

# The Voice of Saint Anthony

Monthly Newsletter of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

April/May 2010  
Volume 5, Number 4

## *Xristos Anestí!*



***“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.”*** John 17:4

**(From the Gospel Reading of the Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council - Celebrated, this year, on Sunday May 16<sup>th</sup> )**

In this passage, we see that Jesus honored God, the Father, by fulfilling His purpose on earth. We, too, honor God in the same way. When anything in creation fulfills its purpose, it brings glory to God. Birds bring glory to God by flying, chirping, nesting, and doing those things that God intended them to do. In fact, anything created by God brings glory to God when it fulfills the purpose for which it was created. St. Irenaeus described it best when he wrote, “The glory of God is a human being fully alive!”

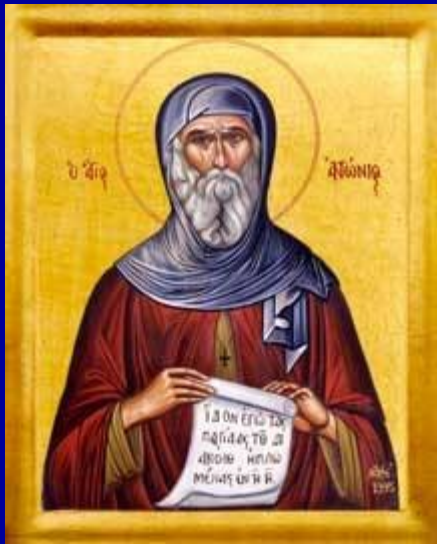
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There are many ways to bring glory to God. I have outlined five specific ways which I would like to share with you. If we can each incorporate these five steps in our lives, we, too, can show God the glory He deserves from us.

The first is to worship Him. Worship is our main responsibility to God. In scripture we read that we should, ***“Use our whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.”*** Using our five senses in the Liturgy and other church services is certainly a good start in how to worship God. Our form of worship includes praying both corporally (with others) and privately to Him, singing, praising, bowing and kneeling to Him. Do we ever sing or even hum a church hymn during a regular weekday? Do we ever stop and thank God when we receive some good news? Do we ever get down on our hands and knees to pray to God at the end of a long day, or at the beginning of a new day? Do we ever reverently bow our head when doing our cross or praying before icons? These are all acts of worship we use to express glory to God.

Second is to bring glory to God by loving others. We were all born into God's family. Following Christ is not just a matter of believing. It also includes belonging to and learning to love the greater family of God. As St. Paul wrote ***“Accept each other just as Christ accepted you; then God will be glorified.”*** It is a daunting task to love others just as they are, without judgment or a desire to change them, but it is our responsibility to learn and understand how to love as God does. As we know, God ***is*** love. By loving as He does we pay God the honor He deserves from us. Jesus taught us this when he said, ***“As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”***

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.

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PASADENA, CA 91107 – 5613  
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[www.saint-anthonys.org](http://www.saint-anthonys.org)

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Rev. Fr. Peter Stratos

### ADMINISTRATION

Alma Vorgias, Secretary  
Christos Kanakis, Pastoral Assistant  
Vicki Kades, Communications

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Ted Vavoulis – Vice-President  
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### JR. GOYA

Presbytera Aida Stratos

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Anastasia McClain, Director

### GREEK DANCE

Esther Vavoulis, President

### MOMS N' TOTS

Maria Udria & Sophia Syrengelas

### VIPs

Pantele Xanthos

To email any of our church groups, please go to our website [www.saint-anthonys.org](http://www.saint-anthonys.org), and you will be able to contact us!

## Father Peter's Message Continued from Page 1

Third, we next bring glory to God by imitating Him. Since we are members of His family, God wants us to grow spiritually. We must endeavor to think, feel, and act like Christ. We can ask ourselves helpful, guiding questions such as; "What would Christ do in this situation?" "Would God be pleased with what I am about to do?" or "What would I do if Christ were standing right here next to me?" The more we develop Christ-like qualities, the more we bring glory to God. In the Bible we read, *"As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more."*

The fourth way to glorify God is by serving others with our gifts. Each one of us was uniquely designed by God with talents, gifts, skills, and abilities. God did not give us our gifts for selfish reasons. They were given to benefit others. All our gifts are given that we may benefit one another. St. Peter wrote in his First Epistle, *"God has given gifts to each of you from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow from you,"*... and he continues, *"Are you called to help others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then God will be given glory."*

Finally, we bring glory to God by telling others about Him. We must not keep God a secret from the world which so desperately needs Him. As we willingly tell others about a new book we have read or film we have seen, with that same eagerness we should share what we know and love about our Lord. We should be confident to share our own personal experiences of God's grace in our lives. When we speak from the love and joy in our heart, God's love will be evident to others. He expects us to share His message with others. The Bible states, *"As God's grace brings more and more people to Christ...God will receive more and more glory."*

Jesus was faced with a difficult decision towards the end of his three-year ministry. Would he fulfill His purpose and bring glory to God, or would He look for the comfortable way out. We know what our Lord did. We, too, are faced with similar decisions to make. Will we choose comfort and ease, or will we live the rest of our lives for God's glory, knowing what he has promised us? Are we going to live for ourselves or God? The decision is ours.

+ Father Peter

## May Services

**Thursday, May 13**

**Holy Ascension; 9:00 am. Orthros/Divine Liturgy**

**Friday, May 21**

**Sts. Constantine & Helen; 8:00 am. Orthros/Divine Liturgy**

**Saturday, May 22**

**4th Saturday of Souls; 9:00 am. Orthros/Divine Liturgy**

**Sunday, May 23**

**Pentecost, 8:30 a.m. Orthros**

**9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy**

**10:30 a.m. Vespers of Pentecost**

## President Message



Christos Anesti! It is a time of hope and renewal as we all have experienced another blessed and joyous Easter. The Easter services followed a very spiritually fulfilling and meaningful Lenten period, where we were led once again by our spiritual leader, Father Peter. This is the time of year when I receive my Lenten pledge letter completed on the first day of Lent. This has become an important annual ritual at St. Anthony that causes us to strive to fulfill and build upon our commitments and spiritual goals.

The first special event of the spring was the Pentahilliarko (Pente) dinner dance, held April 24 at the Altadena Town & Country Club. Special thanks to John and Terese Caire and also Stephanie Soewers for co-chairing the wonderful event. This was a fun evening with great food, fun and fellowship.

The month after the Pente is our famous Golf Tournament, which will be held on May 21 at Brookside Park in Pasadena. Jimmy Christos and Ted Vavoulis are co-chairing, and they will once again provide a very fun and innovatively festive **tournament. If you haven't participated, whether as a golfer, volunteer or just a spectator, it is a lot of fun. Many non-parishioners have told me it's the best tournament they have played in, and this year I finally learned how to play golf so that I can actually take part in this tremendous tournament!** Special thanks to Ted Attala for loaning me his spare set of clubs. This is an important fundraiser, with all proceeds going to the building program.

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The final special event of the spring is a new one, and equally exciting as the others. We will be hosting what will be an annual family picnic on Sunday June 6 after church. The picnic will be at Lacy Park in San Marino where we have reserved a large seating area and athletic fields. Lacy Park is a beautiful setting for this event, and will feature music, activities for the kids, young and old. Our family picnics, whether at Easter time or part of our 50-year celebration, have always been very enjoyable, and we look forward to making this a very special annual event for the whole community. The picnic

will also mark and celebrate the end of the Sunday school year. Special thanks to Perry Vidalakis and John Buzas for co-chairing the Family Picnic.

There continues to be good news on the building project for our new Parish Center. Yesterday was the appeal hearing in front of the Los Angeles County Planning Commission. As I mentioned in my last message, our project was approved by the county by the Regional Planning hearing officer in February. That decision was appealed, by a lone neighbor, to the LA County Planning Commission. On April 14, the Commissioners voted unanimously 4-0 to deny the appeal and uphold the approval. In issuing their ruling, the Commission was very supportive of our project. Father Peter prepared an effective opening statement to the Commission (page 5).

In terms of the project itself, we finalized all design plans and have entered into the construction drawing phase. We will begin interviewing contractors in May, and will present the budget and the overall project for approval in early June. The progress is very exciting, and I will have a lot more detail and information in next **month's President's message. Stay tuned!**

And, finally, we are getting ready to launch the new St. Anthony website. The new site will be a major step forward with greatly enhanced design, content and features. Look for the email announcement for the launch of the new site. Each section, whether it be Sunday School, Building Committee, Greek School, Dance Groups, GOYA, etc., will need updated content. For the new website, we are asking that the Group leaders and co-leaders take ownership of the website content for their group. The new site will be a dynamic one, with constant upkeep with new and revised content needed throughout the year.

As you can see, there are a lot of very exciting things happening right now at St. Anthony. Please plan on taking advantage of all these wonderful opportunities for fellowship, volunteer work, and stewardship.

Yours in Christ,  
John Patzakis



## Opening Comments by Father Peter in Support of the St. Anthony Building Project; Los Angeles County Planning Commission

Good afternoon. The Greek Orthodox Church is the second largest Christian denomination (300 million faithful) worldwide. The foundation of our faith is based on Holy Scripture and Church Tradition.

Our church places a great emphasis on educating the congregation through: sermons, lectures, youth religious education programs throughout the year, bible studies, seminars, talks, open forums, and other means of education. My ministry is about how to bring people closer to God.

That is why this building is so important for our congregation now. Our current facility is aging and dilapidated. It is not compliant with ADA and other codes and is therefore inadequate to the task of providing an adequate environment for our faithful and to serve the needs of the greater community. The community of Saint Anthony needs this building so that we can all work towards our spiritual goal of eternal salvation.

The Church has been at this location for over 50 years. We purchased the property from another church. The hall has been at this location for 45 years. We are simply building a modern building so that we can continue our existing ministry and community service. This request for CSD modification is simply to locate the new building as far

north as is reasonable for all concerned.

The Saint Anthony community is extremely active in its service to those outside its immediate reach. Each of our groups has done wonderful works of service, charity and donation in our local community, the Pasadena area, our state, our country and throughout the world. Just to mention a few of the projects, our Ladies Philanthropic "Friends of the Poor" donated incubators to Methodist Hospital Pediatric ICU just two years ago and our youth groups raised money for an annual Walk-a-Thon called 'Kids Helping Kids with Cancer'. Many of our parishioners serve meals, on a monthly basis, at Union Station, and our parish adopts families and orphans each year from area cities and LAYN.

This community hall is and will be the hub of learning and Christian service, in conjunction with our liturgical worship in the Church. As it stands, the existing community hall is inadequate to the task of teaching and practicing the faith of giving to others. The new facility will be an asset, not only to the St. Anthony Parish, but to the "greater" community.

***(Note: The Planning Commission unanimously upheld the approval of St. Anthony's Project at the end of this hearing, April 14, 2010).***

### Photos from the Leadership Seminar presented by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and the San Francisco Metropolis for church leaders and educators on Sat, February 20, 2010 at St Anthony Church.



10th ANNUAL



PASADENA  
GOLF CLASSIC

FRIDAY, MAY 21, 2010  
12:30 PM TEE OFF

It'll be a Full Day of FUN & FESTIVITIES!

BROOKSIDE GOLF COURSE 1 & 2  
PASADENA, CA • 626.585.3595

**St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church invites you to another fabulous golf tournament, with the continued vision of building a new Cultural Center and expanding our youth programs. We have planned an extraordinary day that has become an annual tradition synonymous with golf, fun and fellowship. Join us for our 9th Annual Pasadena Golf Classic, as we celebrate with great food, an open roast spit and, of course... ouzo. OPA!**

**Brookside Golf Course**

REGISTRATION & CHECK-IN - 10:00 AM  
PRE-GAME PUTTING CONTEST- 11:00 AM  
SHOTGUN START- 1:00 PM

**Banquet at Brookside Country Club**

COCKTAILS & SILENT AUCTION - 5:00 PM  
LOBSTER & STEAK DINNER - 6:30 PM  
AWARDS CEREMONY

**Awards**

LOW GROSS & LOW NET • LONGEST  
DRIVE • STRAIGHTEST DRIVE • CLOSEST  
TO THE PIN • HOLE-IN-ONE

**\$175 Golf Entry Fee Includes:**

GOLF CART & GREEN FEE • TEAM PHOTO • REGISTRATION GIFT BAG •  
LUNCH • DINNER BANQUET • BEVERAGES AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

To register to golf or for more information please contact Jim Christos.  
Jim 626.379.2302 or jimchristos@earthlink.net



## Sponsorship Opportunities

### Diamond Sponsor \$10,000

Includes golf for 16 and 16 additional dinners, a Tee sign with your name or company name, special recognition on official publications.

### Platinum Sponsor \$7500

Includes golf for 12 and 12 additional dinners, a Tee sign with your name or company name, special recognition on official publications.

### Gold Sponsor \$5000

Includes golf for 8 and 8 additional dinners, a Tee sign with your name or company name, special recognition on official publications.

### Silver Sponsor \$2500

Includes golf for 4 and 4 additional dinners, a Tee sign with your name or company name, special recognition on official publications.

### Hole Sponsor \$1000

Includes golf for 2 plus 2 additional dinners. a Tee sign with your name or company name, special recognition on official publications.

### Tee Sign Sponsor \$250

Includes a Tee sign with your name or company name, special recognition on official publications.

**Experienced and non-experienced golfers are welcome to join in!**

**Not a golfer???**

**You can help by volunteering, attending the banquet, becoming a sponsor or making a donation!**



Brookside Golf Club, reminiscent of an earlier era, is steeped in 75 years of golf tradition. Designed by famed golf architect William P. Bell, Brookside Golf Club's 36 holes are nestled in the golden foothills of Pasadena next to the world famous Rose Bowl. The golf courses at Brookside have hosted many major championships including the Los Angeles Open and the National Public Links Championship. Experience tradition. Experience Brookside Golf Club!



# Philoptochos

The Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale was a tremendous success. Many thanks to Yiota Poulos for organizing the baking and to the community for a wonderful response. Proceeds from the sale are being sent to Wells Bring Hope, an organization that digs wells for water in West Africa. [www.wellsbringhope.org](http://www.wellsbringhope.org)

"Friends in Deed" in Pasadena received Easter goodies from Philoptochos, and we continue to provide food to the food bank.



On Sunday, April 11, the annual "Kids N Cancer" reception was held at the Talega Golf Club in San Clemente. The proceeds from this event will benefit children fighting cancer to attend summer camp with their families. Our Philoptochos donated a gift basket and made a monetary donation.



The San Francisco Metropolis Philoptochos held its annual meeting April 16-18 at St Nicholas Ranch. The meeting was attended by President Maria Kokoris, Dorothea Malina, Lisa Xanthos, Judie Christopoulos and many other ladies from other Philoptochos Chapters. Elections were held for a new Metropolis Philoptochos Board, and Lisa Xanthos and Judie Christopoulos were

appointed onto the Board. Congratulations, Lisa and Judie.

On Sunday, April 18, many chapter members signed up to participate in the Greater Los Angeles Walk MS at the Rose Bowl for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Our chapter made a monetary donation to the walk to support Team Vas.

On Wednesday, April 28, our monthly meeting was held at the lovely home of Dino and Julie Balas in Glendora. Julie was our speaker, and the topic was "Positive Psychology." The meeting was well attended.

Wednesday, May 26, we will be having another meeting at the lovely home of Dean and Teddi Efstathiou with a guest speaker, Barbara Goldberg from Wells Bring Hope. We look forward to seeing you.

Vangie Dupas and Andrea Patzakis, Membership Co-Chairwomen, welcome new members. They remind those who have not paid 2010 stewardship to please do so.

Boys and girls, men and women, please consider helping serve a hot meal at Union Station. This is a great way to get service hours. The food is already prepared for you, and it only takes a couple of hours to serve and clean up. First Wednesday of each month. Please call Irene Albeck.

Volunteers are always needed to serve coffee after church on Sunday. Please call Alma Vorgias at the church office, 626-449-6943.

## Philoptochos trip



to the Norton Simon Museum



# Moms N' Tots



## Mom's N' Tots Easter Party

Special thanks to Judie Christopoulos for opening her home to the Mom's N' Tots Group, and to Mary udria and Sophia Syrengelas for planning such a great event!



*St. Anthony Greek Folk Dance Groups will have their annual General Assembly Meeting*

**May 2010**

*(Date To Be Announced)*

This very important meeting will include Dance Board Elections, the mandatory Parents Meeting, and registration for the new year. Look for more information to be distributed via email, flyers at church and in the Sunday bulletin. Please consider volunteering as a parent representative for your child group or for the Dance Board. Help our wonderful program continue to grow and offer our kids the opportunity for fellowship and cultural enlightenment.

Please contact Esther Vavoulis,  
818-730-5508 or [evavoulis@aol.com](mailto:evavoulis@aol.com)  
for more information.

## VIP Rummage Sale

The Senior Organization is planning a Rummage Sale. You are encouraged to save your no longer needed items. We will welcome linens, jewelry, household items, figurines, knickknacks, small furniture, antiques, small appliances that work, toys, dolls, doll furniture and anything you think will sell. Please do not bring any construction materials, computers or printers. These items do not sell. The Rummage Sale will take place on June 25 and 26 in the fellowship hall. **Please bring your items to the Moms' & Tots room the week of June 21 thru June 24.** For more information, please call Katherine Skandale at (818) 790-5028.

## Youth Corner: Mr. Christos Kanakis - Hunger Strike



On March 21<sup>st</sup>, a group of our GOYANS participated in the Hunger Strike which was hosted at Saint Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Irvine, along with GOYANS from the parishes in Southern California.

**The Hunger Strike's** purpose was to raise money for the children in Tanzania as they were sponsored to participate, collect food for the orphans for Project Mexico, be informed of the tragedy of hunger in the world, and learn how their Orthodox faith and good works go hand-in-hand. While everyone was made sure to be hydrated with water and Gatorade, all the participants gave up food to experience an empty stomach for the day.

The GOYANS began the day by placing plastic forks in an area of grass and painted their fingerprints on a banner to represent the children who have passed away as a result of hunger.

After becoming acquainted with one another, they were divided into small groups to learn about how all human beings throughout the world are made in the image and likeness of God and how we are all living icons.

Next, each participant of the Hunger Strike was given a profile passport of a child in Tanzania, which described how they live and how a normal day in their life is like. Everyone had the chance to reflect on his or her worst and best day and compare with that of a Tanzanian child.

After an activity of learning how to sing an African song on being "Christ's Ambassadors," the youth, led by their chaperones, went door to door to collect canned food and nonperishables for the orphans for Project Mexico. It was impressive to see the zeal and determination of the participants as they collected a large amount of food.

The youth also learned and participated in making the offering bread that is used for Holy Com-

union and Antidoron called *prosforo*, and then learned how the Gifts for Holy Communion were prepared.

Water is an extremely important element for survival, and the GOYANS learned how the Church sanctifies water, like when Christ was baptized and sanctified the River of Jordan. The sad reality is that the people in Africa do not have the same resources of water as we do in the United States, and people have to carry water from miles away. **After having a 'water race' where each group had to compete with one another to carry water from one side of the field to the other with a cup on each person's head, the youth experienced how important it was to transfer water without spilling a drop.**

After the lesson on the sanctity and importance of water, Fr. Steve officiated an *Agiasmo* service, where the youth prayed over the water for Christ to sanctify, and everyone was blessed with the Holy Water.

By the end of day, everyone reflected and prayed for a child in Tanzania, and the evening was concluded with a memorial service for all who passed away from hunger in Africa.

After breaking their day of fasting from food, the GOYANS ate koliva from the memorial service and the *prosforo* they had learned to make and slept in the Church under the dome of Christ. The next day everyone shared their experience with the community in Church on Sunday and with their family and friends at home.

We are all proud of our GOYANS for participating in this inspiring event. We will plan to have our own Hunger Strike next year at Saint Anthony.

Christos Kanakis  
Pastoral Assistant

*Lift up and stretch out, your hands, not to heaven, but to the poor; for if you stretch forth your hands to the poor, you have reached the summit of heaven.*

*Saint John Chrysostom*

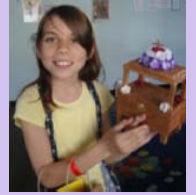


# Holy Friday Retreat



Xristos Anesti!

St. Anthony's Holy Friday Retreat was a great success again this year. Our theme was "the Kouvouklion and Epitaphion."



After a delicious Lenten lunch, the children each constructed and decorated their own kouvouklion, epitaphion, and crucifix to take and keep at their 'home iconostasi.'

They also participated in a pilgrimage through the Church where they learned more about the Crucifixion and Resurrection icons, the Lamentations we all sing on Holy Friday night, the "randistiri" and significance of the "mirofores," the censor, and the epitaphion which is placed in the kouvouklion on Holy Friday. They collected treasures at each station to complete their kouvouklion project.

We thank Miss Demetra Bozikis, who had each child place a finishing-touch flower on the church's large kouvouklion for the Holy Friday services. Thank you to Irene Albeck, the religious education teachers, and the many volunteers who together provided lessons, lunch, and assistance.

A special thank you to Mr. Juan Udria who cut and stained hundreds of wood components for this project. Thanks to Mrs. Judie Christopoulos and all the volunteer drivers who took the high school participants to their annual Holy Friday field trip. And thank you to the parents who brought "your" children to their Church on this very holy day for the Retreat and the Descent from the Cross Service. It was a very special day. Your Religious Education Dept is already working on the 2011 Holy Friday Retreat. So mark your calendars and plan to bring your children next year on Holy Friday, April 22, 2011.

In Christ,  
Rev. Fr. Peter





# GOYA

ON SATURDAY, MARCH 6TH, THE GOYANS HAD A GAME NIGHT. THEY PLAYED SEVERAL FUN GAMES, SUCH AS TABOO, SCATEGORIES, AND CHARADES. A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE KEFALAS FAMILY FOR HOSTING THIS WONDERFUL EVENT AND PREPARING A DELICIOUS MEAL FOR THE GOYANS



ON MARCH 3RD, THE GOYANS SPENT THEIR NIGHT FEEDING THE HOMELESS AT UNION STATION. IT WAS A GREAT FEELING TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY.

ON APRIL 20TH-APRIL 21ST, G.O.Y.A. PARTICIPATED IN A HUNGER STRIKE HOSTED BY ST. PAUL'S IN IRVINE. THEY FASTED FROM FOOD FOR 30 HOURS TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE CHILDREN IN TANZANIA, AFRICA. THEIR DAY WAS FULL OF ACTIVITIES, FACTS ABOUT VITAL RESOURCES LIKE FOOD AND WATER, AND BECAME MORE CONNECTED TO THEIR FAITH. THEY ALSO WENT AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND COLLECTED CANNED GOODS FOR ST. INNOCENCE ORPHANAGE IN TIJUANA, MEXICO. 16,000 CHILDREN DIE EVERYDAY DUE TO POVERTY AND HUNGER CAUSES, AND WITH THEIR 30-HOUR FAST, THEY RAISED \$4,400 AND COUNTING. IT ONLY TAKES \$1 A DAY TO FEED A CHILD IN AFRICA, AND WITH THEIR STRIKE THEY ARE ABLE TO FEED 133 CHILDREN FOR ONE MONTH. THAT'S ONE LESS MONTH TO WORRY ABOUT.



## Upcoming GOYA Events.....

May 15th-Basebal/Park Day at La Canada Elementary

May 22nd- Medieval Times

June 4th- Meeting/ Elections

June 19th- Goya Bonfire Night

June 26th- GOYA Volleyball Tournament

**Email Olga Baroudos [papagalou91@yahoo.com](mailto:papagalou91@yahoo.com) to get involved!**



# GOYA BASKETBALL



St. Anthony GOYA Basketball needs your support, especially on home games! Let's fill the stands and cheer on our teams. Please encourage all members of St. Anthony to come out and support our teams as they face the upcoming games. The quarter finals, semi finals and finals will be the 1st 3 Saturdays in May. Call the church office for more information. Thank you to the 2010 coaches.



## Jr. GOYA

Xristos Anesti!

The Jr. Goya has had a very busy and productive year of service, fellowship and fun.

The majority of the Jr. Goyans participated in the Holy Friday Retreat, and many of the older ones are playing GOYA Basketball.

Now that spring is upon us, we are continuing with the basketball schedule, and our next Jr. GOYA meeting will be on Family night, Friday, May 7. We plan to go on our next outing to the 80-foot waterfall at Fish Canyon Falls in the local San Gabriel Mountains on Saturday, June 5.

Also on the Jr. Goya calendar: end of the year pool party and officer elections in June, the volleyball tournament and mid-summer beach party.

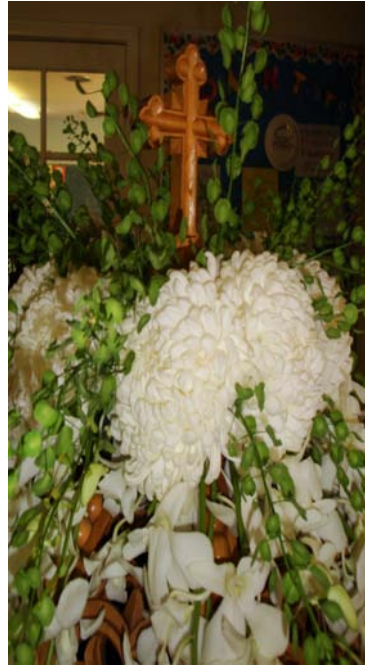




# The Splendor of Easter



Saturday of Lazarus: Making palm crosses



Holy Friday





Holy Friday Evening



Holy Saturday Morning





## Easter Offering Donors

Last Update: April 20, 2010

Virginia & Peter A Adamopoulos  
Albeck and Udria Family  
Sophia & James Angelos  
Anonymous  
Helen & Gus Anton  
Mary Arapostathis  
Georgia Aspiotes  
Philip "Ted" Attalla  
Michael & Renee Bannoura  
Connie & Brian L. Becker  
Christina Becronis  
Harriet Betinis  
Peter N. Bissias  
Helen Bonorris  
Tom Athanasios Bouras  
Angeliki & Chris Broussinos  
Penelope & Frank J. Burkard  
Terese & John Caire  
Jim Chames  
Angene Christy  
Christine & Ted Cocores  
Georgia & George Courlas  
Dimitrios & Eleni Damilatis  
Paula Darlas  
Tom Darlas

Anastasia Diamond  
Pete Dimitrakopoulos  
Elizabeth & Andrew Demopulos  
Theodora & Dean Efstathiou  
Susan L. & Peter G. Evangelatos  
Eleni & Matthew Gallagher  
Thean & Steven Grafos  
Aliko Haralambos  
Pota & George N. Kalivas  
Helen & Tasos Karagias  
Jeanne & Phaedon Karaioannoglou  
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Aliko Haralambos  
Kathy Lucas  
Vivian Mavredakis  
Linda Lewis  
Jessica Kanatkis  
Pat Pastis  
Bess Mechalas  
Litsa Stavropoulos  
Katherine Skandale  
Helen Reese  
Elizabeth Moreno  
Aphie Akipiantz

Margaret Sjostrand  
Helen Skandale  
Stavroula Kiotas  
Lisa Xanthos  
Pan Xanthos  
Anthia Lucas  
Billy Fuerst  
Pan and Lisa Xanthos  
(dome decorations)  
Litsa Vagenas  
(for the lovely Orchids)  
\*All the beautiful children from Good Friday retreat

## Dyeing of Eggs

Sophia Vagenas  
Litsa Vagenas  
Tashia Vagenas  
Georgia Vagenas  
Stavroula Kiotas

Irene Albeck  
Angela Angelopoulos  
Eleni Katsafados  
Despina Stefanidis  
Christine Kundanis



## Bible Study Corner—Doubting Thomas John 20:19-31



During the month of March, our Bible study group was on a modified sabbatical. Instead of continuing with our studies, we attended the Catechism classes that were being presented by Christos Kanakis and Philip Lanergan. It was during one of these classes that certain questions arose regarding the faith, the Church and

the Bible in relation to its divine inspiration. I grasped from these questions that the person possessed true sincerity in desiring to receive truthful answers to the questions. Questions are appropriate and most welcomed when it comes to the authenticity of our faith, and these questions caused me to take pause and to think about my own faith. Is my faith steadfast and secure, or could it be shaken by the open hostility displayed by the secular and unbelieving culture of today? This led me to the assigned Gospel reading for the Sunday of Thomas that is found in **John 20:19-31**. After all, it was from him that the phrase, **"Doubting Thomas"** was coined.

In this Gospel lesson, Jesus appeared to His disciples; however, Thomas was not present. He received a report from the other disciples that Jesus appeared to them but he remained skeptical. **"The other disciples therefore said to him, 'We have seen the Lord.' So he said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe. (John 20:25).'** Thomas wants a thorough examination of Christ's wounds before he is willing to believe the story of his fellow disciples. Eight days transpire, and Jesus once again appears to His disciples. This time Thomas is present, and Jesus singles him out. **"Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing. (John 20:27).'** Thomas then makes an incredible proclamation of faith and adoration towards Jesus as he responded with complete assurance and deep conviction, **"And Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God. (John 20:28).'** Blessed Theophylact states in relation to this proclamation, **"But when Thomas cries out, my Lord and my God, he confesses Christ's divine essence and affirms that the names Lord and God refer to one and the same Person."** Basically, with the words "my Lord and my God," Thomas summarized John's reason for writing his Gospel, **"but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)"**

But what was the reaction of Jesus in response to the words of Thomas, **"Jesus said to him, "Thomas,**

**because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. (John 20:29)"** Regarding Thomas' doubt, the Orthodox Study Bible writes, "The doubt of Thomas is described in the Church hymns as **"blessed,"** for it was not a doubt of resistance to truth, but one that desperately desired a truthful answer—a doubt which gave birth to faith when the answer was revealed. In hymns of the Church, Christ says to Thomas, **"Your doubt will teach My Passion and Resurrection to all,"** and we affirm that his doubt **"brought the hearts of believers to knowledge."** The conversion of Thomas' doubt into faith led him to the clearest confession of Christ's divinity, addressing Jesus as my Lord and my God. **(John 20:28)"**

Jesus wasn't hard on Thomas for his doubts. Despite his skepticism, Thomas remained loyal to his fellow believers and to Jesus Himself. It is encouraging to know that Jesus had a personal interest in and loving concern for Thomas. He wanted to strengthen his faith and include him in the blessings that lay in store for His followers. Thomas reminds us that **unbelief robs us of blessings and opportunities. In today's society it is deemed sophisticated and intellectual to question what Jesus did, but such questions are usually evidence of stubborn hearts and not of searching minds. However in Thomas we can observe that some people need to doubt before they believe. If doubt leads to questions, questions lead to answers, and the answers are accepted, then doubt has done a good work. It is when doubt turns into stubbornness and a hardened heart that creates an environment and lifestyle that will consequently harm one's faith. Many of us throughout our lifetime have experienced or will experience levels of doubt, but we shouldn't stop there. We should let our doubts deepen our faith as we continue to search for the answer. In Thomas I am reminded that the skeptic is not rejected by God—that when one possesses doubts or uncertainties he or she will not be automatically rejected by Christ. I am able to observe in this Gospel reading that Jesus willingly comes to us, to show us His hands and side that we might believe. So if you have any doubts—share them. Jesus will come to you, and when you recognize Him, you will bow down with Thomas, and cry, **"My Lord and my God!"** Everyone, believers and non-believers alike live by faith. The difference is in the object of faith. As Orthodox Christians we put our faith in God and His Word, while the unbelievers put their faith in themselves. As we who believe yet have not seen be reminded of the special blessing and words of our Savior, **"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. (John 20:29)"****

In Christ,

Christos Theoharatos

# GREEK VILLAGE IMMERSION CAMP BEING OFFERED AT SAINT NICHOLAS RANCH



The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco is pleased to announce its first annual Greek Immersion Camp, "The Greek Village," which will be held June 12 – 19, 2010 at Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in

Dunlap, CA. This program is open to all youth ages 6 – 11.

Registration information is available on the Metropolis website: [www.sanfran.goarch.org](http://www.sanfran.goarch.org) or by calling the Metropolis at 415-753-3075. Special discounts are available for families sending more than one child, or for parents who wish to accompany their child to camp.

## ***Saint Sophia Summer Camp 2010!***

The Saint Sophia Camp Committee has been hard at work planning a fantastic summer camp season. Our summer camping program will continue with a shortened season at a rented facility. There will be two weeks of camp. The first week is scheduled from Sunday, July 25th through Saturday, July 31st; and the second week will be from Saturday, July 31st through Saturday, August 7th. We will again be holding camp this summer at Camp Seeley which is **located in the San Bernardino Mountains. It's close to Lake Gregory and the Village of Crestline, and you can check out Camp Seeley at [www.laparks.org/dos/camps/seely.htm](http://www.laparks.org/dos/camps/seely.htm).**

To register online and for additional information please visit our web site at [www.saintsophiacamp.org](http://www.saintsophiacamp.org). You may also contact our administrative assistant, Vicki Kades, at [saintsophiacamp@gmail.com](mailto:saintsophiacamp@gmail.com) or by phone at 323-251-2252, for more information or registration forms.

## ***Apply now to be a camp counselor at Saint Sophia Camp!***

The Saint Sophia Camp Committee is looking for highly motivated, responsible and enthusiastic young adults over 18 to be camp counselors this summer. The first week is scheduled from Sunday, July 25th through Saturday, July 31st; and the second week will be from Saturday, July 31st through Saturday, August 7th. There will be a \$100 stipend, per week, offered to counselors. We will be holding camp this summer at Camp Seeley which is located in the San Bernardino Mountains. Applications are online at [www.saintsophiacamp.org](http://www.saintsophiacamp.org). You may also contact our administrative assistant, Vicki Kades, by phone at 323-251-2252 or [saintsophiacamp@gmail.com](mailto:saintsophiacamp@gmail.com), for more information.



# Stewardship as of Mar. 20, 2010

Rev. Peter & Pres. Aida Stratos  
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Please forgive us if there are any errors or omissions. The printed list is from the date above. Any stewardship additions or changes that were made after the above date will not be added or corrected in this issue.

Please make us aware of any errors by calling the church office.

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