



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
14485 SW WALKER ROAD
BEAVERTON OR 97006

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NATIVITY ORTHROS & LITURGY
December 24th at 11:15pm

JR. GOYA

Sat, Dec 20, chat with Father after Vespers
Sat, Jan 10, Laser Tag & Sat, Jan 24, chat with Father

GOYA

Sat, Dec 13, Christmas Fire Side Chat
Sat, Jan 10, Fire Side Chat
Sat, Jan 24, PanOrthodox GOYA basketball tour at HT

PARAKLESIS AND NATIVITY DISCUSSION

Monday, December 8, 15 & 22, 6:30pm

PARISH CHRISTMAS PARY

Friday, January 2, 6pm

MEN'S BREAKFAST WITH FATHER

8am Precommunion Prayers & Liturgy
followed by breakfast with Father

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday, January 13, 7:00pm

LOGOS BOOKSTORE HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:30am to 3:30pm and
Sundays after Divine Liturgy

BASICS OF ORTHODOXY CLASSES

Class are starting Wed, Jan 7, 7pm

SENIOR HAPPENINGS

Christmas Tea Sunday December 14, 4:00pm

THANK YOU

TASSO DONATIONS ARE

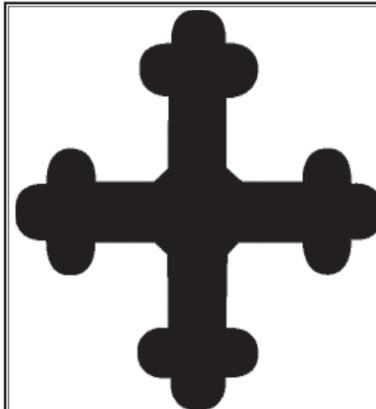
\$1707 THIS YEAR



NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Articles & Announcements, Wednesday January 14

For the February Newsletter



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

December 2014

January 2015

VOL. XVII NO. 10

Witnessing the Truth of Apostolic Christianity

A Light has Dawned

Not too long ago I heard a song that contained the phrase; "we are all only one phone call away from our knees." When I heard these words I thought "how true." I reflected on how fragile our lives are. I also realized that for the most part, we go through life day after day not giving much thought that at any given moment things could change.

As a priest and a therapist, I am all too aware of the struggles and tragedies of life. I see them first hand, hear about them on nearly a daily basis, and often experience them vicariously through the pain and suffering of others. I've sat with and bore witness to people who have received that one phone call. I've prayed with family members as they watched their loved one take their last breath. I've presided over funerals for infants, young children and teens and I can honestly say, every time I was exceedingly humbled at how fragile our lives are.



I've thought a lot about our world and our lives since 9/11. I look at the military actions of our country and that of other nations, and the tremendous loss of life that has occurred as a result. There are many studies that give various statistics, but from what I can gather, it might be safe to say a rough estimate of the casualties of war, for both Americans as well as those of other nations (military and civilians), is between a half to three-quarters a million people since that time of the attack on the Twin Towers in New York.

While I don't believe that most people go around thinking about potential tragedies, and all the "what if's", because such thoughts aren't pleasant, I do believe it's becoming increasingly more difficult to escape the frightening events that we are witnessing around the world.

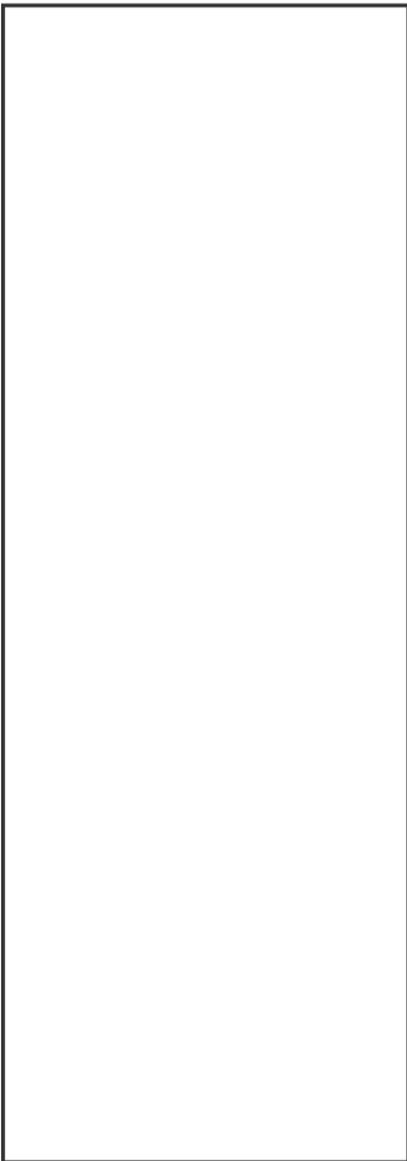
As I write these words, I also call to mind the period of time we are in liturgically, the Nativity Fast, preparing for the coming of God in the flesh. In the hymns and readings of the Church, we are reminded of the coming of Light into a darkened world. The spirit of the Church is full of hope, joy, eager anticipation, and triumph. Despite the reality of darkness in our world today, we stand with a firm hope in the coming of the Christ, the

Anointed One who comes to bring joy and good tidings to all. Even in the midst of all the violence around the globe, we hold onto the Truth who is Christ, the message of Salvation and Eternal Life, and we shout in hymns, "Christ is born, glorify Him! Christ is come from heaven; go and meet Him. Christ is on earth; arise to Him. Sing to the Lord, all you who dwell on the earth; and in merry spirits, O you peoples, praise His birth. For He is glorified" (Katavasias of Christmas, Ode 1).

Though it is true that we live in a fragile world, a fallen world, we ought not live in fear. The beloved Saints of our faith never feared suffering or death because their hope was in Christ. What kept them firmly planted in the faith was the reality that Christ has overcome the world, conquered death, and offers eternal life, and so it must be with all of us. No matter what we see, hear or experience in this life, we direct our eyes toward the Kingdom of Heaven, and put our trust in God.

If anything, we ought to allow the reality of this fleeting world to deepen our appreciation for life as a whole, giving thanks to God for all that He has given us, and strive for deeper and more meaningful relationships with God and others. From Holy Scripture we know that the world is passing away. It was never meant to

light continued on page 3



C.O.M.E. is the Commission for Orthodox Missions and Evangelism, by Thomaida Hudanish

In August 2014, I began working with the Metropolis of San Francisco. My position is the Assistant Director of the Commission for Orthodox Missions & Evangelism, C.O.M.E. Many of you have asked about my work, so I wanted to write to share more about this ministry and what I'm doing.

Since C.O.M.E. was founded in 1991 by Metropolitan Anthony of blessed memory, it has been comprised of volunteers, dedicated to establishing and supporting mission parishes in the Metropolis of San Francisco and sharing the Good News. An easy way to think of C.O.M.E. is as our Metropolis' Missions & Evangelism Ministry.

Our parish, St. John the Baptist, was founded in 1997, through the efforts of C.O.M.E. This parish is one of several parishes that was established less than 20 years ago and has matured into a vibrant Eucharistic community.

In recent years, C.O.M.E. has switched its focus from planting new parishes to parish mentoring and helping existing mission parishes work towards supporting full-time priests. In 2013, with the development of the Metropolis' Strategic Plan, and the creation of the Assistant Director position in 2014, C.O.M.E. is now working with every parish in the Metropolis.

The Metropolis' Strategic Plan has 11 unique task forces, one of which is Missions & Evangelism. This task force is led by our own Fr. Theodore, who has served on the C.O.M.E. Board since its inception and as the President for the past several years. These are the three Strategic Objectives defined for Missions & Evangelism:

- Establish Missions & Evangelism Ministries in every parish.
- Plant 5 new parishes and nurture them to maturity in 10 years.
- Parish Mentoring.

As Assistant Director, my primary focus is to establish Missions & Evangelism Ministries in each parish. The first step is to contact each of the priests of our Metropolis in person or on the telephone. Although it is a time consuming process, it is rewarding to learn about inspiring activities taking place at other parishes and collecting these into a treasure trove of "Best Practices" that we can all benefit from in the future.

Although C.O.M.E. is a ministry of the Metropolis, it has always maintained a separate budget with one main source of funding: the annual spring fundraising campaign known as Pennies & Prayers

(aka Mochas for Missions at St. John). Now we are working to develop Pennies & Prayers and two other funding sources: individual donations to an already existing endowment fund earmarked for Missions & Evangelism, and parish commitments to offering a line item in their annual budget earmarked for C.O.M.E. Through these three sources, we believe that the C.O.M.E. Office will be self-sustaining.

I am thankful to participate in this work. I am especially thankful that I get to do this from my hometown of Portland, and therefore to continue worshipping with and enjoying the fellowship of the St. John community. I look forward to opportunities to share more about what C.O.M.E. is doing in the new year. Please keep this ministry in your prayers. Consider that you and I are missionaries and evangelists, either in word or deed, directly or indirectly, because this is part of what it means to be a Christian. Ultimately, I hope that my life and yours will serve as beacons showing others the way to Christ, the Source of Light.

A C.O.M.E. Wish List

I've learned that one of the biggest challenges is connecting individual talents with the needs of a ministry. At a recent St. John ministry gathering, one of the ministry leaders shared that they found that instead of asking volunteers what they would like to offer, they switched to advertising the needs of their ministry and found great success! Inspired by that, I am writing to share my "Wish List" for those who would like to get involved with C.O.M.E.

First, it would be great for everyone to know what C.O.M.E. stands for! Write it down and practice it on your drive to work. Rehearse it with your kids at dinnertime. There will be a quiz later! :-)

Second, C.O.M.E. needs 5-10 hours of graphic design work to finalize materials for the 2015 Pennies & Prayers campaign.

Third, I'm working on developing a website for C.O.M.E. In January, we need 5 hours worth of content proofreading.

Fourth, we need 5-10 hours to organize and edit photos for the C.O.M.E. website.

Finally, I invite each reader to consider a personal donation to the C.O.M.E. operating fund. Without this ministry, we know that St. John might not even exist, so we understand first-hand the important impact this ministry can have to create future Orthodox Christian communities and bring people to Christ. Simply make your tax deductible gift payable to C.O.M.E. and deliver it to the church office.

METROPOLIS BEGINS IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

The Metropolis of San Francisco welcomes all people with joy, peace and love on their journey to theosis and salvation through churches that save, heal, preach the Gospel and guide the faithful.

The Metropolis of San Francisco Strategic Plan has been completed and implementation is underway. As part of the process, a "Metropolis Advocate" has been appointed in each parish to present and explain the Plan to various ministries and leadership. I am honored to serve St. John's as our Advocate, and look forward to helping everyone understand and become involved in this effort.

Over the past two years plus, 50 dedicated clergy and lay stewards, representing the significant diversity found in our Metropolis, have worked joyfully and diligently to analyze available data and issues, receive input from faithful throughout the Archdiocese and Metropolis in order to develop our Strategic Plan.

Through a disciplined process, the committee reaffirmed the MISSION of the Archdiocese and Metropolis which is to:

- **Proclaim the Gospel of Christ;**
- **Teach and spread the Orthodox Christian Faith; and**
- **Energize, cultivate, and guide the life of the Church in the United States of America according to the Orthodox Christian Faith and Tradition.**

The Faith characteristics that our Church, Archdiocese, and Metropolis support were carefully integrated into this Plan identifying the following shared CORE VALUES:

- Christ-centered**
- Active participation in sacramental life**
- Education**
- Integrity, transparency and accountability**
- Stewardship**
- Outreach and evangelism**
- Inclusiveness and engagement**
- Courage**
- Communications using all media**
- Minister to all generations and strengthen our families and relationships**
- Financial responsibility**

In determining what the Metropolis hoped to accomplish and where it is going, the committee developed a SWEEPing VISION that proclaims that:

We will grow the Greek Orthodox Christian Church in the Western United States through Christ-centered: **Stewardship, Worship, Education, Evangelism, and Philanthropic outreach.**

To realize these commitments of direction, the committee identified 11 key areas of focus and organized Task Forces around each, under the direction of a Task Coordinator.

1. Education
2. Liturgical Life
3. Missions and Evangelism
4. Philanthropic Outreach Development
5. Stewardship
6. Youth
7. Specialized Ministries – Wellness
8. Communications
9. Finances
10. Metropolis Organization and Development
11. Parish Organization

These 11 Task Forces then developed 37 supportive and actionable Strategic Goals which, under the direction of a Goal Captain, will be implemented to Parishes within our Metropolis not having a current, like program.

Clergy throughout the Metropolis have recently completed a survey and have indicated a need and a prioritization of these programs for their respective parishes. To facilitate communications and plans throughout all parishes and with the Implementation teams, an annual implementation schedule along with Quarterly updates will be published allowing our Parishes to gain a glimpse into the plans ahead.

With much work completed and much preparation still ahead, in order to be successful, this endeavor will require the full participation and support of everyone, laity and clergy, throughout our entire Holy Metropolis of San Francisco.

Here are some ways we in our parish can get involved and support the Implementation:

- Download a copy of the full plan or to read an Executive Summary of the Strategic Plan online go to: www.sanfran.goarch.org and click on: "Strategic Plan"
- Attend a meeting conducted by your parish's Metropolis Advocate and a Regional Leadership Volunteer to assist with implementation of an Action Item at our parish

As His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos has stated:

"The future of the faithful and parishes of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco depends on how diligently we pursue this Strategic Plan as stewards of God's many blessings. I look forward to sharing this journey of faith with you!"

For more information, please contact Jimmy Makarounis, your Metropolis Advocate, or Father Theodore

Light continued from front page

be forever in her fallen state. Yes the world we live in is indeed fragile, and we are reminded of this every day. Our lives are likewise very fragile, and we bear witness to this through illnesses, war, hunger, and all manner of suffering. It's not a bad thing to let this reality sit before our minds eye from time to time. It can be very sobering for us, and a motivating factor to draw closer to God and to deepen our appreciation and increase our thanksgiving toward our Father in heaven. Let's not lose sight of the fact that "we are all only one phone call away from our knees."

As we approach the celebration of the Nativity of Christ and His sanctifying Baptism, let us give profound thanks to God for sending us His only-begotten Son and all of what that means to us. "The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great Light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a Light dawned" (Mt. 4:16).

With love in Christ,

Fr. Timothy

Houseblessings 101

Beginning on January 6, the Feast of Theophany, Fr. Theodore and Fr. Timothy will start blessing the homes of the members of our Parish, as well as businesses.

Blessing our homes is an ancient tradition in our Orthodox Church related to the Service of the Great Blessing of the Waters conducted on Theophany. We take the holy water from the Church and we use it to bless our lives in every way possible. The priest blesses us, our homes, our cars, our yards, and by extension all of creation. Not only do we receive a special blessing from God, but through that blessing, God enables us to see His creation in a redeemed way, as a means toward union and communion with Him.

What should you expect in terms of the House Blessing?

Father will offer a short prayer service in front of your home altar and then proceed through the home sprinkling it with holy water, while chanting the Dismissal Hymn of Theophany (provided below).

What should you have ready?

Have your home altar/icon corner ready and accessible. You should have a bowl of water, a bunch of fresh basil tied at the stem for Father to use in sprinkling holy water, a candle, charcoal and incense (if you have an incense burner). If you have already picked up a new holy water bottle at church, please have that handy too. Father will pick up holy water bottles from years past.



Dismissal Hymn of Theophany (1st Mode):

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest; for the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the certainty of the word. O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and hast enlightened the world, glory be to Thee.

SUNDAY CLEAN-UP TEAMS

Beginning in 2015 we will be making some major changes to the current Sunday clean-up rotations! Instead of five clean-up teams working once a month, we will be creating **TEN** clean-up teams who will be responsible for Sunday clean-up only **FIVE** times a year! There will be a minimum of **EIGHT FAMILIES** per clean-up team.

Because every one of us partakes of either coffee, food, or fellowship, it is only natural to expect all to contribute towards the clean-up of the parish facilities.

It is assumed that **ALL** active SJB members will participate in this new clean-up schedule. If you feel that this new schedule may be untenable for your family, please see Jon Corazza regarding your familys personal situation.

A detailed email will be sent out **BEFORE December 15** with your new clean-up team number, your new team captain, your new team members, and the **FIVE** clean-up Sundays you are responsible for.

As always, if there is a Sunday that you cannot help with clean-up, it is up to **YOU** to find a replacement. The entire clean-up schedule for 2015 will be emailed shortly, so if you notice date conflicts, please find a substitute quickly.

Because we are increasing the number of clean-up teams, this also means we have to increase the number of team captains. In an effort to rotate team captains more efficiently and timely, there will be 2 team captains per clean-up team. One will be in charge, the other will be in training. The captain in training will

then become team captain in 2016, with a new individual filling the 'in training' role.

While change can be a difficult thing, the changes in regards to the clean-up schedule are really a good thing for our parish. Having several families clean-up once a month creates burnout and might prevent some families from attending Theology 101 consistently or from volunteering to teach Sunday school.

If you have questions regarding the new schedule, please see Mike Hillier. If your family is requesting to be removed from the clean-up schedule, please see Jon Corazza. There will also be time during Theology 101 on December 14 to review these changes.



JOIN US FOR THESE HOLY DAYS

EVE OF NATIVITY
 Wednesday, December 24th
 7:30am Royal Hours of Nativity
 9:30 Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
 11:00 p.m. Nativity Orthros & Candlelight Divine

HOLY NATIVITY OF CHRIST
 Thursday, December 25th
Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!

ST. BASIL THE GREAT & THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST
 Thursday, January 1st
 9 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great followed by the cutting of the Vasilopita

FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY
 Monday, January 5th
 8:30 a.m. Royal Hours
 5:00 p.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of the Water followed by Potluck Dinner



The Ancient Church Reading Room

