

THE ORTHODOX OASIS



Newsletter of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

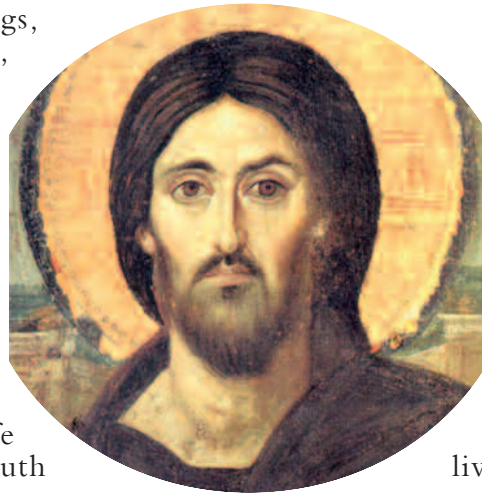
Vol. XIX - Issue IV April 2007

Rev. Andrew Barakos, Presiding Priest & Rev. Virgil Suci, Liturgical Assistant

8202 E. Cactus Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85260 480-991-3009

Christ Turns Our Sorrows Into Joy

Life is a balance of celebration and toil. Birthdays, baptisms, weddings, anniversaries, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter are occasions for us to gather and celebrate. Our lives are full of rhythms, winter is followed by summer, rest follows the workweek, pay follows work, school is followed by summer vacation. The food conscious know that each meal leads to the next and so on. Rhythms are at the core of everyday life and at the center of Church's life as well because they reveal the truth



about life and death.

The truth about life and death is revealed in Christ's death and resurrection. In the culture of the Orthodox Church, feast days are preceded by a period of preparation. The manner of such celebrations goes back to the cultures of the villages in Orthodox countries. Fasting followed by feasting creates a rhythm of preparation and fulfillment that is an image of our very lives. We live in order to

Cont'd. pg 2

PROJECT GREECE

-Project Greece is an outreach being done by school teachers, administrators and others who heard about the plight of disabled children living in a small village in Greece. Many have special needs and the teachers are trained in helping these children and teaching the local people new ways in dealing with them. This year, Presvytera Michele McCuen (Russian Orthodox Church) is a team member. On Sunday, April 29, 2007, we will pass a second tray for a special collection to assist the team members. There are ten members and the cost is \$ 3,500.00 each. You may send your donation: Greek Orphan Fund c/o Karin Smith, 622 East Los Arboles Place, Chandler, AZ 85225. Please make the checks payable to: "Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral." Thank you!

During the summer of 2005, I was part of a team of volunteers who traveled to Sidirokastro,

Greece to develop and implement a community day program where children and young adults from Agios Nektarios experienced the love and attention they need and deserve. We are excited to share that we are preparing to return to Sidirokastro to work with these disabled children and young adults during the summer of 2007.

Some of these children have been abandoned by their families and placed in institutions; others are there because the parents lack the education and resources to care for them. There are **NO** on-going programs, not even for education or recreation. There is minimal human contact. These children are rarely cuddled or held. While we cannot swiftly change the government's support for the disabled in Greece, we can develop a program whereby (even if it is just for a short time each summer) children and residents

Project Greece, Cont'd. pg 3

prepare ourselves for the kingdom of heaven. In heaven, all toil and sorrow shall vanish, losses will be restored, injustices shall be made right and sin will be no more. Every year, during Holy Week and Pascha the Church invites us to enter into this rhythm of life and death in a very intense and special way by witnessing the passion of Christ.

Holy Week is a mix of sadness and joy. The church cannot separate the resurrection of Christ from the Cross. A prayer reads, "Through the Cross joy has come into all the world. Ever blessing the Lord, let us praise His holy resurrection." On the third Sunday of lent we sing, "We venerate your Cross, O Master: and we glorify Your Holy Resurrection." The hymns of Holy Friday are written in a tone of joyful-sorrow. The sorrow of the Virgin Mary witnessing the death of her son and the simultaneous exaltation that death is destroyed the moment Christ descends into it. The very tomb of Christ is a Life-Giving tomb decorated with flowers. During Holy Week, our personal crosses are allowed to be seen in light of His Cross and our sins are revealed as the source of his wounds. Holy Week is a garden from which the soul comprehends the way back to Life, a hope springs forth that turns our sorrows into joy.

The Orthodox Church sees death in terms of a spiritual reality rather than a physical one (see January Oasis article). Saint Peter wrote about Christ's descent into Hell in terms of a spiritual awakening that takes place. "For Christ also once for all suffered for sins—the just One for the unjust ones—that He might bring us up to God, after He indeed was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, in Whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison...[1 Peter 3:18-19]." Saint John of Damascus sees the same spiritual awakening having taken place through Christ's death. "Just as the Sun of Righteousness [Mal. 4:2] rose for those upon the earth, so likewise did He bring light to those who sit under the earth in darkness and shadow of death [Is. 9:2; Mt. 4:16], in order that just as He brought the message of peace to those upon the earth, so did He bring that of deliverance to the captives and that of sight to the blind [Is. 61:1; Lk. 4:18]." The preaching of Christ in Hades was directed towards the "dead" still alive but bound by death. For the living, a spiritual awakening happens in the same way, the risen Christ comes to us bound by sin and proclaims release. This marks the beginning of our journey to heaven. The seeds of this rebirth are planted in baptism, renewed through repentance and

celebrated in worship. Hades then is something experienced while one is alive and is the result of our abandoning God, Who is Life.

Hades or hell is not so much a place as it is a state of being in darkness marked by God's absence. A wise bishop once said, "God is never absent from us, rather we are the ones who abandon Him." The descent of Christ into Hades is above all a theological statement, which proclaims there exists no "place" or "spiritual state" where God is absent. God is "present in all places and fills all things" – even death. Christ facing His own non-existence on the cross is the height of God pouring Himself out for us. On the cross, Christ experiences physical death while at the same time filling death with His Life. Those bound by death became the first to see the truth about death– it was annihilated by Christ. Christ granted the righteous of the Old Covenant to be the first fruits of His resurrection. Saint Ambrose wrote; "Christ was present in the underworld and truly did exert His power in the lower world to set free in the soul which animated His own body, the souls of the dead, to loose the bands of death, to remit sins." There does not exist a spiritual state that God's love cannot penetrate. There are no "points of no return." Such notions are created by us and inspired by the devil who seeks our destruction. Satan, along with those who blaspheme God, *chose* never to return. This means that partaking of eternal Life is the result of us allowing ourselves not to turn away from God.

The resurrection of Christ is the living reality that Christ is with us always. At the moment of the horrid tragic death of Christ, his disciples were in despair – Christ comes, appears to them and turns their sorrow into joy. As we take up the cross of struggling against sin – it is Christ Who sends hope in the form of forgiveness. In the face of divisiveness, the blood of Christ offered in the sacred cup unites us. The resurrection of Christ is the power that allows us to believe that love is stronger than death. The resurrection of Christ turns our sorrows into joy. This is why the resurrection of Christ is the basis of all celebrations. ❖

Christ is Risen!
+Fr. Andrew

of this institution will experience the love and attention they need and deserve.

The community of Sidirokastro has invited to travel back to Greece and help those involved with these children and young adults better understand their potential and needs, and to make their lives better. We are thrilled with the opportunity to do such a project with this population and to instruct the caretakers in these state sponsored institutions. We will be bringing a ray of hope to those who have been discarded. We will set the groundwork for others to continue.

Our team represents volunteer special education teachers, physical therapists, music



therapists, and occupational therapists. We have developed and delivered a program that allows children and young adults to participate in a fun-loving program that will provide them with experience arts and crafts, music therapy, sensory motor activities, and active games.

As you can imagine, this is a task that requires many resources. We will need to purchase equipment, supplies and send professionals, like us, who will not be receiving salaries, but will require room, board and transportation during our stay. I am asking for your support. A donation to this project will help change the lives of many human beings.

Should you have any questions about our project, please call me at (602) 276-6338. Your support, as well as that of any of your friends who might be interested in endorsing my endeavor, will be greatly appreciated. I look forward to sharing this extraordinary experience with you upon my return. Thank you in advance.

To learn more about our project call us, email us, or visit our website at:

www.projectgreece.org



Your donation can be mailed to:

Karin Smith
622 E. Los Arboles Place
Chandler, AZ 85225

Your gift can help make this happen.

Thank you for your support!
Presvytera Michele McCuen



Advertise your
business
here...

for further information,
contact George Spelius,
(602) 791-9997



Youth Ministries

JOY

If you have hesitated to get involved in JOY, this is your call to come and see what you have been missing. Whether we are dressed up for a costume party, playing a game, or creating a craft, we are always having fun and learning more about our Orthodox faith. It is never too late to join us. We meet the first Wednesday of every month and look forward to seeing all children ages kindergarten through fifth grade. **Since the first Wednesday of April will coincide with Holy Week, the April JOY meeting is cancelled.** The coordinators encourage all JOY families to attend Holy Week services. JOY will meet as scheduled on May 2, 2007. If you have any questions call Shannon David or Joanne Lewandowski at (480) 991-3009.

GOYA Schedule

April 6- Help collect food for Vista Del Camino.

Scripture Sleuths



Calling all Jr. Detectives (Kindergarten-5th grade)! "Scripture Sleuths" is a new program. Each week a clue will be revealed to a mystery person, place or event in church history. Clues will be available in Mrs. David's Sunday school classroom (6-8th grades) each week after class. Each month, at our JOY meeting, a winner will be drawn who must be present to win!

MOMS 'N' TOTS

It is such a joy to sing, dance, read, and play with the children in this group every week! In March, we got to meet Melina, the new baby sister of Madeline McKenzie! The little girls all gathered around her wanting to be "the helper!"

We celebrated birthdays for Stephanie, Michael, Kent, Aubrey, and Niko. This group has been nicknamed "the party crowd" since every birthday is a REAL celebration for both the parents and kids! We also were visited by lots of Yia Yia's, Papou's, and Nana's the last few months.

We had a fantastic time at the Train Park where we played, rode the train, and shared a picnic lunch together. No one, including the kids, wanted to leave!

We will not meet on Holy Wednesday (April 4), but hope to see everyone at the service of Holy Unction.

The following Wednesday, April 11, we'll meet at the Cactus Park for our annual Easter Egg Hunt!

In Christ,
Presvytera Andrea

Sunday School News

We have been very busy in our Sunday School classes this second semester! It was wonderful to see so many children come to church prepared with an icon on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Thank you, parents, for helping US teach your children by following-up during the week with the lessons we are teaching on Sundays. We also had a lot of "Nounos and Nounas" attending church with their Godchildren that day.

March has brought us into the season of the St. John Oratorical Festival. As always, it's such a blessing to witness many of our youth professing what their faith means to them in the form of a speech for the entire congregation to hear. Since not everyone feels comfortable "speaking" about their faith; this year, the Sunday School is hosting a "Festival of Faith."

The Festival of Faith is an opportunity for the children to express their faith in any form they wish. Some students will be performing musically, some with art, some with poetry, and any other means they choose. Please come and experience our Festival of Faith on Sunday, April 29, 2007 following the Divine Liturgy.

Our wonderful Sunday School teachers are once again hosting a Holy Friday Retreat. There will be an opportunity for the students to create Pascha crafts, learn the Holy Friday lamentations, play some games related to Easter, and help with the decoration of the Epitaphion. The retreat hours are from 10 AM until 3 PM.

Since we will be providing lunch, it is imperative that your child respond to his/her Sunday School teacher so that we may be properly prepared with food and materials.

As you can see, we have a very active Sunday School program! I'd like to wish all of our families a blessed "Kali Anastasi." May the light of Christ's glorious resurrection radiate in your home!

Presvytera Andrea

Our Church Family **Widows & Grieving Ministry**



GOYA Youth and Assumption advisors at the "Winter Retreat in the Pines" held February, 2007 at Camp Wamatochick in Prescott!



Effie Garcia
 Ministry Director
 (480) 991-3009

- ◆ **April 19-- Grief Support**
 Meeting at 6:30 PM.
- ◆ **Transportation available** for those in need. Please contact the helpline for assistance.
- ◆ **Confidential Hotline:**
 (480) 391-8191
- ◆ **Handy Man Referral Service:**
 (602) 263-8856



ASSUMPTION AGAPE ALLIANCE
Love in Action!

Next meeting is on
Wednesday, April 18, 2007.

For more information or to sign up, contact Assumption Agape Alliance (480) 391-8191.



Abba, Father, Prayer Ministry



The Abba, Father, Prayer Ministry is a ministry of prayer for those who have special needs and requests. Each week a Prayer List is updated and sent via email to our parish prayer ministry partners. The list also is available in the church on Sundays. To volunteer, or to learn more about the ministry, please contact Sherry Chakonias at (480) 991-3009. You may send prayer requests to: prayabbafather@aol.com

Remember In Your Prayers

Aaron *	Erine	Luke *
Adam *	Evan	Matthew *
AJ *	Geoff *	Paul *
Alexandra	George *	Photini
Andrew *	Ian	Richard
Angela	James	Ron *
Ashley	Jason *	Sally
Bill	Jay *	Stephen *
Christina	Jessica	Steve
Colin *	John	Terry
Danny *	Joanne	Terri
Dean	Kevin *	Zoe
Reid	Laura	
Eddie	Laura's Mother	*Military
Ellen	Levi	

Easter Baskets

We will be delivering Easter Baskets of goodies to the homeless children at the UMOM New Day Center. If you would like to donate an Easter Basket filled with treats for a child, please bring your basket to the church community center by Wednesday, April 4, 2007. If you have any questions or would like to help with the collection and distribution of the baskets to the UMOM children, please contact Craig or Joanne Lewandowski at (480) 991-3009.

Food Drive

On Friday April 6, 2007 from 9AM to 4PM, GOYA will assist the Assumption Agape Alliance to collect non-perishable food items for the Vista Del Camino Food Bank. This is the fifth annual Holy Friday Food Drive. Please only bring donations during the above time, as we are unable to store them at the community center in advance. For further information, please contact Craig or Joanne Lewandowski at (480) 991-3009.

Fifth Annual

HOLY FRIDAY FOOD DRIVE

for

Vista del Camino Food Bank

A Food Bank truck will be at Assumption Church on

April 6, 2007 from 9 AM to 4 PM



Please bring donations *only* during this time. Due to space limitations, we are unable to store foods in advance.

The following are the most needed items:

Peanut butter, tuna, canned meats, pasta, spaghetti sauce, rice, dried pinto beans, cereal, jelly, boxes of macaroni & cheese, cans of fruit/ vegetables/ soup.



No perishable food can be accepted.

Sponsored by Assumption Agape

Alliance

(love in action!)



April Assumption Calendar 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Matins 8:00 AM Liturgy 9:30 AM Palm Sunday Bridegroom Service 6:00 PM	2 Presanctified Liturgy 8:30 AM Bridegroom Service 6:30 PM	3 Presanctified Liturgy 8:30 AM Bridegroom Service 6:30 PM	4 Presanctified Liturgy 8:30 AM Holy Unction 3:30 PM Holy Unction 7:00 PM	5 Liturgy of St. Basil: the last supper 3:30 PM The Holy Passion- Crucifixion 7:00 PM	6 Royal Hours 8:30 AM 3:30 PM Un-Nailing of Christ Lamentations 7:00 PM	7 9:30 AM Liturgy of St. Basil Pascha Liturgy at Midnight: Canon begins 11:00 PM
8 AGAPE Vespers 4:00 PM	9 Prayers at the tombs: Paradise Memorial Gardens 10:00 AM	10	11 Moms 'N' Tots 10:00 AM Philotochos Board Meeting 6:00 PM	12 Choir 7:00 PM	13 Liturgy 9:00 AM Theotokos of the Life-Giving Spring	14 Baptism 10:00 AM Baptism 11:30 AM Wedding 2:30 PM
15 Matins 8:00 AM Liturgy 9:30 AM Baptism 1:00 PM	16	17 Bible Study 10:00 AM	18 Moms 'N' Tots 10:00 AM	19 Choir 7:00 PM	20	21 Baptism 11:00 AM
22 Matins 8:00 AM Liturgy 9:30 AM Baptism 1:30 PM	23 liturgy 9:00 AM +St. George	24 Bible Study 10:00 AM	25 Moms 'N' Tots 10:00 AM Goya Youth Forum 7:00 PM @ Belt Home	26 Choir 7:00 PM	27	28
29 Matins 8:00 AM Liturgy 9:30 AM	30	1 Bible Study 10:00 AM	2 Moms 'N' Tots 10:00 AM JOY @ 6:30 PM	3 Choir 7:00 PM	4	5 SPIRITFEST

Assumption Choir Hosts CMI Workshop

On Saturday, March 3, the Assumption Choir hosted a regional Church Musicians Institute workshop. The Diocesan Choir Federation conducted six of these workshops simultaneously, in as many churches in our Diocese on the same day. Our theme for the workshop was, The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. We were host to over 40 musicians from around the Valley and Tucson. Our guest conductor was from St. Katherine's Church in Redondo Beach, California. Our day started with a prayer from Fr. Andrew and a continental breakfast. Marylou Aleck provided us with quite a huge selection of homemade muffins! We spent our morning learning the special Apolytikion (hymn of the Feastday) in Greek and English from four different composers. Fr. Andrew gave a wonderful lesson about the Feastday; the meaning behind our hymns sung that particular day; as well as the ministry aspect of offering our talents in a prayerful manner.

We broke for a Lenten lunch which was prepared by Tom Tzavaras and George Genetos. The



afternoon was spent learning other major hymns, and we briefly touched upon hymns sung for the Veneration of the Cross from various composers. Singing with all those voices was truly inspiring and uplifting. The next time we get together will be at the Federation Conference in Seattle, Washington in June, 2007.

Athena Anastos, Choir Director

Holy Week Flower Offerings

If you would like to participate in the beautification of our church during Holy Week, please make an offering to Assumption Church with the notation, "flowers" in the memo. Each year, the icons and the Epitaphio (tomb of Christ) are decorated with flowers. The total cost is approximately, \$1,700.00 Thank you!

High school juniors and seniors—

TAKE THE CHALLENGE OF YOUR LIFE!



CrossRoad is a ten-day Orthodox Christian summer program where you focus on Christ and His calling for your life. As a CrossRoad participant, you'll explore your vocation with:

- mini-classes taught by Orthodox Christian professors
- visits to Orthodox Churches in the Boston area
- community outreach projects
- field trips exploring the Boston area



June 22 - July 2, 2007

hurry!

Application deadline is March 1, 2007

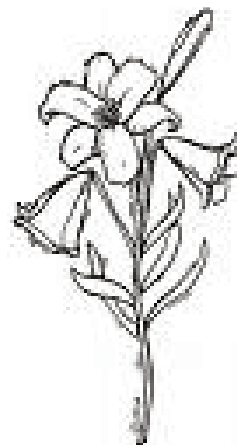
To apply, log onto www.crossroad.hchc.edu or call 617-850-1309 for more information.



CROSSROAD
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SUMMER PROGRAM

Vocation & Ministry
ANSWER THE CALL TO VOTING

Expenses except travel to Boston are covered.



AGAPE Picnic Dinner

April 8, 2006 following 4 PM Vespers

- Reservations & payment required by March 31, 2007
- *Tickets will also be sold on Sundays after Liturgy in the Community Center*

Adults \$15.00

Children 12 & up \$10.00

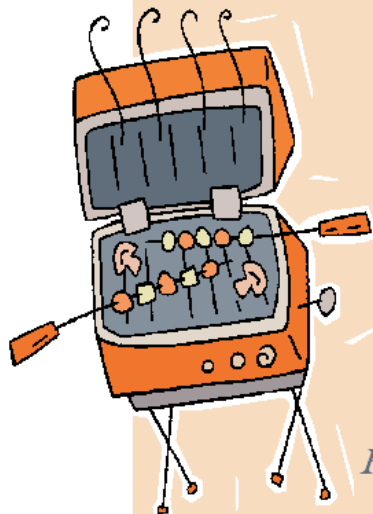
Children 12 & under \$5.00

Menu:

Roast Lamb, Greek Potatoes, Green Beans, Salad, Rolls, Dessert, Coffee & Tea.

- *Other beverages will be available for purchase.*

Presytera Andrea will host her annual Easter Egg Hunt for the children!



RSVP: Chris Evangelides (480) 538-0299

There is sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than 10,000 tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition and of unspeakable love.”

-Washington Irving-



You are invited to an on-going bereavement group

**The Community Center at
Assumption Church
8202 E. Cactus Rd. Scottsdale**

Every Third Thursday of Each Month

**April 19, 2007
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM**

Facilitator
Dee Unks, LPC, Bereavement Counselor

Using an Orthodox Christian approach, we will share our stories, learn more about the grieving process, have our concerns and feelings validated, and support one another as we cope with and adjust to the changes it creates.

There is no fee and no registration is required.

Please contact Effie Garcia at (480) 391-9337 for more information.

AGAPE ALLIANCE- Widows and Grieving Ministry

SAMP

Support a Mission Priest (acronym "SAMP") is a program from the Orthodox Christian Missions Center that adopts a mission priest by sending an annual contribution of \$600.00 a year to each. As part of Assumption's annual stewardship, you are supporting Fr. Emmanuel Mbalire in Uganda and, Deacon Anthony Igwemadu in Nigeria this year. Their stories are here so that you may pray for them and know one way in which your stewardship pledges are helping those in need.

Fr. Emmanuel Mbalire-Uganda

Orthodoxy came to the people of East Africa, not through the efforts of a single missionary, but through charismatic men searching for truth and 'ortho doxia' in the early 1920's. In 1929 two Ugandan men, Reuben Mukasa Ssebbanja Spartas and Obadiah Kabanda Basajakitalo, joined a group which called themselves the African Orthodox Church, based in South Africa, but not tied to canonical Orthodoxy. As these young men searched out canonical Orthodoxy they began to correspond with the Patriarch of Alexandria. In 1946, they were received into the Church through Patriarch Christophoros. At this time, the Church in Uganda had approximately 56 centers and 10,000 baptized members. In 1958 Patriarch Christophoros appointed Nicholas Valeropoulos the first Metropolitan of Irinoupolis and All East Africa. Under his leadership many priests were ordained, and in 1972 three Africans were ordained as auxiliary bishops.

Political tension in Uganda began to rise in the late 1960's, and brought turmoil and destruction, which was to last two decades. Civil tension and wars ravaged the country and its people leaving death and poverty in their wake. During this time the Orthodox Church struggled to bring hope and faith to those suffering under the regime. Finally by 1986, social, economic and political healing and recovery began and the Church was again able to face the spiritual needs of its flock. While still one of the smallest Christian Churches in Uganda, Orthodoxy continues to grow. On May 28th, 1997 His Eminence Jonah was enthroned by Petros VII, Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa, as Metropolitan of Kampala and all Uganda. Today the Orthodox in Uganda consists of 84 communities, 43 priests, 1 deacon, and numerous catechists. There is a minor seminary and 26 schools, 1 Orthodox hospital and 7 medical centers. The Orthodox Church in Uganda has blossomed to 1 % of the 20 million people of Uganda which is 200,000 Orthodox believers.

Forty-three priests serving 200,000 Orthodox Christians spread out throughout an entire nation would have left many of the isolated parishes without any catechism. To address this issue the Church has made use of catechists who are theologically trained people who travel and teach. Some catechists go on to ordination after some time of serving in this capacity; others do not choose ordination for a variety of reasons.



Born on April 25, 1977 in Kawempe, Uganda, Mbalire Luyima was a very lucky young man in that he was able to attend school, finishing with his Teaching Certificate. His father died when he was five years old, so he didn't have his father's spiritual guidance, but while he was still in school, the Ugandan Bishop Theodoros passed through the region and catechized and baptized him in 1987. He married Betty Nalwanja Mbaliri in April 2001 and he was ordained to the diaconate the following year. On December 28, 2002 he was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Jonah.

Presently assigned to the community of the Dormition of St. Mary in Katenie, he lists the various efforts he engages in to bring the hope and peace of Orthodoxy to the people of Uganda.. The fullness of the Liturgical life is his greatest offering as he brings salvation and hope to the people he serves. He offers all the sacraments, cares for elderly and raises funds to pay for the school fees for orphans in his region. Catechism of new believers, teaching the faith and traveling to bring the faith to inquirers is all part of his daily life. The great distance that he has between homes and the lack of transportation is a great challenge for him. He finds great joy in gathering people, serving God and solving spiritual problems. He also states that his family brings him great joy. Papadhia Betty and Fr. Emmanuel have two children, Nicholas Mgadde and Jonah Kagoma. ❖



ALL SAINTS PAN-ORTHODOX

SUMMER CAMP

What does God want us to do?

The world is telling us how much we should weigh, who our friends should be, what we should look like, what we should do on Friday nights, and the list goes on. For a week let us at least try to hear what God wants us to do.

**DIVINE LITURGY
HIKING
S'MORES
LATE NIGHT TALKS
CAPTURE THE FLAG**

**CONFESSION
"OLYMPICS"
SWIMMING
CAPTURE THE
FLAG**

**DAILY PRAYER
ROPES COURSE
HORSEBACK RIDING
BIBLE STUDY
CAPTURE THE FLAG**

When

Sunday, June 24th through
Friday, June 29th, 2007

Who

Boys & Girls 8-17 years old
Smaller children are welcome but must be
accompanied by their parent.

Information

Your parish office or Greek Orthodox Mission of Northern Arizona
(928) 774-8279 www.GOMONA.org/summer_camp.html

How Much

\$190 per camper. Registration Deadline: June 1st

Where

Native American Retreat Center "El Nathan"- Flagstaff, Arizona
www.ameritribes.org/Navajo/ElNathan.htm

Sponsored By: Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Visit Philoptochos' Web Page @

www.assumptionaz.org/philo.htm

Coffee Hour:

Philoptochos is looking for Coffee Hour hosts so if you would like to volunteer for an upcoming Sunday, please call Angie Fotias at (480) 991-3009 to check available dates. *So far we have filled hosts through May 27.* You may choose any Sunday that works best for you and you may co-host with one or two other couples. Once again, it is a wonderful way to meet new people, become more involved, and share in fellowship.

Coffee Hour responsibilities include: Arranging coffee and juice cups along with napkins, plates, and/or forks if necessary (all items are located in the kitchen on the shelves), bringing in a simple food item like cookies, cake, and donuts as well as juice for the children, and leaving coffee pots to cool down after use. It is not necessary for you to make the coffee in the morning, as it is done by volunteer George Genetos every Sunday, but please plug in the coffee pot(s) when you drop off your food items so that it will be ready after church. You need to arrange your food items on the tables provided in time to accommodate people as soon as they come out of church. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE HOSTS CLEAN UP EVERYTHING AFTER COFFEE HOUR** (remove all unused food, clean any dishes used, and place trash and garbage in the proper containers).

Coffee hour hosts for the following upcoming dates are:

APRIL:

- 4-1-07: Palm Sunday Luncheon
- 4-8-07: Easter Sunday
- 4-15-07: Greek School Fundraiser
- 4-22-07: Helen Serelis, Joanne Metanias & Angie Eliades
- 4-29-07: Lisa Pateras and Kelly Pateras

MAY:

- 5-6-07: Cookie Speropoulos and Jeannie Frison
- 5-13-07: Mother's Day – Hosted by the gentlemen of the Parish Council
- 5-20-07: Jan Jones
- 5-27-07: Kelly Pateras and Lisa Pateras

JUNE:

- 6-3-07: Available
- 6-10-07: Available
- 6-17-07: Father's Day – Hosted by the ladies of the Parish Council
- 6-24-07: Paula Nicols and Dee Pappas

JULY:

Every Sunday is available.

Pascha Plant Sale

Philoptochos sold Pascha Plants to remember beloved family and friends and beautify the church for Easter once again this year. Thank you co-chairs Effie Garcia and Kelly Pateras for collecting the donations and to Michele Genetos for ordering the flowers.

Loukoumades Sale

In lieu of a Lenten luncheon, Philoptochos sold Loukoumades on **Sunday, March 11, 2007** after church in the Community Center. Thank you to Joanne Metanias and Paula Nichols for co-chairing this fundraiser, to Nick Mellas and Nick Mihailidis for making the Loukoumades and to all of you who purchased these delicious Lenten treats.

Tsourekia/Koulouria Sale

Philoptochos sold Tsourekia and Koulouria on **Palm Sunday, April 1, 2007**. Thank you to co-chairs Joanne Metanias, Helen Serelis and Toula New, to all the ladies who baked these delicious Easter treats, and to all of you who purchased them.

Next General Membership Meeting:

The next scheduled Philoptochos meeting will be on **Wednesday, April 11, 2007 at 7:00 PM** in the Community Center. Please mark your calendar.

*****REMINDER: Please continue bringing non-perishable food items (canned food, macaroni & cheese, cereal, etc.) to be collected at every Philoptochos meeting for Vista Del Camino. Thank You.**





Stewardship

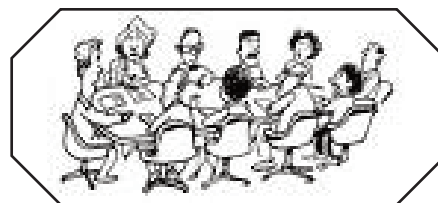
As of 3/16/07

Total Stewards.....236

Total Pledged.. \$285,704

Stewardship Paid.....\$69,857.50

Mortgage Balance.....\$206,869.86



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Annual Good Friday food drive will be held on **Friday, April 6**. This drive is being coordinated by Assumption's AGAPE Alliance. Please make plans to bring your *non-perishable* food items to the donation truck that will be parked in the church parking lot on the day of the drive.

Make plans to attend the upcoming dinners sponsored by the Parish Council. The Annual Palm Sunday Luncheon is scheduled for **Sunday, April 1**, and the AGAPE Picnic Dinner will be held on **Sunday, April 8, 2007**. Reservations are being taken for both of these dinners. Please contact Chris Evangelides (480) 991-3009 or call the church office for more details.

May 5 is the date that has been set for this year's SpiritFest. George Spelius is the chairman of this event and will be looking for volunteers to help out, both on the day of the SpiritFest as well as to assist with the activities leading up to May 5. Please feel free to contact him to express your interesting in helping.

The loss of our parishioner and friend, Nicholas Stamos, will be deeply felt at Assumption. Nick fell asleep to the Lord on Friday, March 1. Nick tirelessly served Assumption throughout the years as the Psalti, chanting hymns every Sunday as well as during Holy Week and other services. In addition to sharing his voice with us, Nick was generous in other ways. He owned a catering business and often provided donations of food for various functions held at Assumption. As we approach Holy Week this year, the void of his presence will not go unnoticed. May his memory be eternal.

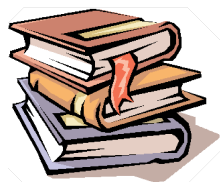
Estelle Stell, Parish Council Secretary

Greek School



A number of events will be taking place following the two week break (March 29 and April 5). On Thursday, April 12, the Greek school will be hosting an Open House for all parents. Parents are welcomed to observe their children's classrooms while in progress as well as any other classes they would like to see. In addition, there will be a board meeting on this day as well so parents can attend the brief meeting before heading to the classrooms. The board meeting and Open House will begin after students are dismissed for classes at 4:15 PM. On Sunday April 15, the Greek school will be hosting the Coffee Hour after church services. All donations will go to the Greek language program. In addition, there will be a table set up in the Community Center on the 15 during Coffee Hour for anyone interested in registering their child in Greek school for the upcoming year or asking any questions about the Greek school. Director Francine White will be available as well as Angela Koufidakis (treasurer) and Angie Fotias (registration). Please keep an eye out for a new peg board that will be set up soon in the Community Center to post news from the Greek school. The end of another year is approaching and the last day of Greek school this semester will be on Thursday, May 24. On that day, the students will present a program for parents, receive certificates and an end-of-year party will follow. If you have any questions concerning the Greek school you may contact Francine White at (480) 991-3009.

ASSUMPTION BOOKSTORE HOURS



The bookstore is open Sundays after Liturgy until 11:45 AM and Tuesdays 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM. For information, and to request special orders, please contact Diana Ozee at (480) 991-3009. We have 14-karat and sterling silver crosses, birthday and nameday cards, CDs, and many other items, in addition to a wide selection of books for adults and children.