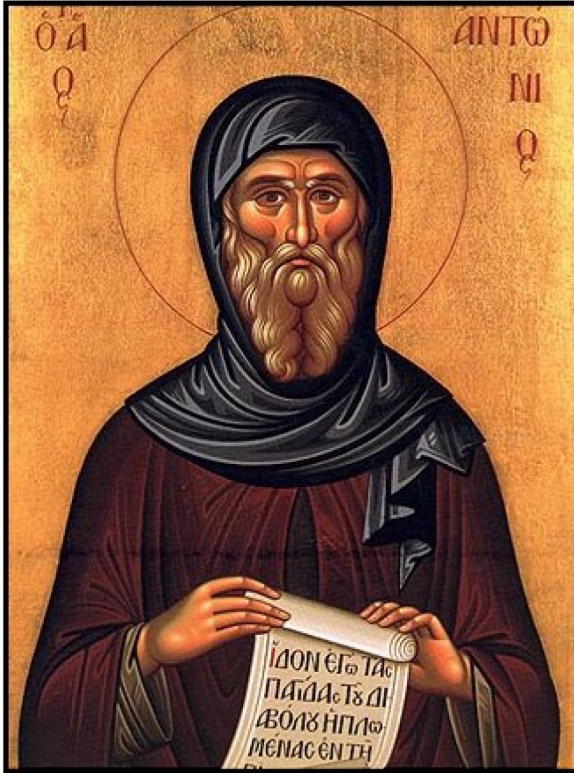


The Voice of Saint Anthony

Monthly Newsletter of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

February 2009
Volume 4, Number 2



FATHER PETER'S MESSAGE

What is sacrificial giving? As Christians we are called to give sacrificially. But, what does this really mean? Both Scripture and a brief look at the writings of C.S Lewis provide answers and understanding to the question of sacrificial giving.

In the Gospel of Luke 21: 1-4 we read: "And He (Jesus) looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." This, to me, is sacrificial giving, because the value of the gift derives from the spirit in which it is given. Thus, a gift that seeks recognition loses spiritual value; and "a gift made from the heart gains immense value." C.S. Lewis wrote: "I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusement, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot because our

commitment to giving excludes them." This is another remarkable example and explanation of the meaning of sacrificial giving.

This concept of sacrificial giving is something that many of us struggle with. When do we give? How often do we give? How much do we give? I recently read an article written by Fr. Anthony Scott who has helped us greatly with our Capital Campaign Project for our new Parish Center. Fr. Scott wrote about a fascinating area of philanthropy termed "donor motivation." Donor motivation is defined as an inquiry into what stimulates people to give generously and sacrificially. He referenced a large capital campaign for St. Vladimir's Seminary that raised more than \$22.5 million from some 3,000 donors. Interestingly, of all the givers, only 6 requested naming opportunities. This begs the question, if not for recognition, then why did these people give? The answer is this: those who give sacrificially do so because they identify with the mission of the parish or church organization, and those that identify with their church make their gifts in the same manner that they make their personal investments. They give to charities and other organizations that are well managed.

04 - Presidents Message

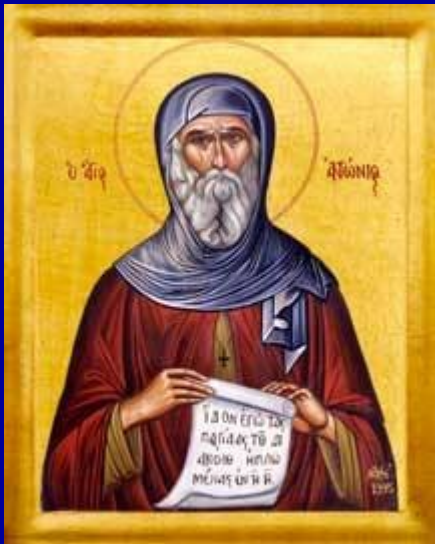
06 - Capital Campaign

10 - Community Calendar

14 - Bible Study

The IOCC is a wonderful example of a charitable organization that is well run and receives many donations. Would we be so willing to give to a corporation that was continually running budget deficits? One that never communicated with its investors (donors)? One that did not have a good record of positive performance and success (changing and saving lives)? I think not. We have to perceive value in the organization in order to want to give to it. This also applies to our church. If we are receiving something of value, we become more connected. If we perceive value, we read the bulletin more closely. If we perceive value, we attend services more often.

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.

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

CLERGY

Rev. Fr. Peter Stratos

ADMINISTRATION

Alma Vorgias, Secretary

Vicki Kades, Communications

PARISH COUNCIL

John Patzakis - President

Ted Vavoulis – Vice-President

Irene Albeck - Secretary

Julie Kiotas-Balas - Treasurer

Nicholas Angelos, Sophia Angelos, Chris Bicos,
Kalli Bicos, Sam Dallas, Nick Demopoulos,
Syrus Mobayen, Steven Pappas,
Peter Stavropoulos, Eleni Vagenas,
Tashia Vagenas

PAST PRESIDENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Andrew Demopulos, Chairman

LADIES OF PHILOPTOCHOS

Maria Kokoris

CHOIR

Jim Hronas

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Irene Albeck, Coordinator

GOYA

Esther Vavoulis

GREEK SCHOOL

Anastasia McClain, Director

GREEK DANCE

Christine Pappas- President

MOMS N' TOTS

Maria Udria

VIPs

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

If we perceive value, we deflect petty unjust criticisms of the church because the church is ours. It belongs to us. Therefore, it is imperative in a church that we are effectively lead, and that our people understand the mission of the church. Our mission is to bring people to a greater understanding of living a Christ-centered life, of changing lives and saving lives, and to offer experiences and programs that help to perpetuate that mission.

Let me now ask this question of everyone in our community: "Why should we give sacrificially?" Because we are all being asked to do so. Christ was not afraid to ask people for meaningful personal sacrifice. Every teaching of the Lord dealt with repentance, change, and to give up one way of life for another. He even asked for the ultimate sacrificial gift when he said to the rich man, "Go and sell all that you have, distribute it to the poor, and follow me, and you will have joy in heaven." (Matt 19:21) He called the apostles to leave family, homes, security and jobs in order to follow him. We are now all being asked to give sacrificially.

A research company once conducted a survey project to determine why donors make large donations. There was one motivation that was universally present among all those donors surveyed. That motivation was the desire to experience the joy in making the gift. Thus far in our St. Anthony Capital Campaign, 68 families have experienced that joy, and you will see more information within this newsletter pertaining to the current community financial situation. We are in a good financial position, but more work needs to be done. Thus far the giving has been committed with love and a true understanding of our parish goals for the future. This is very encouraging, because our parishioners are making major gifts, not to glorify their own egos and receive public acclaim, but rather because of the experience of making the gift, of making the difference in the life of this cherished parish, for the work of changing lives and savings lives. This is all about a deep spiritual joy. We all need to experience this great feeling.

I would like to conclude with this: Our community is certainly and undeniably growing. We are experiencing growth when other churches are declining. Could it be that people are perceiving that we are operating well? Could it be that we

are well managed? Could it be that our people understand the mission of the church and perceive value? Could it be that our people perceive the Holy Spirit at work? I pray that the answer is yes. We have all (and I include myself) enjoyed worshipping and being educated here in our church and current parish center. These two buildings were built through the tremendous sacrifices of others (their own sacrificial giving), indeed a job well done by good and faithful servants. We now find ourselves at a critical moment in our parish history. Having recently celebrated 50 years as a parish, we now look forward to our next great commission, to build our new Parish Center for the work of the next 50 years in this Pasadena community. The additional capacity will allow us the opportunity to enhance our education and service to our own parishioners, and to those who have yet to join us, the community at large. It will afford us an expanded ability to do so much more as a parish and community living a Christ-centered life. We have much more work to be done, and this new community center will serve us well in meeting our tremendous potential.

Just prior to beginning the Liturgy, the clergy recite a prayer that states: "It is time for the Lord to act." Indeed that time has come. Indeed the time to act is now. As construction costs fall, we have a wonderful opportunity for our buiding to rise. Pray deeply about what your church means to you, and how, together, we can achieve something great for the generations to come. Experience the joy that comes from giving.

In Christ,

Fr Peter



President John Patzakis's Inaugural President's Message



It is with great honor and humility that I accepted the Parish Council's nomination and election as President on January 11.

This opportunity to serve means a great deal to me, as I was baptized at St. Anthony and grew up in this beloved parish, then returned upon marrying my wonderful wife Andrea, and now have two daughters in Sunday School. This year I look forward to doing everything I can to help further the tremendous growth and vibrancy of St. Anthony's.

My tenure begins after a highly successful two-year term by Steve Pappas, who is very deserving of our thanks and appreciation for his tremendous, selfless and tireless leadership that did so much to strengthen and foster our parish. Steve's talent, professionalism and complete dedication to St. Anthony is an inspiration to me. I served as treasurer and then vice president during Steve's tenure as one of, if not the most, effective presidents in the history of our community. Steve will continue to serve on the Parish Council and will also play a key role as an executive member of the building committee.

My decision to accept the Parish Council's nomination for president stems from three factors that make our parish so special. First, St. Anthony is a wonderful and vibrant community, and the warmth, love and support my family and I have felt and received from all of you over the years reaffirms what a special place St. Anthony's is. St. Anthony's is truly a thriving community. We have a strong and energetic Parish Council and a parish-wide commitment to growing our spiritual and fellowship programs, as evidenced by the imminent building project, which is ready to commence this summer (with the final approval of the general assembly) due to the generous financial support and volunteer efforts by the broader community and its leaders. The work of Philoptochos, the dedication of our wonderful choir, the commitment of the Festival and Golf Tournament committees, inspirational programs such as Moms and Tots, Family night, GOYA, the Dance Groups, and a

stellar Sunday School staff confirm that I am blessed with this opportunity to help serve such a wonderful and special community.

Another reason St. Anthony is so special is because of our spiritual leader, Father Peter Stratos. We are very blessed to have such a wonderful and dedicated pastor who is always here for us and has done so much for St. Anthony these past three years. One of my key responsibilities as president is to support Father with the right resources and backing in his many efforts in service to our community. Father Peter is continuing to develop plans to grow and strengthen St. Anthony, and the Parish Council and I look forward to working closely with him so that he may continue his good work on behalf of us all.

And finally, St. Anthony is truly special because of its future. We have over 140 children in our Sunday school program, and thanks to the work of many dedicated parents and teachers, our GOYA and other youth programs are thriving. As I was raised going to church at St. Anthony, I know first hand the essential role of the church in guiding and supporting our youth, and am grateful for all this community has done for me through the years. But with such fortune comes responsibility. We can boast about having so many young parishioners, but it is incumbent on us to ensure that our children have the necessary opportunities and avenues for spiritual growth. These avenues are paved by programs and parental involvement.

In fact, 2009 will be a year focused on strengthening our many existing programs and creating new programs for all our parishioners. We have a full slate of programs for all ages and interests – spiritual, educational, cultural, social, athletic, language, dance, and music. To strengthen these existing programs and to launch new ones, we need as many of you as possible to participate in these programs and, more importantly, to be willing to step up into leadership positions.

We are fortunate to have many, many people willing to help out with things, but we also *really* need individuals willing to be leaders!

Continued on next page...

President Message Continued

Several key people have stepped up in important areas; we have a wonderful volunteer Choir Director, Chanters, Golf Chairs, Festival Chairs, Youth Directors, Sunday School teachers, etc. This year, however, we were not able to put on the *Pente* Dinner-Dance as no chairperson came forward. Further, the youth programs, while vibrant, are in need of additional leaders and parental involvement to advance their programs and expand the age groups to which we are ministering.

2009 will be a critically important year for our community. The final design phase of our Building Program will be completed soon and, with the community's approval, we will break ground this summer. When the construction begins, it will be essential that we maintain the fellowship and cohesion that we enjoy today, which is another key reason why strengthened programs and involvement by the broader community will be so important in the coming 18 months.

I am extremely blessed to have a very talented and dedicated Parish Council and Parish Council Executive Committee. Ted Vavoulis will serve as our Vice President and will be working very closely with me to lead our parish. Irene Albeck will once again honor us by serving as our long-standing Secretary. Irene is my former Sunday School teacher, and she is a great inspiration to me, and I am grateful for her counsel and support. Julie Balas has stepped up to the role of Treasurer, and she will help us to continue to strengthen the financial position of our community. Tashia Vagenas has accepted the important role of Assistant Treasurer.

May God continue to bless us and help us make 2009 a year that grows and strengthens the community, and gives us the conviction to move forward in our spiritual journey.

John Patzakis
Parish Council President



ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH COUNCIL 2009

Mr. John Patzakis - President
Mr. Ted Vavoulis - Vice President
Mrs. Irene Albeck - Secretary
Mrs. Julie Kiotas Balas - Treasurer

Mrs. Sophia Angelos, Mr. Nicholas Angelos, Mr. Chris Bicos, Mrs. Kalli Bicos, Mr. Sam Dallas, Mr. Nick Demopoulos, Mr. Syrus Mobayen, Mr. Steven Pappas, Mr. Peter Stavropoulos, Mrs. Eleni Vagenas, Mrs. Tashia Vagenas

* We thank the outgoing members of the Parish Council: John Buzas, Jim Christodoulelis and Peter Zarifes for their invaluable services to our community and to our Church.

Capital Campaign Update

- The findings of the Campaign Planning Study revealed that we have the capacity for a successful major campaign, but we have to learn to give sacrificially.
- To date, 68 individual/family pledges plus \$900,000 in existing Building funds total \$5.7 million in gifts and pledges toward our goal of \$8 million.
- Another small group information session is planned for early February to inform and encourage sacrificial giving to the Capital Campaign.
- Another Parish Town Hall will be held in March to review updated designs and solicit community feedback.
- With the anticipated financial support of many of our other families, we plan to hold a Special General Assembly in late spring to approve moving forward with construction and hiring a general contractor.

Summary of Pledges

Pledge Amount	Families	Cum % of Families	Total Pledges	Cum % of Pledges
1,000,000	2	3%	\$2,000,000	42%
500,000	1	4%	\$500,000	53%
250,000	1	6%	\$250,000	58%
100,000	8	18%	\$800,000	75%
50,000	11	34%	\$550,000	87%
30,000	1	35%	\$30,000	87%
25,000	12	53%	\$300,000	94%
20,000	4	59%	\$80,000	95%
15,000	3	63%	\$45,000	96%
12,000	1	65%	\$12,000	97%
10,000	13	84%	\$130,000	99%
<10,000	11	100%	\$35,400	100%
	68		\$4,732,400	

Reaching Our Goal

Pledges (68)	\$4.8	<i>What will it take to reach our Goal?</i>		
Golf & 50th	\$0.8	500,000	1	\$500,000
Old Accounts & Recent Memorials	\$0.1	250,000	2	\$500,000
Current Commitments	\$5.7	100,000	4	\$400,000
Campaign Goal	\$8.0	50,000	8	\$400,000
		25,000	16	\$400,000
		10,000	<u>32</u>	<u>\$320,000</u>
			63	\$2,520,000
Remaining Target	\$2.3			

We encourage everyone to come forward and join your fellow parishioners who have pledged to the St. Anthony Capital Campaign

Irene Albeck
 Nicholas Angelos
 Sophia & Jim Angelos
 Mary Arapostathis
 Julia & George Argyros
 Philip "Ted" Attalla
 Julie & Dino Balas
 Eleni & Chris Bicos
 Kalli & Dino Bicos
 Mary & Soterios Bicos
 Marietta & Steve Bicos
 Michele & Peter Bissias
 Nicholas Buzas
 Pam & John Buzas
 Terese & John Caire
 Tanya & Jimmy Christodoulelis
 Judie & Gus Christopoulos
 Georgia & George Courlas
 Laura & Taso Darlas
 Elizabeth & Andy Demopulos
 Nicholas Demopulos
 Maria Karras & Nick Demos
 Katherine & George Dupas

Vangie & Ted Dupas
 Tania & Tom Grafos
 Aliko Haralambos
 Haralambos Family
 Joan & Peter Kaplanis
 Stavrula & Alex Kiotas
 Maria & Nick Kokoris
 Joanna & Konstantinos Koulos
 Christine Kundanis
 Kal & Ron Kvitne
 Maria & Jimmy Kypreos
 Parise Livanos & Peggy Jones
 Kathy Lucas
 Sophia & Mike Malahatis
 Dorothea Malina
 Mary Ann & Paul Mallis
 Jennie & Chris McNulty
 Bess Mechalas
 Irene & Nicholas Mitsos
 Chrissa & Syrus Mobayen
 Presvytera Maria Mylonas
 Christine & Steven Pappas

Leah & Arry Pastis
 Vivian & Gust Pastis
 Andrea & John Patzakis
 Philoptochos Panagia Chapter
 Yiota Poulos
 Evangelia & Thomas Riley
 Peter Scamagas
 Christiann & Christos Siatras
 Katherine & George Skandale
 Stephanie & Randy Soewers
 Litsa Stavropoulos
 Presv Aida & Fr. Peter Stratos
 Ellie & John Tarazi
 Dean & Steve Tripodes
 Dena & Nikitas Tripodes
 Jenny & John Tsouvalas
 Eleni & Peter Vagenas
 Tashia & Alex Vagenas
 Esther & Ted Vavoulis
 Zoe & Perry Vidalakis
 Jennifer & John Webster
 Cleo & Peter Williams
 Tina & Peter Zarifes

VASILOPITA CUTTING AT ST. ANTHONY'S IN JANUARY 2009



This age old tradition commenced in the fourth century, when Saint Basil the Great, who was a bishop, wanted to distribute money to the poor in his Diocese. He commissioned some women to bake sweetened bread, in which he arranged to place gold coins. Thus the families in cutting the bread to nourish themselves, were pleasantly surprised to find the coins.

The name "βασιλόπιτα" comes from two Greek words: βασιλεύς 'king' + πίτα 'pie', but was reinterpreted as [Saint Basil's](#) (Βασίλειος) cake

Moms N Tots

Every Thursday 9:30 am—10:15 am: Ages 6 months to 4 1/2 years old are welcome to join in. Activities include crafts, singing, story time, playtime and much more! Come join the fun. There is no pre-registration necessary! Yiayias, papous, theas, godparents, nannies, cousins, etc., are all welcome!

For more information about Moms N Tots, please contact Mary Udria at 626-963-9384 or email Maroula7@aol.com.



Field Trip February 26, 10:00 am Peekaboo Playland in Eagle Rock (www.peekabooplayland.com)

**2513 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock
Kids \$8 and Adults are Free**

Tucked away behind a historic craftsman-style house in the heart of Eagle Rock is a cozy, clean and safe hideaway, a perfect place for both children and adults to play and socialize. There is 3,400 square feet of indoor and outdoor play areas to ignite a child's imagination and drive to explore the many fun things to do, including bouncers, play structures, swing sets and much more! Don't forget your socks! Join the fun!

Greek School

**Ελληνικό Σχολείο: Πρόγραμμα εκδηλώσεων
Φεβρουαρίου – Ιουνίου 2009**

Κυριακή, 1 Φεβρουαρίου: Εορτασμός Τριών Ιεραρχών (30 Ιανουαρίου). Ι. Ναός Αγίου Αντωνίου, μετά τη Θεία Λειτουργία. Το Ελληνικό Σχολείο προσφέρει τον κυριακάτικο καφέ, με την ευκαιρία της γιορτής των Ελληνικών Γραμμάτων.

Κυριακή, 22 Μαρτίου: Εορτασμός της 25ης Μαρτίου. Αίθουσα εκκλησίας, 12.15 μμ

Παρασκευή, 12 Ιουνίου: Τελετή λήξεως. Αίθουσα εκκλησίας, 6 μμ.

Ενημερωτική συνάντηση γονέων-δασκάλων, έκθεση προόδου: Παρασκευή, 3 Απριλίου, 7 μμ.

**Greek School Special Events
February – June 2009**

Sunday, February 1: Celebration of the Three Hierarchs (January 30). St Anthony's Church, following Divine Liturgy. Coffee hour is hosted by the Greek School in honor of the feast day

Sunday, March 22: Celebration of Greek Independence Day. Church Hall, 12.15 p.m.

Friday, June 12: Graduation Ceremony. Church Hall, 6 p.m.

Parent-Teacher meeting and progress report: Friday, April 3, 7 pm.



Greek School Christmas party 2008
VIP baby Katerina Nastri with mom Dimitra Kasdagli
(center) and students



St. Anthony Greek Folk Dance Groups



presents their annual

FDF Preview Night

featuring performances by

*Bouboukakia, Filarakia,
Terpsichoreans, and Ta Asterakia*

Come enjoy a catered dinner and watch our award winning dancers perform.
Afterwards there will be dancing for everyone!

Save the date!

Saturday, February 7, 2008

St. Anthony's Church Hall

Doors open at 6:00pm; Dinner and Performances start at 7:00pm

Tickets:

Prepaid \$40, At the door \$45

Children 3 to 12 years old and Dancers \$25, Children under 3 Free

Seating is limited so reserve your table early!

**Table reservations are made on a 'first come first served' basis by date paid.*

For reservations, contact

Terese Caire at teresechiames@sbcglobal.net , 818-952-1787 or Eleni Vagenas at peteeleni@yahoo.com , 909-519-7788



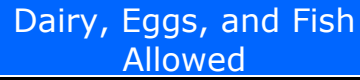
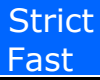
Groups perform at Claremont Manor



OPA!

February

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
1 +Sunday of Canaanite 9:00 am Orthos 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am Sunday School in Church Greek School Program Luncheon Greek Dance 2:00 pm — 4:00 pm Terpsichoreans	2 +Presentation of our Lord 9:00 am Orthos/Divine Liturgy Greek School 4:00 pm Preschool 4:00 pm Kindergarten 4:00 pm Beginners I Bible Study	3 Bible Study 10:00 am - 11:30 pm Session Ahepa 7:30 Meeting	4 Greek Dance 4:45 pm—6:00 pm 5:00 pm—6:00 pm 6:30 pm—8:00 pm Philoptochos Outreach – Union
8 +Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion 9:00 am Orthos 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am Sunday School in Church Greek Dance 2:00 pm — 4:00 pm Terpsichoreans Past Presidents Dinner	9 Greek School 4:00 pm Preschool 4:00 pm Kindergarten 4:00 pm Beginners I Bible Study 7:00 pm Session	10 Bible Study 10:00 am - 11:30 pm Session Parish Council 7:30 pm Meeting	11 Greek Dance 4:45 pm—6:00 pm 5:00 pm—6:00 pm 6:30 pm—8:00 pm Philoptochos 7:15 pm Philoptochos Meeting
15 +Sunday of the Prodigal Son 9:00 am Orthos 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	16 Greek School 4:00 pm Preschool 4:00 pm Kindergarten 4:00 pm Beginners I Bible Study 7:00 pm Session	17 Bible Study 10:00 am - 11:30 pm Session	18
February 12—15, Folk Dance Festival, Ontario, CA			
22 +Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday) 9:00 am Orthos 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am Sunday School in Church	23 Greek School 4:00 pm Preschool 4:00 pm Kindergarten 4:00 pm Beginners I Bible Study 7:00 pm Session	 24 Bible Study 10:00 am - 11:30 pm Session Philoptochos 7:00 pm General Meeting	 25
	Monday March 2nd: Kathari Theftara (Clean Monday) Lent Begins		



Fast Free

SATURDAY

7	6:00 pm Dance Groups Preview Night
---	------------------------------------

13	Greek School
4:00 pm	Beginners I-II-III
4:00 pm	Inter. I-II-III
4:00 pm	Adult I-II-III

February 12—15, Folk Dance Festival, Ontario, CA

✝ 21
+1st Saturday of the Souls
 9:00 am Orthos/Divine Liturgy

28
+2nd Saturday of the Souls
 9:00 am Orthos/Divine Liturgy

The Goyans would like to thank the Pappas Family and Dupas Family for hosting our Christmas Party and GOYA



GOYA held a game night on Saturday, January 10th and played Bunko and Gestures. It was a night filled with fellowship and fun.



On January 31st, GOYA attended Medieval Times and experienced the captivating time period of the 11th century.



GOYA Basketball first game is March 1st, 2009.



If you would like to join G.O.Y.A., please contact Olga Baroudos at Papagalou91@yahoo.com. All 7th through 12th graders are welcome to attend.

If anyone would like to lead an activity (ex. Laker tickets, etc) for us we welcome you! Please talk to Olga Baroudos or our advisor, Mrs Vavoulis.



SUBSCRIBE TO THE ST. ANTHONY EMAIL LIST!

It is easy, just go to the homepage of our website — www.saint-anthony.org and click on the Sign-up for St. Anthony's Church e-mail list! You will receive up-to-date announcements and information regarding services, parish news and events at your fingertips.



"Praise His Name with the Dance"

By Deacon Niko Bekris

I remember my first year ever going to FDF with my dance group. It was 1990, I was eight years old, and I remember the beautiful Pacific Northwest was covered in snow that February. FDF that year was in my hometown of Seattle, Washington- not an area of the country that gets the honor of hosting a Folk Dance Festival very often (probably in part because of the way the weather was behaving that day...). My group, Junior Levendya, won fourth place in Advanced Primary that year. Not bad for a first experience of FDF, I thought, and there would be many more experiences to come. Through many blessings from above, not to mention hard work by my dad, my family and I got to attend every FDF after that (except one) for the next fourteen years! Each one was an unforgettable experience.

On several occasions I have asked myself, what is it about Greek folk dancing that I love so much? For that matter, what is it about Greek folk dancing that we all love so much? Have you seen how quickly an exhibit hall in Ontario will fill up with dancing once a Greek folk band starts playing there? It doesn't even matter if the music is Cretan, Thracian, Macedonian, Pontic, we love it! And why do we love it? That's easy- *because dancing expresses what's going on inside our soul*. When we're alone and sad, we're not very inclined to dance, are we? But around tons of our friends feeling joy and love, we can dance all night long (and many of us do!)

If you open your Bible to the Old Testament (and we should), you'll read many verses about dancing as an expression of joy. But even more than that, you'll see dance as an expression of praise to God. King David danced around the Ark of the Covenant- the sacred container where the Hebrews kept many holy items that symbolized God's love for them. (2 Kingdoms 6:5) Psalm 149 says "Praise His name with the dance," (v.3) and there are others. When you read these, you may think, "What does God have to do

with Greek dancing?" He has plenty to do with Greek dancing. Look at how we dance the majority of our dances- holding hands as one body. If one person moves off step, the whole line is affected, just like in life. Have you ever tried holding your hands up by yourself? Holding hands altogether is a lot easier, just like anything in life we do together. Let's look at the bigger picture, too- most of these dances came from the celebration of joyful events, like weddings, baptisms, and major feast days, and as your directors can tell you, even the harvest seasons! Dancing is something beautiful that God has created us to love!

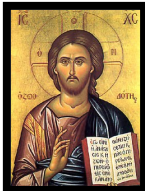
FDF is such an amazing experience, and we can often get swept away in the rush of emotion and enthusiasm of the whole weekend that sometimes we may miss what the key component of the festival is: that we come as faith communities and as part of a greater faith community. Remembering this is how our dancing is fulfilled. At my first FDF in 1990, I didn't come as a member of "Junior Levendya, from Seattle." I came as a member of "Junior Levendya, *from the Church of the Assumption*, in Seattle." Let's hold closely to this beautiful part of our faith. And let's always remember to "Praise His name with the dance," so that we may know true fulfillment as we continue the dance of life.



Dn. Niko Bekris was a student in Vicki Kades Dance Group in Seattle (photos taken in 1997 at FDF).



Bible Study Corner: Spiritual Endurance Hebrews 12:1-13



In this month's Bible Study Corner I took the liberty of steering away from my normal article and decided to provide you with one of our Bible study sessions allowing you to see what our studies consist of. I have enclosed the questions along with some of the answers. I have also included other verses that assisted in the study and I suggest that you refer to them in your study. Please try to answer the questions as best as you're able before looking at the responses provided in the study session. I think this will enhance your study. I hope this submission will create within you a greater interest in the study of God's Word and provide the stimulus for continued study.

Purpose: To understand how God uses suffering and discipline to make us more like Him.

Personal Reflection: Why is discipline—whether at home, at work or in sports—essential to success?

In what areas of life do you find it most difficult to be disciplined? Why?

At the age of seven, Glenn Cunningham and his older brother were badly burned in a school-house fire. His brother died and Glenn was severely burned. Doctors thought that Glenn would never walk again.

Glenn refused to accept their verdict, and he not only walked but began to run. Glenn entered the 1932 and 1936 Olympic Games winning a silver medal in the 1500-meter race. He was the fastest miler in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) every year but one between 1933 and 1938. In 1934 he astonished everyone by running a mile in 4:06 minutes—a world record that remained unbroken for three years.

Like Glenn, all runners must overcome pain and hardship if they want to win. As our hearts begin to pound and our muscles start to ache, Paul urges us in Hebrews not to give up but to keep on running. We see in chapter 12 that Paul provides some powerful incentives for completing the race.

Read Hebrews 12:1-13 and answer the following questions.

☞ Look briefly at Hebrews chapter 11. Who are some of the "witnesses" who surround us as

we run our race?

- ☞ The Greek word translated as "witnesses" (12:1) is related to the English word *martyr* and refers to those who testify. What do you suppose these witnesses are saying to us as we run the race?
- ☞ How would you describe the race you are currently running? Time for personal reflection and honest introspection.
- ☞ Paul urges us to "throw off...the sin that so easily entangles" (v.1). In what ways can sin entangle us as Christians?
- ☞ We should also "throw off everything that hinders" (v. 1). Although some things are not sinful in themselves, how might they hinder our spiritual growth or progress? (Give some examples.)
- ☞ Just as a runner fixes his eyes on the finish line, so we are to focus on Jesus (vv. 2-4). Why is He our supreme example—and more?
- ☞ When suffering and hardships invade our lives, why do we sometimes question God's love?
- ☞ How can the "word of encouragement" in verses 5-6 along with verses 7-8 change our perception of hardship?
- ☞ What are the spiritual benefits of submitting to the Father's discipline (v.9-11)?
- ☞ In what sense are we like injured athletes in rehabilitation (vv. 11-13)?
- ☞ How can cooperation with the trainer/therapist—or lack of cooperation—make a big difference in recovery for you?

Answers on pages 18 & 19

St. Anthony's Bible Studies

**Monday evenings (7pm) with
Christos Theoharatos**

**Tuesday mornings (10am) with
Fr. Peter**



VIP News



The St. Anthony VIP's celebrated the Christmas season by attending a Sunday afternoon concert given by the Citrus College singers. Our group of 20 thoroughly enjoyed the musical program and hope to make the concert an annual tradition.

Between Christmas and New Year's about 25 VIP's gathered for a party at the Xanthos home. Everyone was asked to bring food items for the local food bank and the seniors were more than generous with their offerings. Good friends, good food and an abundance of Christmas spirit made for an evening enjoyed by all!



We are planning activities for 2009 which may include joining the St. Paul Ambassadors from Irvine on some of their excursions. We will keep you informed of upcoming events.

Last year we had hoped to visit Egypt and St. Katherine's Monastery but due to the current political climate in the Middle East, this trip is being postponed indefinitely. We are still looking to do a Panama Canal cruise during 2009.



Our senior ladies led by Yiota Poulos had a koulourakia sale last month and plan to offer these cookies periodically throughout the year which will help the VIP treasury.

We are having a breakfast meeting on Thursday, February 12th at 9:30 a.m. at Twohey's Restaurant. Please join us and feel free to bring along anyone else interested in joining the VIP group.



Next Meeting Feb. 12



Southern California Altar Boy Retreat

**March 7th,
Saint Nicholas Church, Northridge**

Come for an afternoon of fun, fellowship, and faith with Greek Orthodox altar boys from all around So-Cal!! His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos will be attending with us. More details to come!!!

Contact: Niko Bekris, Director, Youth and Young Adult Ministries,
Metropolis of San Francisco:
sfyouth@sanfran.goarch.org

Three January 2009 sermons from Fr. Peter and Met. Gerasimos are now posted online at www.saint-anthonys.org/sermons/ in streaming audio format.

January 2009

- 01-11-2009 **Sunday After Theophany** - Christ, the light of our world.
- 01-05-2009 **Eve of Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ** - sermon from visiting Metropolitan Gerasimos. Theophany is more than the blessing of the waters. He discusses the theme of joy and renewal.
- 01-04-2009 **Sunday before Theophany** - Christ's baptism in the Jordan river, and the beginning of His public ministry. He also discusses the definition of Epiphany and Theophany, and how the water is blessed.

Thanks to Nick Kleissas for digitizing and converting the audio to MP3 format.



Philoptochos

Thank you to everyone who supported Philoptochos' Vasilopita reception after church on Sunday, January 11. This successful event raised over \$1,000 for St. Basil Academy in Garrison, New York. This event is the main source of funding for the operating expenses of the Academy. The delicious Vasilopita was prepared by Evelyn Kefalas and Sophia Vagenas. A special thanks to Julie Kiotas Balas and Stavroula Kiotas for hosting this event along with other ladies.

On Friday, January 16, following St Anthony Great Vespers Services, the Philoptochos hosted a wonderful dinner in the Community Center. Thank you to all the very dedicated ladies who worked tirelessly to make this a lovely evening. Thank you also to the hard working kitchen crew of Jim Kypreos, George Koudanis, George Pantazis and George Treatafellas who helped with the meal preparation.

The National Philoptochos Society has created an Autism Assistance Fund to heighten awareness of autism and provide assistance and support to persons within the autism spectrum. Autism is a complex, life-long, neurological disorder that inhibits a person's ability to com-

municate and develop social relationships. This disorder is diagnosed annually in one out of 150 children in the United States. Our Philoptochos chapter will be contributing to this new fund in 2009.

Our upcoming General Meeting will be held January 28th at the home of Mary Ann Mallis in Pasadena. This meeting will feature a speaker from Union Station Homeless Services. Please plan to attend and learn about this worthwhile organization. If you would like to volunteer to serve a dinner at the Union Station Homeless Services on the first Wednesday of the month, please contact Irene Albeck.

As we begin a new year, please consider hosting and serving during coffee hour after Liturgy. Please contact Maria Kypreos for information....many choice Sundays are still available.

February:

- Heart Disease Awareness Month supporting the American Heart Association's "Go Red For Women Campaign"

- General Meeting will be Wednesday, Feb. 24th

~Respectfully submitted by Pamela Buzas



*Photos from the
Annual Christmas Benefit and
St. Anthony's Dinner*



Stewardship (as of Jan. 21)

1. Rev. Peter & Presv. Aida Stratos
2. Presv. Maria Mylonas
3. Adamopoulos, Virginia & Peter
4. Akrotirianakis, Barbara & Nicholas
5. Albeck, Gregory
6. Albeck, Irene
7. Andrianopoulos, Christyann & Alex
8. Angelopoulos, Angela
9. Angelos, Nicholas
10. Angelos, Sophia & James
11. Anton, Helen & Gus
12. Arapostathis, Mary
13. Aspiotes, Georgia
14. Attalla, Philip "Ted"
15. Baliotis, Tina & Demetrios
16. Bannoura, Michale & Renee Gharib
17. Betinis, Harriet
18. Bicos, Kalli & Dino
19. Bicos, Mary & Soterios
20. Bissias, Michele & Peter N
21. Bogosyan, Margarita
22. Boltinghouse, Helen & Jose
23. Bonorris, Helen
24. Bowers, Connie & Terree
25. Bozikis, Demetra
26. Broussinos, Angeliki & Chris
27. Buzas, Pamela & John
28. Caire, Terese & John
29. Chames, Jim
30. Christodoulelis, Tanya & Jimmy
31. Christopoulos, Judie & Gus
32. Christy, Angene
33. Cocores, Christine & Ted
34. Coroneus, John
35. Dallas, Athena & Saterios
36. Dallas, Petra & Gregory D.
37. Damilatis, Dimitrios & Eleni
38. Darlas, Paula
39. Demetriades, Elizabeth & Demetrios
40. Demopulos, Elizabeth & Andrew
41. Demopulos, Michael
42. Demos, Nick & Maria Karras
43. Drulias, Rosann & Bill
44. Dupas, Katherine & George
45. Dupas, Theodore & Evangeline
46. Duran, Chuy & Carrie
47. Efsthathiou, Theodora & Dean
48. Fuerst, Nicolette & Jay M.
49. Gaeta, Maddy & Anthony
50. Giannoulis, Anna & Tony
51. Halias, Georgia
52. Halias, Louie & Sara
53. Haralambos, Alik
54. Haralambos, Anthony & Kathleen
55. Haralambos, Page & Tom
56. Harper, Christina C.
57. Hatzidakis, John & Christina
58. Housos, Dena & Gus
59. Huffaker, Donna
60. Jacovides, Helen
61. Kalivas, Anastasia
62. Kalivas, Elene & George
63. Kaplanis, Joan & Peter
64. Kappos, Anthia
65. Karaioannoglou, Jeanne & Phaedon
66. Karatzas, Chris
67. Karatzas, John & Mersina
68. Katem, Basil N.
69. Kefalas, Evelyn & John
70. Kefalas, Mike & Nicole
71. Kefallinos, Vicky & Nick
72. Kiotas, Stavroula & Alex
73. Kokoris, Maria & Nicholas
74. Koudanis, Helen & George
75. Koulos, Joanna & Konstantinos
76. Lagousis, Kendra & Ted
77. Lakon, Valerie & Peter P.
78. Lappas, Virginia & Dino
79. Lareau, Craig R. & TesiEllen Athans
80. Ledis, Stella & Rene
81. Levandis, Melissa & George
82. Loutsos, Anna, Georgia & John Grajeda,
83. Malina, Dorothea
84. Mechalas, Bess
85. Messerotes, Vera
86. Millward, Niki M. & Steve
87. Mitsos, Michael N. & Michelle
88. Mobayen, Chrissa & Syrus
89. Moreno, Eva Elizabeth
90. Mowrey, Anthony & Tina Boykin
91. Nichols, Joyce & James
92. Papadatos, Sophia & Taki
93. Pappas, Cathy & Peter
94. Pappas, Christine & Steven
95. Pappas, Hope & Constantine
96. Pappas, Jennifer & Dean
97. Pastis, Leah & Arry
98. Pastis, Patricia
99. Pastis, Vivian & Gust S.
100. Patzakis, Andrea & John
101. Pegadiotes, Ioanna & Stelios
102. Pegadiotes, Maria & George
103. Pegadiotes, Stan S.
104. Pla, Thena & Fernando
105. Plumtree, Maria
106. Polychronis, Eleftheria/Theodore
107. Riley, Evangelia & Thomas
108. Rouman, Ann
109. Sahpazis, Georgia
110. Samaan, Evett & Nader
111. Sarantopoulos, Elena & Takis
112. Siatras, Christiann & Chris
113. Sideris, Kitsa C.
114. Soewers, Stephanie & Randy
115. Stavropoulos, Peter T. & Theodora Coulis
116. Theoharatos, W. Jeannie & Christos
117. Treantafelles, Georgia & Andrew
118. Treantafelles, Helen & George T.
119. Treantafelles, Vivian & Stan
120. Tripodes, Dean S.
121. Tripodes, Dena & Nikitas
122. Tripodes, Koula J.
123. Tripodes, Mary
124. Tripodes, Steven G.
125. Tsevdos, Alice
126. Tsouvalas, Jenny & John
127. Vagenas, Eleni & Peter K.
128. Vagenas, Georgia & John
129. Vagenas, Tashia & Alex
130. Vasilomanolakis, Francine
131. Vavoulis, Esther & Ted
132. Vorgias, Alma & Zacharias
133. Williams, Cleo & Peter
134. Wojcik, Pamela & Radoslav
135. Wood, Cindy C. & Grant
136. Wooten, Rhea & Mike
137. Xanthos, Pantele J.
138. Yagjian, Anita & Michael
139. Zarifes, Tina & Peter



**Your 2009
To Sign
Stewardship
Card!**

Bible Study Corner Continued (Answers)

1. Paul imagines an athletic contest in a large amphitheater and makes use of certain athletic stadium vocabulary, such as we find in other Epistles (1 Corinthians 9:24-26; Philippians 3:13-14). The witnesses include the heroes (saints) of our faith mentioned in chapter 11. These witnesses are both the spectators in the stands who watch us run and the inspiring examples who have completed the race before us. **"Since Paul is addressing the first generations of Christians, all his examples are taken from the Old Testament. Later, with the passing of time, this cloud of witnesses will include hundreds of New Testament witnesses, particularly martyrs.** (The Epistle to the Hebrews, A Commentary Archbishop Dmitri Royster)" **"The church makes no distinction between the living and the dead. God is not the God of the dead, He is the God of the living. For Him all men are alive, and so they are for the Church. With this eschatological perspective we can see death as the great hope and joyfully await the judgment and the coming of Christ. We can say with the Spirit of the Church, 'Come soon Lord Jesus'. History and eternity are one, eschatologically and eucharistically. The prayer of the Church includes not only the members of the Church but through them and because of them the whole world. She sees the whole world as the potential Church, the total Church for which she hopes. And in the Church, within this eschatology, all things are already accomplished as well as being in process. We have a living relationship in the communion of saints and sinners with all the living and the dead."** Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, The Modern Spirituality Series.

2. These martyrs according to St. John Chrysostom, **"witnessed to the greatness of God, in spite of the dangers to which their witness exposed them, and the remembrance of those holy people re-establishes and recovers the soul which had been weighed down by woes, as a cloud does him who is burnt by the excessively hot rays of the sun."** Archbishop Royster informs us that the word for race (**agon- where we get our word agony**) refers specifically to an athletic contest, and indicates that the Christian's race is a real contest and that his opponent is the devil himself; it is a life-long struggle, not a sprint but a long distance run, and the contestant can never take his attention away from his goal. Next time you are in church remember this great cloud of witnesses that we, as Orthodox Christians, are blessed to have among us in the form of icons during our worship.

18 3. This is a question for personal reflection; but

I will leave you with this passage from Proverbs 3:5-6, **"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."**

4. Runners or athletes in ancient times would strip off all their clothes before a race to allow themselves maximum freedom of movement. The author compares sin to loose-fitting clothes that could become entangled in our legs and trip us. Yet sin is not the only thing that can keep us from running our best race.

5. Many areas of life are neutral in themselves but can hinder us from running if we become too absorbed in them or if they distract us from our primary goal. Archbishop Royster states, **"Paul urges us to throw off anything that can be an encumbrance or a hindrance to participation, even seemingly small and insignificant distractions that could impede the singleness of vision of which the Lord spoke (Matthew 6:22) and of heart, which characterized the life of the first disciples (Acts 2:46)."**

6. Ephrem the Syrian states, **"Let us look not toward human beings for the perfection of our faith. Rather let us look into 'Jesus Christ, the pioneer of faith,' who was made our leader and 'the perfecter' of our faith, because he began from Jordan the fight against the enemy, then continued it in the desert, and finished it in Jerusalem through the cross, which was erected by the persecutors at Golgotha."** Jesus is our ultimate example because he endured extreme suffering during his race and yet kept going because of the joy that awaited him at the finish line (v. 2). Whatever we may have to suffer as Christians, it cannot compare to the crucifixion. Yet Jesus is far more than our example. He is the author of our faith (v.2) because he took the initiative to bring us to himself. He is also the perfecter of our faith (v. 2) because he will ultimately bring us to full maturity at the end of the race. He is with us throughout the race.

7. During times of suffering and hardship, many people question God's love. They wonder how a loving Father could allow them to experience such pain. We wonder whether or not He is listening to us. We wonder whether or not He cares. We wonder whether or not He actually sees and feels our pain. In essence we are focused on our circumstances as opposed to being focused on Christ. What are your thoughts on this question? Reflect on it and then proceed to the next question.

8. Paul in Hebrews takes the opposite view of suffering. Hardship and suffering is a sign of God's love, just as discipline is a sign that a father loves his children. The Lord is not sadistic; he does not discipline us in order to make us feel pain but rather to make us share in his holiness (v.10). Paul also challenges the assumption that freedom from pain and hardship is a sign of God's blessing. On the contrary, if our lives are usually free from suffering we may not be members of God's family. St. Basil the Great states, **"In truth, tribulations are, for those well prepared, like certain foods and exercises for athletes which lead the contestant on to the hereditary glory, if, when reviled, we bless; if when maligned, we entreat; if ill-treated, we give thanks; if afflicted, we glory in our afflictions. It is indeed shameful for us to bless on propitious occasions but be silent of dark and difficult ones. On the contrary, we must bless even more at that time, knowing that 'the Lord disciplines him whom He loves and chastises every son whom He receives.'"**

9. According to Archbishop Royster, **"The Apostle insists that the only proper way to respond is to accept this discipline and submit to it. The reward for their obedience is life, both life in the world to come and the godly life in accordance with God's plan for the present."** Paul reminds the Hebrews that they have always respected their fathers in the flesh, which is their earthly fathers, even when they were corrected or disciplined by them. Our human fathers are limited in two ways: their discipline lasts only for a few days, and their ability to train their children is fallible. They are subject to human ignorance, are victims of emotion, and they sometimes discipline improperly. Archbishop Royster writes in relation to God's discipline, **"Our Heavenly Father's correction and training are, by contrast infallible. He knows what we need and what is for our own good, and, furthermore, He has a design or will for those who will follow Him (Ephesians 5:17); to become partakers of His divine life or of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Holiness is God's, and therefore the real goal of the life in Christ is to become holy, that is, to share in His holiness."** Who loves the child more—the father who allows the child to do what will harm him, or the one who corrects, trains, and even punishes the child to help him learn what is right? It is never pleasant to be corrected and disciplined by God, but his discipline is a sign of his deep love for us.

10. Because of the effects of sin in our lives, we are like injured athletes in rehabilitation (vv.11-12). Our arms are feeble, our knees are weak, and we are lame. These are all signs of weaknesses.

11. We may respond to God's discipline in several ways: (1) we can accept it with resignation; (2) we can accept it with self-pity, thinking we really don't deserve

it; (3) we can be angry and resentful toward God; or (4) we can accept it gratefully, as the appropriate response we owe a loving Father. God is not only a disciplining parent but also a demanding coach/trainer who pushes us to our limits and requires our lives to be disciplined. Although we may not feel strong enough to push on to victory, we will be able to accomplish it as we follow Christ and draw on His strength. Then we can use our growing strength to help those around us who are weak and struggling. If we submit to God's exercise or rehab program, we will become stronger and experience God's healing. But if we resist God's discipline and training, we will become permanently disabled (v.13).

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews was written between A.D. 64 and 68, but his words remain relevant today almost 2,000 years later. We, too, can benefit from God's discipline of love. I will quote from Archbishop Royster from his commentary on the Book of Hebrews, **"God applies His discipline to His children because He wills their ultimate good. He knows that their present trials cannot be pleasant for them, since no discipline or even medicine is at the time it is administered. For this reason, the Apostle exhorts them to keep their faith in God's plan for them, and not consider their difficulties a sign of His abandoning them. Their present training, like the athlete's, will yield the desired results or bear fruit; the latter will be rewarded with a temporal victory, but they will be rewarded with salvation, described as a 'peaceable' state of 'righteousness.'"**

The Christian life involves hard work; it requires us to give up whatever endangers our relationship with God, to run patiently and to struggle against sin with the power of the Holy Spirit. To live effectively we must keep our eyes on Jesus. We will stumble if we look away from Him to stare at ourselves or at the circumstances surrounding us. We should be running for Christ, not ourselves, and we must always keep Him in sight. We must not live with only our own survival in mind. Others will follow our example, and we have a responsibility to them if we are living for Christ, as we claim to be. So the question to ask is this, Does our example make it easier for others to believe in and follow Christ, and to mature in him? Or would those who follow us end up confused and misled?

Now that you have completed your study of Hebrews 12, ask God for the strength to run with perseverance and for the insight to see the joy that awaits you at the finish line.

In Christ,
Christos Theoharatos

**Saint Anthony's
Greek Orthodox Church
778 South Rosemead Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91107**



Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Arcadia, CA
Permit No 390

**Save the Date:
May 8, 2009**

**St. Anthony's
Annual Golf Tournament
at Brookside**

