

The Epistle

December 2012

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church

Rev. Father Simon Thomas, Pastor

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The Nativity of Christ

(Sermon delivered on Christmas Day in 1990 by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, of blessed memory)

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We are keeping a Feast which is the decisive point in the history not only of mankind but of the whole Cosmos. God, the Living God has taken flesh, thereby becoming a man among men, and yet, revealing to us all the greatness, all the immensity of what man is; but at the same time uniting Himself to a human body that stands as an image of all things created. He has become akin to all the materiality of this world: everything, beginning with the smallest atom and ending with the greatest galaxy can now recognize itself fulfilled, revealed in glory in the Body of Incarnation.

But we must also ask ourselves questions about ourselves. Because God has called us to enter into this mystery of communion with God; God has called us to understand the way in which we can become partakers of the divine nature, to use the words of Saint Peter in one of his Epistles. Let us therefore cast a glance at the people involved in this glorious, mysterious night of the Incarnation:

The Mother of God, perfectly surrendered, perfectly given to God in all Her purity and in all Her humility; a Living Offering capable of uniting Herself to God in such a way that He became flesh. One day in history, a maiden of Israel proved capable of bowing down before the greatness of God, and receiving what cannot be received otherwise than in humility and obedience. She was able to pronounce the Name of God in worship with all Her mind, and heart, and flesh - and God became man in Her.

And we all are called to open ourselves to God, we all are called to let God enter into our lives, fill each of us - and this happens incipiently, almost imperceptibly when we receive Communion. We become partakers of His humanity and the dwelling place of His divinity. If we only could with greater depth, greater faith, and indeed greater faithfulness keep the gift of this Communion...

And then, there is Joseph; Joseph who is bewildered both by the message of the Angel and by what is happening; bewildered - at time in wonder, and at time in doubt. Isn't this an image of many of us? But how did he face his doubt and still remain in wonder? Because he believed; because he accepted the fact that there are many things which cannot be understood with the intellect, but can be perceived, which can be experienced. And he did, indeed, experienced what was going on: he saw. He saw the Virgin birth, he saw the presence of the God Who have become man.

And what is our way, how can we find our way towards God? Let us think of the Magi and of the shepherds. The Magi were people of knowledge, people of science; but it is not science that gave them wisdom; it is the contemplation of the created world and their gradual, ever-deepening wonder before what they saw; and the more they knew, the humbler they were, the more they knew, the more open they were to all that God would reveal to them about the depth, the mystery, the beauty, and the terrifying depths of the created. And because they were full of wonder, because they were open to the discovery of the unknown, of the unthinkable, they were brought to that place, where the unthinkable has taken place: the incarnation of God.

(Continued on page 3)

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church

The mission of Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church is to safeguard the 2,000 year old Traditions handed down by Christ and His disciples, by encouraging members to participate actively in the Sacramental life of the Church, and by furthering our knowledge of the Faith through education. In order to realize our role as stewards of God's vineyard and to grow spiritually as individuals and as a Parish, we will share our Faith with those who seek the knowledge of God, welcome and embrace all who join us in worship and fellowship, and reach out to those in need. Fulfilling our mission will draw us closer to God and His Kingdom, and allow us to experience the love of God (Agape) in our Parish and community.

Rev. Father Simon Thomas
Parish Priest

SAINT BARBARA PARISH COUNCIL

JAMES PETERS - PRESIDENT	ALEX CHUCHAS
PAUL TZIOUVARAS – VICE PRESIDENT	BESSIE CONDOS
TERRY KERAMARIS - SECRETARY	CONNIE PAPPAS HILLMAN
RANDY LANGEL - TREASURER	TOM KAPERNEKAS
RUTH ANGELOS	MARY PAPADOR MENDOZA
TAYLOR CANFIELD	MICHAEL OSBORN

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

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CHOIR DIRECTOR	ANDRIANA KOLENDRIANOS
GREEK FESTIVAL	GEORGE PAPADOR
GREEK SCHOOL TEACHERS	GEORGIA GASTOUNIOTIS
ST. BARBARA HISTORICAL MUSEUM	MARY MAMALAKIS
MISSIONS	ALEX HAIMANIS
PARISH BOOKSTORE	PATRICIA DOVAS
PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY PRESIDENT	BESSIE CONDOS
V.I.P. COORDINATOR	SOFIJA NEDIC

YOUTH PROGRAMS

ACOLYTES	ALEX TRIGONIS & RANDY LANGEL
DANCE GROUP DIRECTOR	FATHER SIMON THOMAS
YOUTH CHOIR DIRECTOR	SOPHIA KENRICK
SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR	ANGELA CANFIELD
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP	YIANNI MAGOULIAS & MARGO GEORGHIOU
ORTHODOX SOCIAL NETWORK	BROOKE UYESAKA

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

AHEPA PRESIDENT	BILL POULIS
DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE PRESIDENT	VALERIE KATSIKIS

OFFICE PERSONNEL

VALERIE KATSIKIS – Office Administrator

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY – FRIDAY * 9 A.M. – 5 P.M.

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA * METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

And then, there were the shepherds, men without knowledge, but they had purity of heart; they had simplicity; they were capable of listening to the message which the Angels brought not only with their ears, but with their inmost self; they recognized the truth of the message because it gave them life, joy, hope - and they found Christ.

And what is the Incarnation about if it is not about the love of God? And it is revealed to us in a way in which all love can reveal itself to us: surrendered, frail, totally within our power to destroy and to hurt; this Babe of Bethlehem is the perfect image of love, given, but perhaps, received by the ones - and indeed, as we know, rejected by the others.

And so is the love of God. God created us in order that we might be loved by Him with all His being; and in this, He accepted beforehand the Crucifixion, because He gave us power to reject His love. We see that now exemplified in Christ, in the Incarnation, in God becoming Man. The Gospel speaks of it: the few responded to the love of God, the many passed Him by, and many shouted, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!", because the message of love, of that love which is God's love, the total gift of self was too much: it had to be erased in favor of selfish, limited love - if that can be called love.

Let us therefore try to learn from the people who were there: from the Mother of God and Her perfect freedom to give Herself, and Her perfect generosity in doing so; Her perfect ability to believe, to trust God at any cost, at all risks. Let us think of Joseph between wonder and doubt; and when we are in the same position, let us not only concentrate on our doubt, but look with wonder at the impossible, unthinkable that is God's way in our midst.

And then, let us learn, when we face the world that surround us, dark and mysterious, so deep, so frightening, so entrancing also, - let us learn to look at it with wonder: not to pass judgments, but look, look so deeply as to see its depth and the meaning of things. And this we can do ultimately only if we learn to have a pure heart, to cleanse ourselves from selfishness, from hatred, from everything that is darkness in our souls and in our lives.

And then we also, sooner or later, or rather from time to time, will find ourselves face to face with the love of God, offering itself to us frail, vulnerable, awaiting from us a response: let us then give this response.

But this response is to be given not only to God Whom we do not see, but to everyone who surrounds us, because Christ has said to us, 'Whatever you have done to one of these, you have done to Me'. It is by loving concretely, actively, generously, at a cost those whom God sends us, those whom we meet in life that we can learn that love, the love of God. Amen.

BLESSING OF HOMES FOR THEOPHANY 2013

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

WHAT IS A CONVENIENT TIME/DATE THAT YOU WILL BE HOME? _____

(Please try to schedule times during the day)

(Fr. Simon will bring basil and Holy Water. Please have a bowl of water prepared for the service.)

President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Please review and return your Stewardship packets for 2013 as we continue this most important aspect of our Parish Life. Many thanks again to our Stewardship Committee for their untiring efforts during 2012. The results speak for themselves!

Also, many thanks to Philoptochos, the Daughters of Penelope, and Ahepa for their supporting efforts.

The results of the Parish Council elections are: Tom Blake, Randy Langel, Jim Peters, and Paul Tziouvaras elected. Michael Osborn's term ends in December. Thank you Mike for your work these past three years and invaluable input on the many issues at hand.

It has been my pleasure to serve with all of our Parish Council Members this past year. I feel we have accomplished a great deal for our Parish and Community. I thank you and salute you for your time and efforts.

I also thank Father Simon for his input, spiritual leadership, and guidance as well as our Parish Administrator, Valerie Katsikis for her untiring and energetic efforts for our beloved Parish.

Our Feast Day is rapidly approaching on Dec 4th with Great Vespers on Dec. 3th with the anticipated visit of Chancellor.

Personally, it has been a privilege and an honor to serve our Parish Community as your President this year.

In his service,
Jim

Saint Barbara Prayer List

Please contact the Church Office to add/remove someone from the list.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
Archbishop Demetrios of America
Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco
Metropolitan Jeronymos of Mwanza
Father Simon & Presvytera Stephanie and children
Parishioners of St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church
Parishioners of St. Barbara's in Kazinga, Tanzania

Monsignor John Yanek (surgery)
Presvytera Krissy Flesoras (health)
Vasili Economidou (cancer)
Bill & Helen Gekis (health)
Sorel (Sophia) Kolendrianos (Rett Syndrome)
Jheri E. Redding (Lyme Disease)
Mary Stamos (health)

Great Blessing of the Water And Diving for the Cross at Goleta Beach

On Sunday, January 6, 2013, we will join St. Athanasius parish for the Great Blessing of the Water (and diving for the cross) at Goleta Beach. All are invited to participate in a picnic lunch at the beach after the blessing. Subway sandwiches, chips and drinks will be available for purchase. Please R.S.V.P. to the Church Office by Wednesday, January 2nd if you would like to participate in the lunch.

Liturgical Calendar

Sunday, December 2nd
14th Sunday of Saint Luke

Orthros – 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

Monday, December 3rd

Great Vespers for Saint Barbara – 6:00 pm

Tuesday, December 4th

Feast of Saint Barbara

Orthros – 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

Wednesday, December 5th

Great Vespers for Saint Nicholas – 7 pm
(in Northridge)

Thursday, December 6th

Feast of Saint Nicholas

Orthros – 8:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 9:00 am

Sunday, December 9th

10th Sunday of St. Luke

Orthros – 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

Wednesday, December 12th

Feast of Saint Spyridon

Orthros – 8:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 9:00 am

Saturday, December 15th

Great Vespers – 5:00 pm

Sunday, December 16th

11th Sunday of Saint Luke

Orthros – 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

Monday, December 17th

Feast of Saint Dionysios

Orthros – 8:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 9:00 am

Saturday, December 22nd

Great Vespers – 5:00 pm

Sunday, December 23rd

Sunday before the Nativity

Orthros – 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

Monday, December 24th

Fore-Feast of the Nativity

Royal Hours – 8:00 am

Vesperal Divine Liturgy – 9:30 am

Tuesday, December 25th

Feast of the Nativity of Christ

Orthros – 8:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 9:00 am

Thursday, December 27th

Feast of Saint Stephen

Orthros – 8:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 9:00 am

Sunday, December 30th

Sunday after the Nativity

Orthros – 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

Monday, December 31st

Feast of Saint Basil

Orthros – 4:00 pm

Divine Liturgy – 5:00 pm

Let us Celebrate Saint Barbara

As we approach the Feast of Saint Barbara, our parish is preparing for the celebration of its Feast Day. This celebration of our Parish is to “honor the Holy Barbara,” one of the Great Martyrs of the Church. This honor would be magnified with your presence and participation. For information on all events, please note the schedule below, or contact the Church Office:

Monday, December 3rd - Great Vespers at 6 pm, followed by a Lenten Reception at 7 pm

Tuesday, December 4th - Orthros at 9 am; Divine Liturgy at 10 am

This year, we will be honored with the presence of our new Chancellor, Fr. Apostolos Koufallakis. Please come to meet him, and welcome him to our community!



Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker

December 6th

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God. As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity.

St Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to St Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. St Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured was also restored to health.

When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, St Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshipping at each one. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, St Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there." So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

After his consecration as archbishop, St Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment, and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of St Constantine as emperor, St Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, St Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 St Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicene Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Sts Sylvester the Bishop of Rome, Alexander of Alexandria, Spyridon of Trimythous, and other Fathers of the Council.

St Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and Omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies. Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by St Nicholas for his wrongdoing, repented and begged for forgiveness.

Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of St Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to St Constantine in a dream, St Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles, and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment.

Having reached old age, St Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now.

The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in every corner of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples. In many countries, there is, perhaps, not a single city without a church dedicated to him.

St Nicholas is the patron of travelers, and we pray to him for deliverance from floods, poverty, or any misfortunes. He has promised to help those who remember his parents, Theophanes and Nonna.

A Donation For Those Who Have Selflessly Given So Much! Support The V.I.P.'s!

The V.I.P. ministry at Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church is composed of men and women seniors, many whom have selflessly contributed immensely to the Church for years. Many of the members still continue their devoted work despite having given their time and talents for decades. They are all young at heart and many remain extremely active within our church and the greater Santa Barbara community. The V.I.P. ministry provides a great opportunity for this invaluable group of parishioners to have fun and enjoy fellowship at exciting events that they plan together. Since its inception this ministry has been completely self-sustaining. As they grow in strength and number, and regularly gather together for events, it is becoming harder for them to sustain this ministry without any outside support. Please consider making a donation during this Christmas Season to support the V.I.P.'s and their ministry for this upcoming year; this will help ensure that they are able to have an active and fun-filled 2013!

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

What started as a Philoptochos Initiative became a parish activity when a group of Philoptochos Members and other members of our parish family worked on Saturday, November 17, to dust and polish ecclesiastical items for our upcoming Feast Day and the Holidays. Although this type of work was done annually at Easter, this year we decided to do the work two times of year--right before our feast day and at Easter. The group that helped represented the cultural diversity of our parish and included two people who were recently Chrismated and a teenager, as all of us worked together for our church. Those who participated in the cleaning included: Fr. Simon, Pam Alexander, Angelique Chuchas, Bessie Condos, Pat Dovas, John Demourkas, Katina Demourkas, Alexandra Iorio, Glory Lamb, Alex Trigonis, Brooke Uyesaka-McGillivray, Tuyen and Elaina Velliotes, Tina Winford, and Mona Zozos.

If you were not able to participate, we will be doing this again right before Easter and recruitment will start in early spring.

Thank you so much for your help and may our Patron Saint Barbara Bless you and your families.

Bessie Condos, President

2012 PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD

This year we will once again offer the opportunity to send out a Community Christmas Card. With this card, you have the opportunity to exchange Christmas and New Year greetings with the entire parish. This card is professionally done and inscribed with greetings along with the names of all the contributors. **You can be included by donating \$25.00 to the St. Barbara Community Christmas Card.** The deadline to return this form with your check to the church office is **Monday, December 3rd**. Please **print your name** below just as you want it to appear on the card.

Please make your check **payable to St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church** in the amount of \$25.00

Philoptochos October 7, 2012 Meeting Minutes

President Kara Osborn called the meeting to order once a quorum of members was present. The attendees were: Ruth Angelos, Bessie Condos, Georgia Gastouniotis, Connie Hillman, Catherine McDavid Smith, Sofija Nedic, Kara Osborn, Vivian Pahos, Linda Peters, Anna Petronakis, Patti Stathis, Lisa Stathopoulos, Tina Winford, Mona Zozos and Pam Alexander.

The outcomes of the meeting are as follows:

1. A motion by Catherine McDavid Smith, seconded by Mona Zozos, was passed to start the process of bringing the St. Barbara Chapter into compliance with National Philoptochos Chapter standards.
2. In response to this motion, seven Philoptochos officers were voted in to carry out specific Chapter duties and serve on the Philoptochos Board. The term of office for these officers is from the time of swearing in (planned for Oct 14, 2012) to April 2013 when a new election will be held. The elected officers are:

President: Bessie Condos
Vice President: Georgia Gastouniotis
Recording Secretary: Catherine McDavid Smith
Corresponding Secretary: Linda Peters
Treasurer: Tina Winford
Assistant Treasurer: Vivian Pahos

Kara Osborn will serve as an officer and Board member in her capacity as a Past President.

3. An Audit Committee, headed by Patti was established to conduct the annual audit of our Chapter finances as required.
4. The Proposed 2012-2013 Budget for our Philoptochos Chapter, prepared by Georgia Gastouniotis, Vivian Pahos and Kara Osborn was discussed. A motion was passed to support the National Philoptochos monthly list of charitable donations, in the amounts proposed by Georgia, Vivian and Kara. To this end, 15 separate checks will be sent to National to cover donations that were to be made from January 2012–October 2012. Further review, discussion, and approval of the proposed budget will occur at the next meeting, Sunday, November 11, following Divine Liturgy.
5. Members were reminded that our dues are to be paid each September. **Please remit your checks to Vivian Pahos as soon as possible.**
6. Several suggestions were made regarding fund raising strategies:
 - a. Baking cookies once a month to sell after the Liturgy on Sunday.
 - b. Hosting an outside speaker to come and discuss a theological topic.
 - c. Hosting a cooking demonstration.
7. It was agreed that our first fund raising effort will be hosting a cooking demonstration. Mona Zozos volunteered to coordinate this effort.
8. The Vespers and Feast day for Saint Barbara are December 3 and 4, 2012. Bessie Condos and Mona Zozos will coordinate the clean-up of our church in preparation for the Feast Day. Catherine McDavid Smith will check with Valerie to see when would be the best time to schedule the clean-up efforts. Catherine will see to it that an announcement regarding the clean-up dates and a call for volunteers is included in the November Epistle and weekly bulletins. High School students will be encouraged to volunteer to receive community service credits.
9. **The first Philoptochos Board meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2012 following the Divine Liturgy.**
10. **The next General Philoptochos meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2012 following the Divine Liturgy.**

Parish, Youth & Young Adult Ministries

Choir

We enthusiastically welcome new singers to join us for the 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy.

Youth Choir

The Sunday School and Youth Choir will be practicing Christmas carols this December in preparation for the Christmas pageant Sunday, December 16. We're looking forward to celebrating Advent and Christmas with our Saint Barbara family! For more information, contact Sophia Kenrick at 967-1470 or louloudaki@gmail.com.

VIP's

The V.I.P. Seniors attended the 3rd annual "Thanksgiving Feast" on November 15, 2012. The Orthodox Center was in a festive mood and the tables were decorated with candles, fall flowers and leaves, while the sounds of Greek music filled the room. Thirty members attended this year's event that was filled with food, fun and friendship.

The buffet table was filled with turkey, ham, stuffing, vegetables, salads, tarts, relish and bread rolls. A dessert table was filled with pies, cakes, cookies, and fruits. A great big thank you goes to all the members who donated food. A special thank you for donating turkeys goes to Bill Poulis and Bill Pertsulakes while another big thank you to Ted Martin for donating the baked ham.

A heartfelt thank you goes to all the volunteers who assisted with setup and clean up. Thank you and our compliments go to Georgia Papador for her beautiful table centerpiece design, and to Mike Pahos for his choice of music.

Due to a busy Christmas season, V.I.P. Seniors are going dark during the month of December and will meet again on January 4, 2013.

Wishing everyone a Blessed Holiday Season!

Orthodox Social Network

All couples are welcome, from the not yet newlywed to those with children taller than they are. Check you inbox for upcoming information on the December event which will be **Saturday, December 15th**, at Cadiz in downtown Santa Barbara.

Sunday School

The holidays are upon us! A wonderful way to get our hearts prepared for the true beauty and richness of the season is to be with our friends and family during church and Sunday school. Together we can be reminded and learn what many blessings we are thankful for, and what joy giving can be bring. We look forward to an enriching and fun holiday season with all the Sunday school families!

Toumba Dance Group

Toumba practice will be on Sundays after Divine Liturgy. This month practice is on December 2nd. Looking forward to seeing all our dancers!

Greek School

Greek classes for children and adults are offered weekly at the Redding Education Center. We meet every Tuesday with first level beginning at 6:00pm consisting of children and adults and second level at 7:00pm with young adults. Everyone is advancing with their reading and I am very impressed with their accomplishments thus far.

Greek Independence Day will be celebrated Saturday, March 23rd. We are doing a play and our students have been assigned their parts. Rehearsals will begin soon. Other than our students, I would like to ask for 6-8 more adults from the community in volunteering to participate in this play. No need to learn words, we just need bodies and we'll discuss the costume you will be wearing. Also, I need someone to handle the sound effects and music. For further information regarding classes or to participate in the play, please contact Georgia via email at ginagaston@verizon.net.

Community Organizations

Order of AHEPA, Santa Barbara Chapter 243

www.ahepa20.org/chapters E-mail ahepa243@gmail.com

AHEPA continues to be a vibrant organization. The mission of the AHEPA Family of Santa Barbara is to promote Hellenism, Education, Philanthropy, Civic Responsibility and Individual Excellence. Santa Barbara Chapter 243 has a goal to expand and strengthen its educational efforts and the lifelong development of mind and body, the classic Hellenic definition of Paideia. We have our meetings on the third Monday of the month, usually at Harry's Plaza Café in the Ranchero Room, starting at 6:30 p.m.

We have had many speakers at our meetings and will continue to do so. Each of the meetings with a guest speaker will be open to members of the community and we invite you to join us, have dinner, and listen to an inspiring and informational speaker. We try to have the names and topics of the speakers announced in the Epistle in advance so that members of the community will be advised and attend.

We are open to new members who want to be a part of our organization. If you are interested in joining, or attending a meeting to see if you would like to join Ahepa, please call Bill Poulis at (805) 682-4733.

Daughters of Penelope, Santa Barbara Chapter Delos 103

www.dophq@ahepa.org; www.dopdistr20.org

Please remember to pick up your pastry orders Sunday, December 16th, in the Orthodox Center. We "thank you" for supporting us throughout the year.

The Daughters are rather busy this Christmas season. **We will be donating poinsettia plants for the solea again** this year. Our annual **Christmas brunch will be Saturday, December 8th, at Café del Sol at 11:30 am** with a White Elephant Gift Exchange. The **Annual AHEPA Family Christmas Dinner is Thursday, December 13th, at Mulligan's Café at 6:30 pm.** Please contact Bill Poulis if you will be attending.

For more information about the Daughters of Penelope you can visit the national website at www.daughtersofpenelope.org, as well as our district website at www.dopdistr20.org. If you are interested in becoming a Daughter, please call Helen McGillivray at 965-6727.

Santa Barbara-Patras Sister Cities Group

The Greek Community of Santa Barbara has selected Patras, Greece as a Sister City with Santa Barbara due to the similarities in geographical situation, culture, tourism, and higher education.

Patras has an indigenous cultural scene that revolves around annual music, drama, and poetry festivals. The Carnival, attracts thousands of tourists from throughout Europe. The two Universities, a Technological Institution and their connected research institutes, Patras is an important scientific center like UCSB.

The region in Patras retains some of its traditional winemaking and a small agricultural and fishing sector. The Achaia Clauss winery, founded in 1861, produces and exports wines of excellent quality throughout the world. Our advocate group includes 15 members of different origins of Greece and non-Greeks and we meet every other month. Our representative in Greece has informed the new Mayor of Patras and we are in the process in building a firm, long-term relationship.

The United Nations dinner is held yearly in Santa Barbara and some of our members attended as we enjoy a fun evening with members and friends of other Sister City Groups.

We welcome everyone, Greek or non-Greek, to join our group.

For a Membership Application and more information, please contact Georgia Gastouniotis, President at ginagaston@verizon.net or George Papazacharioudakis, Secretary at gpapazach@msn.com.

NEWS & NOTES

Baptisms...

Sawyer Burge, son of James and Megan, the sponsors are Hunter Kral and Kathryn Orliaz

Deaths...

Photini Plouffe, October 26th

Memorial Services...

Pete Demourkas (4 years) on November 18th, husband of Katina, father of John and Mary, grandfather of Katine Fictum

Koula Garas (1 year) on November 18th, sister of Katina Demourkas and aunt to John and Mary

In Memory of...

Photini Plouffe, by John & Katerina Kingsbury, Cy & Helen Stathis, George & Pat Dovas, Patti & Randy Langel, Mike & Vivian Pahos, Chris & Connie Hillman, Gicas & Stella Pollalis, Bill Poulis

Nasia Cosmides by Cy & Helen Stathis, George & Pat Dovas, Patti & Randy Langel, Gicas & Stella Pollalis, Mike & Vivian Pahos, Bill Poulis, James Cosmides

George Poulos, by Bill Poulis

Volunteers for December 2012

Epistle Readers:

2	Greek: Nick Pappas	English: Dean Papazacharioudakis
9	Greek: Angelique Chuchas	English: Randy Langel
16	Greek: Voula Aldrich	English: Theophilos Lasswell
23	Greek: Tom Pappas	English: Ruth Angelos
30	Greek: Xenia Tziouvaras	English: Yianni Magoulas

Acolytes:

Connor Blake, Tasso Ioannidis, Cainan Iorio, Dean Richardson, Dimitri Richardson

Ushers:

2	Jim Peters, Peter Stathopoulos
9	Mary Mamalakis, Bessie Condos
16	Paul Tziouvaras, George Papazacharioudakis
23	Alex Haimanis, Nick Pappas
30	William Poulis, Brian Iorio

Prophoro Bakers:

2	Connie Pappas Hillman
9	Sophia Kenrick
16	Valerie Katsikis
23	Georgia Gastouniotis
30	Angelique Chuchas

Altar Flowers:

2	Christopher and Helen Plouffe
9	Connie and Catherine Hillman
16	Bessie Condos
23	Available
30	Available

Coffee Fellowship Hosts:

2	Christopher and Helen Plouffe
9	No Host
16	Christmas Luncheon
23	No Host
30	No Host

Stewardship 2012

Aldrich, Voula
Alexander, Pam
Alexander, Sophie
Anderson, John & Catherine
Angelos, Dr. James & Ruth
Angelos, Nick
Anthes, George & Stacie
Anthimiades, Dorothy
Anton, Alice
Arger, Jim & Carol
Argyropoulos, Demetri
Argyropoulos, Elias & Tina
Argyropoulos, Symeon & Antoinette
Ballas, Gus
Barth, Charles & Pam
Baskous, Jeanette
Benbow, Peter & Olya
Berrett, Sam & Julie
Blake, Tom & Krista
Bocek, Dan & Christina
Burge, James & Megan
Campbell, Gordon & Elene
Canfield, Taylor & Angela
Carlton, Gary & Karen Stathis
Carroll, John & Lexy
Casserly, Terrence & Eugenia
Chachakos, Bill
Chachakos, Jim
Chuchas, Alex & Angelique
Cocores, Ted & Christine
Compogiannis, Chris
Condodina, Alice
Condos, Bessie
Condos, Theony
Cosmides, George & Nasia
Daphne, Laurel
Demourkas, John & Dana
Demourkas, Katina
Dovas, George & Pat
Dyer, Hugh & Angie
Earl, Gordon & Iuliana
Fakinos, George & Barbara
Fenger, Ellen
Fictum, Jeff, Mary & Katina
Fisher, Cleo
Galanoplis, Beatrice (Peg)
Gastouniotis, Dean & Georgia
Gekis, Bill & Helen
Georghiou, Diana
Georghiou, Margo
Goumas, Helen
Haimanis, Alex
Hanges, Andrew & Georgia
Hanges, Paul
Hayes, Chuck & Nikki
Hillman, Catherine
Hillman, Chris & Connie
Holland, Andrea
Hroundas, George, Joanna & Angelo
Hull, Dorothy
Hunt, Barbara
Iorio, Brian & Alexandra
Jensen, Cynthia
Kallas, Anthony & Agnes
Kaminsky, Ian & Iris
Kapernekas, Tom & Sasha
Katsikis, Valerie
Katsiroubas, Nick
Kenrick, Sophia
Keramaris, Terry
Khoury, Cherif
Kingsbury, John & Katerina
Kolendrianos, Chris & Megan
Kolendrianos, Ernest & Andriana
Kourakis, Matthew & Stefanie
Kwiatkowski, Jackson
Lamb, Glory
Langel, Randy & Patti Stathis
Lasswell, Theophilos & Dorothea
Laury, Helen & John
Magoulias, Efstratios Jon "Yianni"
Mamalakis, George & Mary
Manos, Michelle
Martin, Nick
Martin, Ted
Matiosian, Mace & Phyllis
McFadden, Timothy
Mendoza, Alexis
Mendoza, Richard & Mary
Moreno, Lindsey & Paul
Nedic, Sofija
Nicolau, Jaime & Soteris
Osborn, Michael & Kara
Pahos, Mike & Vivian
Pantages, Greg & Rea Goumas
Papadaki, Hariklia
Papademetriou, Adelphi Seraphima
Papador, George & Tracy
Papador, Georgia
Papalexis, Jim & Lee
Papazacharioudakis, George
Papazacharioudakis, Penny Cocores
Pappas, Alex & Sydney
Pappas, Anastasios & Carolyn
Pappas, Nick
Penoff, Dana
Penoff, Nadya
Peters, Jim & Linda
Petronakis, Sam & Anna
Phillips, Emanuel
Plouffe, Photini
Pollalis, Gicas & Stella
Poulakos, Jennifer
Poulis, William
Poulos, Steve
Ramirez, Alexandra & Michael
Rishwain, Jeff & Connie
Roen, Curtis & Georgina
Roig, Francesc & Kathleen
Santoli, Giuseppe & Sofia
Scarvelis, George & Alexandra
Sears, Jack & Emilie McMinn
Smith, Catherine McDavid
Solomon, Karen
Spanos, Andrea & Luigi Ottieri
Stathis, Cy & Helen
Stathopoulos, Pete & Lisa
Stockmal, Steve & Mariella
Swider, Bob & Christy
Terzopoulos, Christina & Marc Schillinger
Theofanous, Theo & Danae
Thomas, Fr. Simon & Presvytera Stephanie
Tragos, Bill & Lilli
Tragos, Christian & Tracy
Tragos, Nick
Trigonis, Alex & Alexandra
Tripodes, Nikitas & Dena
Tullis, Bud & Barbara
Tyler, Max & Marisa
Tziouvaras, Ahileas & Polyxeni
Tziouvaras, Paul & Vivi
Velliotes, Louie
Vogel, Marina
Winford, Gerald & Stamatina
Yazadzhiev, Dimitar & Catherine
Zozos, Presvytera Mona

Stewardship 2012

As we finish up the 2012 calendar year and enter the Christmas season, the Stewardship Committee would like to urge everyone to review their stewardship commitment for the year. By now you should have received a Stewardship Statement as of October 31. Please make every effort to fulfill your Stewardship Commitment for 2012. More information regarding end-of-year statistics and new 2013 stewardship information will be forthcoming.

We would also like to thank everyone who has submitted a Stewardship Commitment Card for 2013. There is still plenty of time to complete your 2013 Commitment Card. Our goal for 2013 is to involve all stewards in the workings of the church through their time and talent. We also encourage everyone to participate in our "2% Program" to offer back to God and His Church from the bounty He has bestowed on us.

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church

1205 San Antonio Creek Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93111

Telephone: (805) 683-4492 Fax: (805) 964-2774 Web: www.saintbarbara.net

2012 Christian Stewardship Commitment Card

I/We _____ Phone _____
Please Print

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

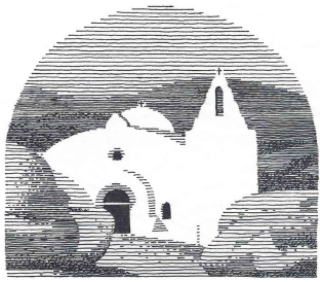
Commit to Stewardship in the amount of \$ _____ to Christ and His Church for January – December of the year 2012, in gratitude for the gifts He has bestowed upon us. Our Commitment will be paid in installments of \$ _____ on a *(please circle one)* weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis.

Signed: _____

The amount being committed has increased from last year from last year

The Address above has changed

You are advised to consult your CPA or other tax advisor regarding the deductibility of all or part of this gift. The dollar amounts above are CONFIDENTIAL. For Authorized Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church Personnel Only



*The
Epistle*

*Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church
1205 San Antonio Creek Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93111*

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