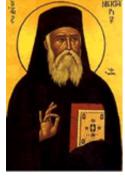
The Voice of Saint Anthony

Monthly Newsletter of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Summer Issue 2009 Volume 4, Number 6



FATHER PETER'S MESSAGE

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, annointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has com-

mitted sins, he will be forgiven." (James 5:14,15).

In the Old Testament we received the message that God the Father would send His Son "to heal the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind." (Luke 4:18). The New Testament is the fulfillment of the promise of God the Father prophesied in the Old Testament. Christ came to save the world. While He was here, He also did the work of healing his people from all kinds of sickness and illness.

Like their Master before them, the early apostles participated in God's work of healing, attributing their miracles to the risen and ascended Christ. "Jesus the Christ heals you," St. Peter told a newly restored man, who had been bedridden for eight years. (Acts 9:34). St. Paul identified healing as a gift of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:9). The healing ministry of the Church comes directly from the work of Christ in the New Testament. This is directly reflected in the Orthodox service of

06 — Sunday School News

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15 — Philoptochos News

16 — Golf Tournament Wrap-up

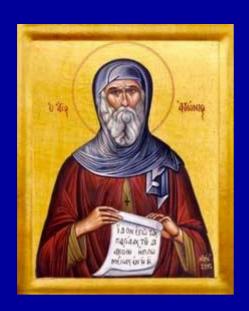
Holy Unction (Holy Wednesday).

The Orthodox Church has never believed or behaved as though the gifts of the Spirit or the healing miracles of Christ have somehow subsided or stopped all together. We actively believe that miraculous power of healing from the Holy Spirit is at work here on earth. In that sense, we might say that we too are still living in 'Bible times.' The works of the Lord and the reality of Biblical events are not just some far off, historical recording. They continue; the history of the Christian family continues. Christ, Himself, promised, "He who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." (John 14:12).

Through the centuries, the Church Fathers speak often of miracles throughout the body of the Church. Our Archdiocese recently received relics of a miracle working saint, St. Seraphim of Sarov, a 19th century Russian monk. He was blessed with the gift of healing during his lifetime, and even after his death people would be restored to wholeness at his graveside.

The Orthodox Church today still believes in healing. To this day, the practice of prayer for the sick follows the New Testament instruction of St. James. The Church has a special service of healing, which may be performed at any time. This is the Sacrament of Holy Oil that we celebrate each year on Holy Wednesday during Holy Week. The Paraklesis Service to the Theotokos, commonly chanted during the first two weeks of August, is another service where we can pray for our loved ones that are ill. Additionally, we have Paraklesis Services to other saints, known for their intercessions for healing, of which we can regularly avail ourselves.

Continued on Page 3 ...



Sunday Services

Orthos 9:00 am
Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Church office hours:

Monday-Thursday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am to 12:00 Noon

Closed on Saturday & Sunday

Publication Reminder:

The Voice of Saint Anthony deadline is the 10th of the preceding month. Please submit announcements electronically to Vicki Kades at VKades@gmail.com.

St. Anthony's reserves the right to edit, alter or reject any content.

Thank you to Stephanie Soewers for editing the monthly bulletin.

Thank you to all that contribute photos to the monthly newsletter: Judie Christopoulos, Vicki Kades, Maria Karras, Steve Pappas and Esther Vavoulis.

ST. ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH 778 S. ROSEMEAD BLVD. PASADENA, CA 91107 - 5613 (626) 449-6943 Fax (626) 449-6974 www.saint-anthonys.org

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> MOMS N' TOTS Maria Udria

<u>VIPs</u> Pantele Xanthos

To email any of our church groups, please go to our website www.saint-anthonys.org and you will be able to contact us!

Father Peter's Message Continued from Page 1

I am writing to you all about illness and sickness, prayer and healing, because we have many people, here in our own community and beyond, who need our prayers and our support. Though medicine is advancing and people are living longer lives, we are also seeing a virtually inexplicable surge in the number of people suffering from chronic and catastrophic illness. Many of us know people who are currently battling cancer, heart disease, MS, and other devastating ailments. What can we do as members of a community family to help our brothers and sisters? First, and foremost, we can pray for them. There is more power in prayer than we are able to fully comprehend. So, in the fall we will be implementing more opportunities to pray for our brothers and sisters. We will do this in the form of church services. But, we can also do this through home prayer through the distribution of names on prayer lists. Prayer is vital, important and effective, but we will not stop there, because the sick also need practical assistance. St. Paul wrote to the Hebrews, "Let us therefore come bodly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16). We must also put our prayers into action.

With these needs in mind, I am in the process of organizing and implementing a new ministry, which I will be announcing very soon. Our Ladies Philoptochos has always done a marvelous job of reaching out to those in need. However, this outreach is not just their responsibility. It is the duty of all of us. It is the duty of the community

June Services

Monday, June 29
Holy Apostles Peter & Paul
9:00 am. Orthros/Divine Liturgy.

Tuesday, June 30
Synaxis of the Apostles
9:00 am. Orthros/Divine Liturgy.

of Saint Anthony. We need to reach out to each of those who need our help. We need to establish a system of providing services for: visiting the sick, elderly, disabled, shut-ins, new mothers, and families of the deceased. We also need to provide assistance to families in crisis. We need to arrange for transportation to church services and medical appointments for those who need our help. We need to assist with shopping, household chores, and minor home repairs for those who cannot do this on their own. We need to help those who are grieving. I will tell you there is much need, and from personal experience I can tell you that even if we had 2,3, or 4 priests, the need would still be too great for the clergy alone. Much of this work is intended to be served by the members of the body of Christ.

This new ministry will require a great commitment, work, and many volunteers. But, many hands commited together will lessen the burden, and fulfill our souls' need for giving to others. I will be calling on you soon to give of your time, talents and resources. Now, is the time to act for our community. Together, we can and will make an enormous difference. Remember these words of our Lord given to each of us,

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'" (Matt 25:40).

+Father Peter

Easter thank you for donations towards two wreaths for the cross:

Mary Arapostathis

Marietta Bicos

Elizabeth Demopulos

Eleni Koudanis

Sofia Malahatis

Aleka Pantazis

President Message



As we wind down a very active first half of the year heading into the summer, it is a good time to reflect on the many good things happening at St. Anthony. As recounted in last month's address, Lent and Pascha was again a very

moving experience, led by Father Peter and culminating with a very successful Easter Picnic at Lacy Park where we hosted the Metropolitan.

Following Easter was another tremendous Golf Tournament, which many have commented was the best ever for St. Anthony and in fact many non-parishioners commented that it was one of the best golf tournaments they had ever been to. The tournament featured a record number of nearly 240 Golfers, and again was a very festive, enjoyable and professionally-run event. If you haven't experienced our Golf Tournament before, it's a tremendous opportunity for fun and fellowship, even if you are like me and count a successful put through the windmill for a birdie as your best golfing moment. As a volunteer it was a lot of fun to be part of such a successful event that everyone in the parish should be proud of and experience. Of course the banquet dinner featuring Ted Vavoulis' famous lamb chops was a hit. Many thanks and congratulations to the cochairs Ted Attalla and Will Prappas, as well as Jimmy and Tanya Christos, Ted and Esther Vavoulis, Louie and Vicki Kades and many others who helped make the Golf Tournament a very successful event.

In the first half of the year we saw our youth programs continue to flourish. Our Sunday School program continues to thrive, with over 130 students. GOYA, which is now 60 members strong (ages 12-18), has been very active with many events, including Lenten retreats, Family nights, social outings, and a successful basketball season. The Dance groups continue to thrive with 80 dancers and another very successful and victorious FDF competition. More recently, St. Anthony hosted a very successful volleyball tournament at Huntington Middle School in San Marino, and a dinner dance in our church hall attended by nearly 250 kids from Greek Orthodox parishes all over Southern California.

It is a joy to see our youth programs rejuvenated and active. However, As Esther Vavoulis stated in her Youth Groups report at the General Assembly on May 31st, the only thing preventing an even richer experience for our youth groups is more parental involvement through volunteered time. We would like to have even more programs, more retreats, more social and fellowship events. The kids are very enthusiastic and eager to participate, but we need more parents to step forward and become an active part of this wonderful youth ministry and help secure our future and our childrens' future. Esther, Julie Kiotas Balas, Maria Grover, Pana Louise Gelt, Eleni Vagenas and other s have been very active in supporting our youth programs, but they cannot do it all by themselves. If you would like to help and become more involved in these important and rewarding youth programs, please speak with one of the aforementioned youth leaders.

Finally, a key event over the summer will the final approval of the construction of our new Parish Center. The new building designs were unveiled at a town hall and also at the General Assembly, both held in May. These new designs, which took into consideration a lot of important feedback from the community, were well received and there is a lot of excitement building over the project. The project will be ready to be voted on for approval at the end of the design review phase in the mid-Summer timeframe, with a goal to break ground immediately after the Festival, which will be held on September 18,19 and20.

Have a Great Summer Everyone, John Patzakis

Temporary Relocation Announcement

The relocation committee is diligently working on a plan for a smooth transition during construction of our new Parish Center. Programs will continue with minimum disruption, however, adjustments will be essential. It is anticipated that temporary classrooms and office space will be in place to ensure continuity of all programs. Fellowship coffee following Divine Liturgy will also continue. Father Peter has expressed the importance of maintaining activities related to the church to remain on church grounds and the relocation committee is making every effort to fulfill this task.













September 18, 19, 20, 2009

5:00 pm - 10:00 pm Friday

Saturday Noon - 10:00 pm

Sunday Noon - 9:00 pm

St Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church 778 S. Rosemead Blvd., Pasadena

210 Fwy			
California Blwd		Handicap Parking	
Huntington Dr	General Parking ‡	GREEK FEST St Anthony's	
PMB leades B mg 10 Fwy	Rosemead Blvd	Baldwin Ave	
-			

www.saint-anthonys.org www.hellenicfestival.org

Sun..."

"Great Fun

under the

Pasadena

For More Information Call: (626) 449-6943

Shuttled overflow parking at Prime Clinical Systems 3675 E. Huntington Drive @ Rosemead Blvd. Just south of the church.

Religious Education/Sunday School



The religious education program began in September 2008. It is gratifying to register so many students, seeing their eager faces and how much they have grown over the summer.

The start of the year, October, is a great month because lessons continue without disruption and teachers are able to present the lessons they have researched and prepared.

In November the annual religious education/ Sunday School fund raiser "The Turkey Raffle" was held and Nicolette Fuerst graciously chaired this successful event.

This past December our annual Christmas program was presented under the direction of Judy Christopoulos and Dean Pappas helped with the technical support. As always the program was concluded by our special guest, I can't mention his name but I will give a hint, he is on the building committee.

Returning after a two week holiday hiatus teachers and students were anxious to get down to business and get 2009 off to a good start.

In February, the Triodion began and lessons focused on the meaning of the gospels for each Sunday of the first part of the Triodion. Children were instructed to get ready for Great Lent by preparing themselves to receive holy communion on the first Sunday of Great Lent and participate in the procession of the icons. The middle of the Triodion continued with gospel lessons.

Classes met five Sundays without interruption in March and allowed instructors to emphasize the importance and meaning of the gospels and how each of the Sundays were commemorated.

April was truly amazing as it brought us closer to Holy Week. On Saturday of Lazarus children were invited to attend Divine Liturgy, receive Holy Communion followed by breakfast and relearning how to make palm crosses. Thank you Presvytera Aida for leading, instructing and counting the palm crosses. Holy Friday, April 17 a Lenten retreat was held from 11:00 AM to 2:45 PM for all students. Judy Christopoulos took six high school students on an inspirational field trip.

On Sunday of Saint Thomas Godparent Sunday was held.

May always indicates religious instruction is drawing to a close and teachers are frantically attempting to cover and complete curriculum set for their grade levels.

June 7 was the last day of religious education for 2008-2009 and it was also the Sunday of Pentecost. Certificates were presented in class to the students.

Religious education from preschool to high school covers a wide range of information: gospel, Bible stories, saints, major feast days, sacraments, memorization of the creed, and learning to articulate what it means to be "Greek Orthodox".

Students who attend at least 80% of the 30 sessions held will receive a solid foundation of Orthodox catechism. All the teachers are dedicated, qualified and have extensive knowledgeable of the Orthodox faith.

In Matthew 7:24-26 it says the wise man built his house on rock, when the rain, wind, and floods poured over it, it did not fall, because it was built on rock, but the foolish man built his house on sand and when the rains, wind, and floods came it was washed away. Let us follow the wise man and build our children's' lives on the solid rock of the church. Our faith and the teachings of the church will help to overcome obstacles and lead us to greater glory.

Thank you teachers:

Preschool, Mrs. Margaret Vagenas Helpers: Anna Athanasoulis, Stacey Athanasoulis, Stefanie Angelopoulos, Lizzie Vagenas and parents.

Kindergarten & First grades, Mrs. Fotene Trigonis

Second & Third grades, Mrs. Stavros

Fourth & Fifth grades, Mrs. Jenny Tsouvalas

Sixth, Seventh & Eighth grades, Mrs. Dena Tripodes

High School, Mrs. Maria Grover

Also, thank you Judy Christopoulos the "go to" person and John Coroneus for helping to assess the religious education program at Saint Anthony.

Continued on next page ...

Religious Education/Sunday School Continued

Thank you's continue:

We would like to also thank Lisa Xanthos for baking Lenten desserts for the Southern California Religious Seminar held at our church in April, Joanna Koulos, Elleni(Koulos) Ioannou, and Helen Bonorris for making prosphoron with the children during our Holy Friday Retreat. Each child made small individual breads (which was eaten shortly after it was baked). And to Sophia (Kypreos) Syrengelis for overseeing craft time and Mary Udria helping to organize and assist as needed. Mary Ann and Paul Mallis, Philip "Ted" Attala for their donation of Girl Scout cookies. Athena Dallas for her extraordinary efforts implementing and follow through with Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.

Kudos to Leftheri Christodulelis, George Dupas and Rebecca Bowers for writing and presenting their wonderful oratorical festival speeches.

To all the parents and yes it does take a village, in this instance the Greek Orthodox village of Saint Anthony to encourage the love of the Lord our God with all our hearts.

Most importantly, thank you, Father Peter for your continual support and encouragement during this past year.

Mrs. Irene Albeck

Greek School

Ελληνικό Σχολείο: Ευχαριστίες και Ευχές

Εκφράζουμε τις βαθύτατες ευχαριστίες μας στην οκογένεια Ανδριανοπούλου (Alex και Christyann) για τη γενναιόδωρη προσφορά 1000 δολλαρίων στο σχολείο μας. Τα χρήματα θα διατεθούν σε εκπαιδευτικό υλικό και παιχνίδια για το προνήπιο και το νηπιαγωγείο.

Η τελετή λήξεως των μαθημάτων της σχολικής χρονιάς 2008-2009 θα γίνει την Παρασκευή, 12 Ιουνίου, 6 μμ στην Αίθουσα της εκκλησίας. Οι μαθητές θα παρουσιάσουν ένα καλοκαιρινό εορταστικό πρόγραμμα και θα ακολουθήσει φαγητό με συμμετοχή όλων των οικογενειών του σχολείου μας.

Είμαστε ευγνώμονες στον Father Peter και στην κοινότητα του Αγίου Αντωνίου για το ενδιαφέρον και τη θερμή υποστήριξη των δραστηριοτήτων του σχολείου μας. Ευχόμαστε σε όλους Καλό Καλοκαίρι!

Τα μαθήματα για τη σχολική χρονιά 2009-2010 θα αρχίσουν αμέσως μετά το Φεστιβάλ του Σεπτεμβρίου 2009.

Greek School: Thanks and Wishes

We express our warmest thanks to Alex and Christyann Andrianopoulos for their generous donation of \$1000 to our school. This money will be used to buy educational material and toys for the preschool and Kindergarten classes.

Our end-of-year celebration will take place on **Friday, June 12, 6 pm,** at the Church Hall. Our students will present a special summer festive program, to be followed by a potluck dinner with all families participating.

We are grateful to Father Peter and the St. Anthony community for their interest and warm support of our school. We wish to all a Good Summer!

School year 2009-2010 will begin immediately after the Church Festival, in September 2009.

Saint Sophia Camp Registration now open



July 19—July 25 July 25—August 1

The first week is scheduled from Sunday, July 19th through Saturday, July 25th; and the second week will be from Saturday, July 25th through Saturday, August 1st. Campers aged 7 to 18 are welcomed to attend. Applications are online at www.saintsophiacamp.org.

We will be holding camp this summer at Camp Seeley which is located in the San Bernardino Mountains.

You may also contact our administrative assistant, Vicki Kades, 323-251-2252 or by email at saintsophiacamp@gmail.com, for more information. Registration for campers will end on July 15th. Camp cost \$350 per camper/per week. Scholarships are available.



Take a walk on the wild side! Take your kids on an unforgettable adventure this summer!

It's the wildest VBS ever!

It's KINGDOM of the SON Prayer Safari!

2009 Vacation Bible School

July 27 - July 31*

at St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Join us for a 4-day program (9:30 am -12:30 am) with an *optional parents supervised off-site adventure on the 5th day. All children from Pre-K to 6th grade are welcomed! Journey into the Serengeti, learn to talk to God as you explore the Lord's Prayer and go on an expedition into the pages of God's word. Volunteer to serve on our VBS Safari Crew, today! To volunteer (teens and adults) or to register, please contact the VBS Tour Guides - Christine (818-415-5176) or Irene (626-792-8122).



Register Today!
Form's on the next page!



KINGDOM of the SON Registration VBS 2009

July 27 - July 31, 2009

(4-day program with optional parents-supervised off-site trip on the 5th day)

Please complete both sides and return this vacation bible school registration form to St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church or mail back to the church office. ATTN: VBS Tour Guide - Pappas. A donation of \$45.00 per child may be sent along with the registration form. Please make checks payable to St. Anthony's Church.

All registration forms must be received by June 30, 2009. After this registration deadline the fee is \$50 per child.

Student Information: Please complete one form per family. Write grade entering in September 2008. _____B-day _____Grade_____ Last Name____ B-day _____Grade_____ Name____ B-day Grade Name ___ Last B-day _____Grade_____ Last Name____ Home Address Street City State Zip **Additional Information:** Mother's Name Home phone (___)_____ Cell phone (___) _____ Pager () Work phone () Father's Name_____ Cell phone (____) Home phone (____)____ Pager (_____) _____ Work phone (____)____

WE NEED YOU!

Help make this program possible for **your** children. Check one or more areas of interest. Someone will contact you shortly about your volunteering assignment.

	r Teacher's Aide Mus Craft Center Snack Center Decorating Special Events O	ic Center Recreation Center Missions Registration ther
	Identification and En Consent for Me	
		nsent to St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church Vacation Bible a duly licensed physician(M.D.), Osteopath (O.C.) or Dentist
	students	'names
This care may be given pendent.	under whatever conditions are nece	essary to preserve the life, limb or well being of my de
Parent/Legal Guardian Please list any allergies	(signature)s. Include medications, foods, etc.	Date signed
If parent/guardian is 1	not available in an emergency, con	tact
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PhysicianName	Address	Telephone
DentistName	Address	Telephone
If Physician cannot be reachcall emergency hospital	ed, what action should be taken? Output Output Description:	
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Relationship



Name _____

Name _____

Moms N Tots



Thank you to all the moms, dads and yiayias who made this year's Moms N Tots a huge success. It was a pleasure to watch all of the children grow and develop through music, story time and play time. We shared many laughs and memorable moments through our weekly get together's as well as our fieldtrips and parties! Thank you for the opportunity to share such a special experience with all the families that participated and for all the new friendships that were made. \sim Mary Udria





Photos from end of the year party!













GOYA Basketball



Thank you to all the coaches and a special thank you to Nick Angelos the St. Anthony's basketball representative for all his hard work!!!

Congratulations to this years ALL STARS:
Alexandra Vavoulis, Jr. Girls
David Gelt Jr Boys
Patricia Pazious Sr. Girls
Peter Kalivas Sn. Boys

Olga Barboubas Nonis Award Recipient.

Great Season to everyone!!!









Two Messages from our Metropolis Youth Director



"Nintendo 'Me'"

By Rev. Deacon Niko Bekris

"Have you beaten all eight bosses?" When I was a kid that was a popular question we asked each other on the playground- "Did you beat all

the bosses in Mega Man 2"? It was an insanely popular video game back in the early 90s, and the point of the game was to go from one level to the next, beating the evil robot boss of each level, and by doing so, acquiring a weapon to help you in the next level. You've probably heard of the Mega Man series, as they are still being made, these days mostly for Nintendo DS. I was certainly a big fan. There were few things I loved doing more in third grade than playing Mega Man for a few hours Saturday afternoon, or for that matter, Super Mario World, Shadows of the Empire, or later FIFA '99 or NFL 2K3.

Video games have a way of doing that. You pick up a controller, tell yourself you're only going to play a game for fifteen minutes... and then you look at your watch and two hours have gone by! Video games have gotten so realistic these days, too, that a fictional world is created in your television that makes you want to spend hours there! Whether it's Hyrule, the Mushroom Kingdom, a futuristic Tokyo, or an American sports stadium today, we can get sucked into playing video games and forgetting about basically everything else. Don't get me wrong, video games can be immensely fun- a great way to unwind and even have fellowship with one another. I'm sure you know what I'm talking about, though, when I say that video games sometimes have a way of tempting us to drop what we're supposed to be doing and turn into zoned-out vegetables.

I recently glanced at a few online video game magazines to see what's selling these days. I was quickly amazed at how realistic video games become each year- like virtual movies that you control! I am also amazed when I see that most of the best-selling video games are rated "T," or "M," (Teen or Mature) and often have increasing levels of violence- even the games

advertized in billboards, magazines and TV. Studies have found teenage males to have raised levels of testosterone after playing video games, and heightened aggression. Very subtly, anyone can run the risk of having a shorter patience, an increased eagerness to be entertained, and becoming desensitized to violence. Clearly, what we play on video game consoles does have an effect on us, and despite the many harmless games that do exist, the industry as a whole doesn't seem to care about regulating levels of violence and content in their games.

God certainly wants us to have healthy fun and enjoy ourselves, no doubt. But He also wants to make sure that we always do what's healthy for our soul and spiritual growth. You know that feeling you get when you stop playing a game after three hours? What does your house look like when you're walking into the kitchen to get a drink of water? It's pretty surreal, isn't it? You almost have to phase yourself out of the game and back into real life. If we're not careful, the violence and mindless entertaining we experience in video games can have an adverse effect on us if we don't balance it with healthy time outside, reading recreationally and most importantly, going to church. Our church services are the most healthy activity we can do for our souls, and they are not mindless entertainment, but require effort on our part for us to participate, which is a good thing! Our bodies and souls require a healthy balance of fun-filled activities as well as worship of the Lord, not to mention that Christian "filter" I often talk about to be working. I promise you, if you make this an aim of your life, you will see the benefits and the great gift of life the Jesus Christ gives us. And best of all, to achieve this, we don't have to beat eight bosses.





"Here I Am" By Rev. Deacon Niko Bekris

I have a confession to make. I love comic books. I love stories about superheroes,

about the struggle between good and evil, about people striving to do what's right, to do justice. Whether they're in the format of a comic book, TV show, movie, you name it, I've been a fan since I was a kid. Apparently I'm not the only one, either. This last May saw the premiere of the newest superhero movie based on a Marvel comic, "X-Men Origins: Wolverine." The movie had all the action and special effects that Americans want in a summer blockbuster, certainly, and was a smash hit, like most superhero movies today. What I liked most about this movie when I saw it, though, wasn't the incredible fight scenes and motorcycle chases (although those weren't bad, either), but the inner struggle that Wolverine went through- trying to find a place for himself, looking for peace, acceptance, and justice.

Towards the beginning of the movie, government agents find Wolverine living and working in his new home in Canada and ask him to accept a dangerous mission. He refuses, because he no longer wants any part of violence and killing, and simply wants to live a quiet life in the wilderness. The agents don't accept this answer, and trouble follows Wolverine as he tries to follow his own mind, rather than what evil people want him to do. Eventually he finds himself desperately trying to find his bearings, where to go and who he is. No one in this movie tells Wolverine to follow the right path, or asks what he wants to do with his life and helps guide him that direction. Instead, he is called upon- forced- to move his life in a direction involving violence, greed, and hatred. He is not left to follow the path that fulfills him, but a path that others selfishly want to put before him.

This seeking and soul-searching reminded me of a story in the book of Genesis about a forefather of the church named Abraham. Abraham was a wealthy man who lived a quiet life with his wife, and both of them were elderly. One day, he received a message from God telling him to take all his belongings and his wife and move to a land that the Lord would give them (Gen 12:1). He was not told how or why, or even where they were going, only that it was the Lord God who was calling him. every reason to refuse the Lord's invitation, given the fact that he had settled, had become wealthy, and was old, but he said no such thing. He simply had a faith in the Lord that that would lead him to this new land called Canaan, trusting that God's purpose was for the good of Abraham, his family, and the world. And indeed it was. God made Abraham the "father of many nations," and in this nation, all of Abraham's descendents had a special relationship with God, who watched over them and their every path. When I read Abraham's response to God's call in chapter 22, I loved Abraham's typical willingness, as he simply replies with "Here I am,"

What a beautiful response! What a willing spirit Abraham truly had! How many of us could respond this way? When God calls us to something, we often hesitate and then go, or even refuse. Unlike Abraham, we don't trust God enough to simply give our whole lives to his service, even though we in turn are rewarded and fulfilled in this life and the next. I myself have not just hesitated, but run from what God was calling me to! Like Wolverine, I refused someone's invitation to do something in my life, and was disoriented and needed to find myself. However, unlike Wolverine, the person who invited me, and the person who calls each of us, has no sinister agenda or anything else in mind other than our well-being and the good of the world. We don't need to hesitate like Wolverine did, otherwise we, too, will surely lose ourselves and try to find our path in life somewhere that is not as good for us. We do not need to have any hesitations. Like Abraham, we need to say, "Here I am, Lord," and God will lead us. None of us know to what land or for what purpose we'll be called, but we do know that the Lord will be with us to guide us, because He loves us.

Let us say "yes" to the Lord, so that we too, may find our new home with Him in our hearts, and allow Him to have that same special, loving relationship with us as He has always wanted.



Metropolis Council Meeting and Clergy-Laity Assembly



On May 4th and 5th, Saint Anthony was once again strongly represented at Metropolis leadership events at the Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, California. The semi-annual meeting of the Metropolis Council was held on Monday, May 4th. Metropolis Council members Father Peter Stratos, John Buzas, and Steven Pappas attended this full-day meeting. On Monday evening, Parish Council President John Patzakis joined the Saint Anthony group for the start of the annual Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly.



After Metropolitan Gerasimos officially opened the Clergy-Laity Assembly on Monday evening, the clergy went to their Syndesmos meeting with the Metropolitan, leaving lay leaders for parishes across our Metropolis to network. This provided everyone the opportunity to share their experiences with building programs, festivals, golf tournaments, stewardship, and other common topics of interest.

Tuesday morning started with an early Divine Liturgy up at the Monastery of the Life Giving Spring, up the hill from the retreat center. Meetings and breakout sessions closed out the morning, and everyone descended down to the new lake for its re-dedication and a late lunch of lambs on-the-spit.



A couple of years ago, the lake drainage was destroyed and eventually the lake emptied, leaving a small forest growing where the lake once stood. Major work has been done on the lake and it is slowly filling up. As part of the blessing and dedication of the lake, Metropolitan Gerasimos emptied hundreds of young fish into the lake to truly give it renewed life.

The Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center is in the midst of wonderful improvements and revitalization. Rooms are being upgraded to hotel standards, services upgraded, and the lake area completely redone. We are currently looking for good dates to schedule a Saint Anthony Family Weekend up at the Ranch in October 2009 or May 2010. This will be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy each other's company and have our children and grandchildren appreciate the splendor of Saint Nicholas Ranch.



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Philoptochos



The Kids "n" Cancer annual reception was held on May 18. President Maria Kokoris presented a donation to Kids "n" Cancer from the proceeds from our annual Easter bake sale. Our Philoptochos also donated a wonderful gift basket to the silent auction. Thank you to everyone who donated and supported this ministry which provides a

camping experience to children afflicted with cancer.

A special thank you to both Yiota Poulos and Christina Becronnis for baking delicious items for our annual Easter bake sale and also baking throughout the year for Philoptochos and St. Anthonys.

On May 30, St Anthony Philoptochos held a Walkathon at the Rose Bowl benefiting the HIV/ AIDS care and prevention services of the International Orthodox Christian Charities and the National AIDS Fund. Many members of our community supported this important fund raising activity. Thank you to Jenny Tsouvalas for organizing the walk and to all of you who participated and donated toward this cause. The funds raised from this event will assist in the care of 1.8 million AIDS orphans in Ethiopia and 400 AIDS service organizations in the United States.

Reminder: Past Presidents Dinner Meeting on Wednesday, June 24 at Annandale Country Club. Please come and enjoy an evening of fellowship. Watch for the meeting notice coming soon with details.

St Anthony Philoptochos summer project will be "Shoes for Orphan Souls". We will be collecting new shoes and socks for children of all ages 1 to 18. Shoes will be distributed to orphaned children in the U.S. and around the world, most of the children have never owned a new pair of shoes. Please be generous and bring a new pair of shoes and socks to the church hall donation box. We know that everyone would like to send a child to school in a new pair of shoes.

Save the date for our annual Holiday Benefit Luncheon on Saturday, December 12, at the The Langham Hotel in Pasadena. We are still looking for volunteers to join the 2009 Holiday Benefit Luncheon Committee. If you would like to participate on the committee, please contact Maria Kokoris.

Please help and host a coffee hour after church on Sunday. For information, please contact Maria Kypreos

Volunteers are still needed to serve meals at the Union Station Homeless Services in Pasadena on the first Wednesday of each month. Please contact Irene Albeck for details.

Submitted by Pamela Buzas



Photos from Easter Bake sale, Kid 'n' Cancer, and label commemorating St Anthony Philotochos' gift to Methodist Hospital's NICU. Standing next to our new Phillips monitor are Tracy Joseph, nursing manager and David Neal, director of nursing.





Golf Tournament













What a memorable day everyone experienced at this year's highly successful golf tournament. With a softening economy, donations were trickling in, and golfers slow to register. The outlook looked bleak two weeks before tee time...

However under co-chairmen Ted Attalla's and Will Prappas's great leadership and skillful guidance this year's golf tournament set a record for the number of golfers. A remarkable 242 golfers played! People kept commenting "it was the best tournament ever". The food re-

ceived an all time number of compliments. Dino Balas and Ted Vavoulis led the way cooking their world famous Greek lamb chops right on the golf course. Gus's Bbq was passing out their delicious ribs and mint julip drinks. El Cholo blended margaritas. Farmer John's indulged everyone with their acclaimed hot dogs. Twohey's provided succulent tri-tip on the course as well as serving an exquisite dinner in the hall. And seeing Jimmy Kypreos and Petro Moutzaridis roasting a lamb and pig in an open spit are memories indelibly etched in everyone's mind. No wonder some golfers rolled up their sleeves and put their clubs away. With such a gastro-epicurean feast who can blame them?

The auctions contributed to a great financial success. The final tally projected net revenue would surpass \$85,000!

The chairmen would like to thank all the hard working volunteers that helped throughout the day. Auction co-chair Christiann Siatras and Tanya Christodoulelis did an outstanding job. Registration co-chair Vicki and Louie Kades were terrific while juggling three weddings no less around the same time! And the entire golf committee scrambled (no pun intended) for months to guarantee success. Chairmen Ted and Will also want to express their deepest gratitude to all the wonderful donors and sponsors who reached in their pockets and so generously gave. Thank you! I hope everyone will make it a point to join us next year on May $21^{\rm st}$ 2010 for our special $10^{\rm th}$ anniversary celebration. Whether you're a golfer or not you will want to be there for all the fun and the surprises.





































GOYA Volleyball Tournament

The 2009 G.O.Y.A. Volleyball Tournament was hosted by St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church on Saturday, May 30th. It was a day full of fun as over 150 govans from many churches came to have a fun day playing volleyball. Following the tournament, there was an Awards Banquet to honor the winners, along with a dinner and dance to celebrate. I would like to thank everyone for coming and supporting this event to make it successful. A special thank you to Theana Bicos and Demitri Kokoris for volunteering to be the St. Anthony's volleyball coaches. Also, a special thank you to Mrs. Pana Gelt, Esther Vavoulis and Mrs. Anthia Lucas for organizing the entire tournament and make it possible every year.





Bible Study Corner: We Are One In Christ Philemon 1-25



In this article I'd like to present you with St. Paul's very short and overlooked epistle to Philemon. Many consider this epistle to have no application to our present lives as Christians and some question why this personal letter was even placed in the Bible. I humbly disagree with this point of view. It consists of only 25 verses, yet it provides us with a

powerful testimony and message of forgiveness, reconciliation, humility and acceptance. It remains most relevant today in its teaching as it did approximately 2000 years ago. So let's open up this powerful letter and learn what it has in store for us as present day Christians.

Paul wrote this epistle while he was under house arrest/prison in Rome (Acts 28:30-31) in about A.D. 60-63. It is a personal note written to Philemon, a well-to-do Christian and prominent member of the church in Colosse. Philemon was a Greek landowner and slave owner living in Colosse. He had more than likely been converted under Paul's ministry in Ephesus and then returned to Colosse where he became an important figure in the growth of the church there.

Paul wrote this letter on behalf of Onesimus, Philemon's runaway slave. Onesimus "belonged" to Philemon, a member of the Colossian church and Paul's friend. But Onesimus the slave, stole from his master and then ran away. He ran to Rome, where he met Paul and there he came to faith in Christ (v.10). So Paul wrote to Philemon and reintroduced Onesimus to him, explaining that he was sending him back, not just as a slave but as a brother (Vv. 11-12, 16). With humility, Paul requested that Philemon accept and forgive Onesimus (Vv. 10, 14-15, 20). The barriers which have been previously erected between Philemon and Onesimus should divide them no longer they are now one in Christ. Instead of rendering lawful and rightful punishment upon this slave, Paul asked his friend to withhold punishment, and instead to forgive and accept him as a new Christian brother, welcoming him into his home as he would welcome Paul (v.17). Paul placed upon himself a great level of responsibility to see that Philemon and Onesimus reconciled. He was willing to pay all that Onesimus took from Philemon. Paul had asked that any money that had been stolen be charged to his account. In other words, Onesimus no longer would owe Philemon anything, but Paul would. Paul was not merely suggesting that the debt be forgiven, but the wrong needed to be rectified; therefore Paul took on that debt on Onesimus' behalf. Onesimus got a dose of true Christian love through Paul's action. Paul was placing himself under legal obligation. Here we have the essence and primary purpose of this epistle which is revealed in verse 18. Paul wrote that he would repay the

debt, but Christ gave His life and shed His blood to pay our entire debt of sin. Like Philemon, who owed his very soul to Paul (v.19), his reason for salvation, how can we ever repay Christ for placing our debts on His account? Paul had every confidence that Philemon would do even more than was requested. He himself had been freely forgiven by Christ. He would not do less, surely, for Onesimus. We have then a vivid illustration of Ephesians 4:32, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you."

In this letter and within our society today, we see the invisible walls that divide people into the "ins and outs," the "haves and have nots," along with the endless assortment of groups, cliques, and castes. Determined by race, skin color, nationality, money, background, education, status, religion, gender, or ability, individuals are judged, categorized, and put in their place. When these social barriers are crossed, usually it is at a great price. But Jesus broke the barriers that divided men and women from each other and from God. In a male dominated society, He spoke freely with women (Mathew 9:18-26; Luke 8:1-3). In the face of the holier than thou hypocrites, He enjoyed meals with sinners (Mathew 9:10-13). Ignoring years of discrimination, Jesus associated with Samaritans (John 4:1-42) and Greeks/Gentiles (Luke 7:1-10; 8:26-39). He continually sought to bring the outcasts and the powerless into his fold; the crippled and lame (Luke 6:1-11), the desperately ill (Mathew 8:1-4; Luke 17:11-19), the blind (Luke 18:35-42; Mark 8:22 -26; John 9:1-7), children (Mark 10:13-16), swindlers and cheaters (Mark 11:13-17; Luke 19:1-10), and the poor (Mark 3:7-12; Luke 21:1-4).

We see throughout the ministry of Paul and within his epistle that he faithfully followed in the footsteps of our Lord. He became the Apostle to the Gentiles as he travelled extensively and shared Christ's message with all types of people. We recall what Paul wrote to the Galatians when he declared to them, "There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)." Perhaps the greatest example of the barriershattering power of the Gospel is seen here in Philemon, where Paul reunites a rich slave-owner and his runaway slave, now both member's of God's family. So please take the time to read this short yet meaningful epistle of reconciliation and consider what divides you from your brothers and sisters in Christ. Ask God today to remove those barriers so that He may bring you together as one in Christ.

In Christ, Christos Theoharatos

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