



# MISSION NEWS-

## Comments from Irene Basdakis, Vice Chairperson, Steering Committee

As our beautiful mission continues to grow in spirit and as a community, our duties and responsibilities as ambassadors to our church continue to evolve. I am honored to serve as the Greek Orthodox Mission's Vice Chairperson to the Steering Committee and Liaison to our many operating committees.

My responsibilities as the liaison are to maintain communication and consistency between the various committees and the mission. I have asked each committee to submit documentation on their organization so that I can review where each committee stands.

Specifically, each committee will provide a one page description of the committee including its purpose and goals, financial information, copies of the minutes, how often each group meets, names of the leaders of the group and any other information deemed relevant in order to maintain open communication.

I will review the information and then present it to the Steering Committee at the May Steering Committee meeting. At that time, the Steering Committee can evaluate the strength of each committee and place additional focus on those committees that require more attention. We need to be organized from within to create a strong foundation before we continue to move onward.

My new position has allowed me to focus on the operational side of our mission. It is clear that our church is here to stay. We are blessed to have so many volunteers who fulfill our mission's needs and obligations so selflessly. We are even more blessed to have so many children at our mission who also serve the mission in so many ways. Whether it is passing out the liturgy books on Sunday mornings, assisting Father John during Sunday services and Holy Week, helping out at the candle table, staying after church to assist Father John with a baptism or assisting in setting up our fellowship hour, our children have been ready to serve.

That being said, please recognize that we are still a mission. Because we are all volunteers, not everything is done perfectly. Undoubtedly, we will make mistakes along the way. We will learn from them, correct our ways and continue forward. I know that we all possess the best interest of our church and that we do have a long road ahead of us. Together, as a family, we will continue to grow in our faith and as a community. It isn't the result that is most important, but what we become along the way that is the true test of our mission in life.

For those parishioners who often thought of assisting in some way, now is the time. Join a committee, volunteer to assist fellowship hour, be an usher on Sunday or write an article for our newsletter. Everyone has a special seed of greatness that God has blessed them with. We hope that in some way, you can share that, large or small, with your community.

I am very excited and looking forward to June 3 when we will be celebrating our 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary as a mission at the home of the Theodossis Family. They have so generously offered to host a benefit dinner and dance to show their support of our mission. We need the support of our entire community to have this event be successful. Please extend an invitation to your friends and families as all are wel-

## Steering & Operations Committees:

FATHER JOHN KARIOTAKIS  
Pastor

STEVE DAFNIS\*  
Chairman

IRENE BASDAKIS  
Vice Chairperson  
Operations

EJ CONSTANTINE\*  
Capital Formation and  
Genesis Program Chair

DEMETRA LEWIS\*  
Stewardship Chair

JOE NOLLAR  
Finance Chairman

CHRYSOULA CUTRONE  
Events Chair

GEORGIANN ELLIS  
Treasurer

MICHAEL SELBERIS\*  
Member

RON MADURA  
Member

\*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

## Comments (Continued from page 1)

Thanks to the graciousness of this family, the entire ticket amount of \$100 will go directly to our church. Although from the outside, looking at the many programs and services we provide to our community, it appears that we are a fully chartered church—we are not. We are still a mission and in need of funds in order to achieve church status.

Thinking back to our very first meeting in June 2003, twenty-seven of us, mostly strangers to each other, came together to share ideas and begin a church. Here we are, three years later with more that 160 families strong, celebrating together and achieving our goals.

Lastly, please take notice of the box located at the entrance to the church. If you ever have a question, concern, comment, a need, suggestion or know of someone who needs our parish's attention, please jot down your comment and place it into the corresponding file in this box. Appropriate action will be taken. Be sure to leave your contact information if you would like a response.

Thank you for your endless efforts and commitment to our Mission. I will keep you posted on the happenings among the mission and its committees.



### 21 May—The Feast of Sts. Constantine and Helen

The Great Sovereign Constantine was born in 272. He succeeded to the throne in 306 at the death of his father. In 312, he saw the famous vision in the sky—a cross—with the words “By this shalt thou conquer” and that night he was visited in a dream by the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of this symbol was declared to him. He used the new symbol on the 28th of October in an attack against a challenger and soundly defeated him. He entered Rome in triumph where he was proclaimed Emperor of the West by the Roman Senate. He conquered the anti-Christian Emperor of the East, Licinius, in 324 and thus combined the Roman Empire under his rule. He was a talented administrator and during his reign dealt with the rising heresies of the time. He convened a council in Nicaea to deal with several issues but most especially the most challenging heresy of the time, that of the priest named Arius. The council, after much debate, validated the Orthodox view of the Trinity.

### The Arian Heresy Briefly

Arius was himself an ordained priest who was known even before his ordination to have divergent opinions. His intemperate attitude had caused the withdrawal at one time of his ordination to the Deaconate. However, when he abandoned these irregular ideas, he was allowed to be ordained a priest. Eventually, Arius returned to his erroneous thoughts and began preaching the doctrine that would soon bear his name: that the Son of God (Jesus Christ) had not always existed; that he was capable of vice and virtue; and that he was created and made (Hermias Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book One, Chapter Fifteen). This deviant thought was the opposite of the Orthodox viewpoint and the belief of the Apostles from the beginning of the Church that the Son of God was of one essence with the Father and was co-eternal with the Father.

Arius' new doctrine gained many adherents, especially in Alexandria at around 320. Its popularity among some laity and clergy probably resided in its “simplification” of the Orthodox belief. Since the followers of Arius found the Mystery of the Divine Incarnation of God so difficult a concept (that God could be God and Man at the same time), they thought it was necessary to explain the nature of Christ in a new fashion, which they believed to be more rational. Arius and his followers conveniently set aside that which was recognized as the belief of the Church from the beginning; even such testimony as the Gospel of John where it was written: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” For the Arians, Christ the Son was created out of nothing, who in turn created the universe. Because of his position and authority, he was to be worshipped and looked upon as God. Thus at Jesus' Incarnation, the Arians taught that the divine nature of the Son, the Logos, replaced the human and spiritual aspects of Jesus (Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry, *Heresies*).

## **Announcements**

### **Sunday School News**

It is hard to believe that this Sunday School year has passed so quickly. There are so many special moments to remember. We will round out the year with a couple of more memories in the making. On Sunday, May 28, Father John will be delivering a Special Sermon for our Youth which we are sure will be touching and thoughtful. On Sunday, June 4th, teachers will be giving each registered student their Sunday School Book to keep. If the student will not be able to attend at that time, they may pick the book up before then. The very last day to pick up books will be on Sunday, June 11th. Books will not be mailed out. On Sunday, June 11th, we will have a Graduation Ceremony for our Sunday School. Father John will be presenting each registered student a Certificate of Participation. There will not be Sunday School classes on this day.

### **Philoptochos News**

The Philoptochos is always glad to welcome new members. If you are interested in joining or would like more information, please contact Chrys Cutrone at (949) 295-1256.

### **Annual Parish Fundraiser Dinner Dance**

On Saturday, June 3rd, we will be celebrating our third anniversary with a benefit dinner and dance to support the Greek Orthodox Mission of South Orange County. The part will be hosted by Angelo and Fotini Theodossis. The celebration will take place at 27781 Golden Ridge Lane, The Hunt Club, in San Juan Capistrano with a cocktail hour beginning at 6:00 pm and dinner

### **The Arian Heresy Briefly (continued from Page 2)**

The local bishop, Alexander of Alexandria, tried twice with councils that were convened specifically to address the controversial teachings of Arius, to discuss the doctrine. In the first council, victory was claimed by both those who opposed the Arians and by the Arians themselves. In the second council, Alexander declared himself in favor of the Orthodox whose belief was that the Son was consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father. In so doing, he used the term "homoousios" as a way to indicate that the Father and the Son were of one substance. This term was to become the key word in the controversy which was to last another 50 years (John Raymond, *Church History-Arianism versus the Council of Nicaea*).

After this, Arius and his followers could not be brought to quit their heresy but rather they began a series of maneuvers communicating to bishops in other cities and sending delegations to them to ostensibly seek their opinions on the new doctrine. The Arian's real purpose, however, was to spread the doctrine as far as possible and gain notoriety for it, conferring thereby a certain status for the idea and when possible to gain adherents in the episcopacy. Of those whose sympathy they gained, was one Eusebius, leader of the church of Nicomedia and a man of learning and high reputation in imperial circles.

In 325, the Emperor Constantine called for a general council to be held in at Nicaea in Bithynia. The Emperor wished to stabilize and unify the church having heard of the various divergent opinions believing that it would also benefit the Empire to have a unified religion not riddled with contention. Various sources suggest that the number of Bishops attending this council were from 220 to 300. A creed was drawn up which did not favor the Arian position and is known through the writings of Athanasius and Basil among others. When 19 Bishops refused to ratify the creed, the Emperor compelled their adherence. Two Libyan Bishops and Arius refused to comply and were exiled.

Later the decision at the Council of Nicaea was called into question. Eusebius managed to convince the Emperor that the meaning of "homoousios" implied that the Father and Son were identical and was therefore erroneous. With the death of the Emperor Constantine, the Empire was divided between his sons Constans and Constantius. The former was pro-Nicaea and the later was anti-Nicaea. Over a dozen additional councils wrestled with the question and when Constans died, his brother Constantius, who was pro-Arian imposed a creed with wording that claimed that the Father and Son were "similar" or homoios. With the death of Constantius in 361, this imposed doctrine collapsed since it was not the belief of the majority of church.

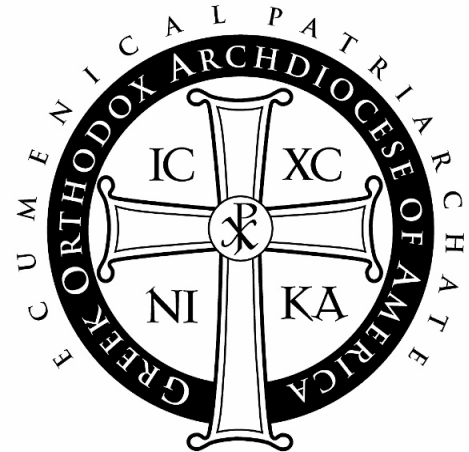
Terminology difficulties, imperial involvement, and misunderstandings between the Western Latin Church and the Eastern Greek Church all had some effect on how the Arian Heresy had managed to gain many adherents from its inception in 320 to its final demise as a doctrine in 381. It is important to know about this heresy because it was the first great challenge to Orthodox Christian doctrine, since at various times emperors, bishops, and laymen alike clung to its errors. Most of these men were not unreasonable and unintelligent. Study of the heresy and its origins, even though it is no longer current, underscores the importance for the Orthodox of recognizing erroneous teaching and the fact that we must perpetuate the truth at every opportunity. Finally we must understand what we believe; how else can we expect to defend it?

**Greek Orthodox Mission  
of South Orange County**

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**METROPOLIS OF  
SAN FRANCISCO**

**Sunday Liturgies:**

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 (the sign says Sycamore Commons). Proceed to the north end of the property (signs are posted).

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