth. The Virgin Mary hears the Good News first from Archangel Gabriel, but that was not easy news for a young lady to bear. An unwed mother was an abomination at the time and brought much shame and suffering to the expecting mother and she might even be stoned to death.

Yet Panagia accepted the Good News with gladness and humility. She was brave enough to dare to take this new role that was to change the world and make it 1,000,000 times better. The greatest gift that came as a result of all this was eternal SALVATION for those who would accept it and seek it the right way.

Great Lent is such a challenge for each and every one of us. Preparation is extremely important. What we sow during Lent—what we put into it—we will reap a hundredfold. Fasting is a fundamental part of Great Lent. Remember that our forebears Adam and Eve lost paradise, because they failed to fast from one fruit and disobeyed the first commandment, which was to

abstain, basically to fast, from that fruit.

Prayer is equally important. It has to be enhanced, expanded and done more often and with deeper attention. Church attendance should increase to at least two times a week, since we cannot have more frequent services in our situation. Once a week is unacceptable during Lent. Holy Communion should also be more frequent, at least once a week. We are like a beautiful car that is to start a long trip (Lent). We need enough spiritual fuel, Holy Communion.

Cleanliness is also essential. We know that "cleanliness is next to godliness." Spiritual cleanliness is simply achieved by Holy Confession, which is the easiest of Sacraments. The evil one makes it difficult, however, because he loses his enormous power over us in just the few minutes it takes us to confess. So let us dare enough to go to confession and not procrastinate any further.

Looking forward to being your guide and companion during this great trip, I remain the happiest priest,

Fr. Costas

### Steering & Operations

#### Committees:

REV. DR. COSTAS  
CONSTANTINOU  
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 traditions and emphasizes our Hellenic heritage, customs and values."

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

## 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 (2<sup>nd</sup> 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

#### Something to Ponder

*(During Great Lent, Christians are called upon to give alms. For those who think that one person alone cannot make a difference, perhaps the following story will illustrate the flaw in this attitude).*

After a storm, a man came upon a stretch of beach strewn with starfish and was startled to see a young boy throwing them back into the ocean one at a time. The man said to the boy, "What on earth do you think you are doing? You can't possibly make a difference here!" Without so much as pausing or looking up, the boy picked up another starfish, tossed it into the ocean, and replied, "I did for that one!"

#### About Receiving Communion at Evening Liturgies

You *can* eat breakfast and lunch, but nothing after lunch. (Have lunch at noon time, not a very late lunch). If you are observing the Lenten fast, it should be very easy to be prepared to receive communion. Everyone should make an effort to attend at least one of the Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgies during Lent and everyone should be prepared to receive communion on Sundays, especially the Sundays of Lent. You should all be at least abstaining from meat. If you also eat nothing on Sunday morning, you should be receiving Holy Communion during the Sunday Divine Liturgy. If you have genuine medical reasons why you cannot fast, you should still receive. If you are in doubt, talk to Father Costas about it.

#### READERS NEEDED FOR EASTER DAY AGAPE SERVICE AT 12:00 NOON.

At this service we read the Gospel in as many languages as possible (John 20:19-25, in three parts about two verses each time). If you would be willing to read the Gospel in one of the languages below, or in another language, please see Fr. Costas. It is a beautiful service. Everyone should attend.

**Homeric Greek**  
**Classical Greek**  
**English**  
**American Sign Language**  
**French**  
**German**  
**Italian**  
**Arabic**  
**Other?**

#### Church Services for March 2007



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

LITURGY of the PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS and SALUTATIONS

- March 2nd -  
- March 9th -  
- March 16th -  
- March 23rd -

5:30 pm—Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy  
Immediately Followed by light Lenten Dinner  
7:30pm—Service of Salutations (Heretismoi)  
to the Most Holy Theotokos

## Announcements

### Sunday School News

There will be Sunday School Retreat on Great and Holy Friday, April 6th, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. All children are encouraged to attend and parents are encouraged to come and help out with Pascha preparations and attend services. A Lenten luncheon will be served. Please contact Ariana Sfakianakis for questions or to sign up. Food donations are appreciated as is also parent volunteers. Please see Ariana after the Divine Liturgy or call her at (714) 879-7758. Thank you so much!

### 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.

### 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. **Palm Sunday Luncheon.** Philoptochos is sponsoring a Luncheon on Palm Sunday. They would appreciate help in this community event. Anyone interested in helping should contact Irene Constantine at (949) 218-0882. **Coffee Corner.** Philoptochos is asking that each Sunday the following groups take charge of the Coffee Hour after the Divine Liturgy:

1st Sunday: Sunday School ◊ 2nd Sunday: Philoptochos ◊ 3rd Sunday: Seniors Group ◊ 4th Sunday: Parish Council ◊ 5th Sunday: Choir or Dance

If you would like to volunteer to sponsor Coffee Hour within the group you may represent, please contact the following people or Sally Meyerhofer at (949) 388-7816 or at meyerhofer@cox.net.

Sunday School: Ariana Sfakianakis at (714) 879-7758 or asfakianakis@adelphia.net; Philoptochos: Irene Constantine at (949) 218-0882 or ireneconstantine@yahoo.com; Prime Timers: Danny Tonge at (949) 457-9524 or at mdtonge@sbcglobal.com; Parish Council: Steve Dafnis at (949) 347-9572 or sdfanis@cox.net; Choir and Dance: Robert Henning at (949) 459-6375 or r.henning1@juno.com and Tina Bertok at (949) 481-8385 or tinabertok@cox.net.

We would greatly appreciate volunteers for Sundays during the next three months:

<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>
4th	8th	6th
11th	15th	13th
18th	22nd	20th
25th	29th	27th

### 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 March 6th and 22nd. These practice dates are on Tuesday and Thursday respectively. They will meet at the church office.

### Church Office Updates

**Cell Phone.** Fr. Costas' cell phone number is (949) 365-6339). Do not hesitate to call him. Father would prefer that you not leave messages on the office 800 number because it seems that we are still not receiving all of the messages. Please call him directly. **Regular Day Off.** Monday is now Fr. Costas' day off. Please refrain from calling him on that day, unless it is an emergency.

### Post-Pascha Fellowship Picnic

Please reserve the date of Saturday, April 21st as GOMSOC will be having a Post-Pascha Fellowship Picnic. Details are being finalized and will be announced soon. This will be great chance to socialize and get to know each other better. Children are enthusiastically welcomed!

### Committee to Name our Mission Parish

A committee is now being formed to create the selection process for the naming of our Mission Parish. Those persons interested in serving on the committee can email GOMSOC at info@gomsoc.org or speak directly with Fr. Costas.

### FDF Dance Groups

We are proud of our Dance Groups, "Athanati" and "Anastanrides" for their participation in this year's FDF in Ontario, CA. They both did beautifully!. "Athanati" received the Folk Dance Festival's Board of Trustees' Special Achievement Award. Our hearts are bursting with happiness for them!

**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](http://www.gomsoc.org)

**Email:** [info@gomsoc.org](mailto:info@gomsoc.org)