

METROPOLITAN'S ENCYCLICAL FOR THE FEAST OF THE DORMITION 2013

Beloved in the Lord,

For the first fifteen days of August, Orthodox Christians will prepare to celebrate the Dormition of the Theotokos. Being one of the most significant Feasts of the Virgin Mary in our liturgical calendar, it is the only one that begins with a fasting period. For these two weeks we will engage in the spiritual discipline of fasting from certain foods, under the direction of our parish priests. A fast is a discipline of avoidance, removing what is extraneous in our lives, to remind us of what is really important and necessary. This fast like all fast periods should focus our attention on the need for God in our lives.

Our parishes will offer the Service of Supplication, the Paraklesis to the Virgin Mary. This is the spiritual discipline of engagement involving us more intentionally in prayer and worship. In the Paraklesis, we call out to the Mother of God as our protector and guardian. These services are continual reminders of our belief that the intercessory prayers of the Theotokos to her Son are beneficial to our lives.



We honor the Virgin Mary and supplicate to her for intercession because she is the loving Mother of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She always points to her Son. Look at her in the various icons of the Church, holding her Son, but always directing our attention toward Him and away from herself - an example of the sacrifices that all mothers make for their children. Look at how this scene is reversed in the icon of the Dormition, when the Son holds the soul of His Mother. While our attention is drawn to Mary in her bier, we cannot avoid seeing the presence of her Son. A tradition of this Feast from long ago says that Christ Himself entered the room where she lay to receive her soul from the angels that carried it to Him. Tradition tells us that when the Apostles returned to her tomb a few days later, the tomb was empty, her body was gone, and only a sweet fragrance remained.

Over the next two weeks, I invite you to consider the significant role of the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, in our Orthodox Church. Search her out in Scriptures. Listen for her name in our worship, noticing how our prayers end with a supplication to her. See her and venerate her in the holy icons. In each of these, consider how the Church continually turns to this extraordinary woman, this beautiful mother, and this role model for humanity. The Virgin Mary shows all people that a life dedicated entirely to God leads to union with God.

Extending my personal wishes to all those who celebrate their Feast Day, I pray that through the intercessions of Theotokos may we enjoy this fasting period and joyfully celebrate the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

With Love in Christ,

+ GERASIMOS
Metropolitan of San Francisco



St. Sophia
Greek Orthodox Church

**AUGUST-
SEPTEMBER
2013**

Inside...

Page 2: "The Church is a Hospital, Not a Courthouse" by Fr. Michael

Page 3: For the Refrigerator Door: "Our Sins and the Sins of Others"

Also: Greek Festival, Philoptochos, and Iconography Workshop news and information.

St. Sophia
Greek Orthodox
Church

510 E. Sunset Dr.
Bellingham, WA 98225
email: stsophia.bellingham@gmail.com
website: www.saintsophias.org

Fr. Michael Tervo, Proistamenos
email: michael.tervo@gmail.com

The Church is a Hospital, Not a Courthouse: As a Place of Healing, the Church Must Encourage ALL of Its Members



A Message from Fr. Michael

We parishioners at St. Sophia must have a vision of what the purpose and mission of the Church should be. The Church must encourage its members in developing a Sacramental life in Christ. Everyone should be given an equal opportunity to have this, without fear of judgment by brothers and sisters in Christ.

It is saddening when some people take the position that the Orthodox Church must be the “enforcer” of God’s law and commandments. I admit that I too have fallen to this dangerous temptation and erroneous view of my role as an Orthodox Christian and a priest.

Many people see the Church as the policemen, judge and jury, meeting out punishment and sentences on spiritual infractions.

These people think that the Church should declare who are winners and losers, who are good and bad, who are sinners and saints. Putting it starkly, this view sees the Church as Santa Claus... making a list of who is “naughty” and “nice.”

Abbot Tryphon of the Holy Savior Monastery on Vachon Island told a story from his days as a high school teacher. One of his fellow teachers kept a list of the “good” and “bad” students. The “good” students were those whom he liked: who did all their homework, came to class every day, were obedient and were pleasant to be around. These he rewarded with special attention.

The “bad” list were the rest of his students... the oft absent, those who did not do the work, troublemakers, and the like. Intended or not, these received negative attention.

This teacher with delight handed out good grades with positive comments and words of encouragement. The work of the “bad” students, by contrast, were marked with stark letter grades like “F” and “D,” marked in a way that expressed anger, frustration and derision.

Abbot Tryphon, who received these students right after that teacher, could tell by the looks on the students’ faces whom received good grades and who received bad by their soaring spirits or dejected expressions. Those who received the good grades were eager to study more; those with the bad struggled in seeing the purpose of continued study.

Many today struggle to see the purpose of Church. The Body of Christ exists to help people soar! The Orthodox Church, its clergy and the laity, must not exist to pick winners and losers, the holy and the sinner, the good and the bad.

Instead, the Orthodox Church is called to be a hospital for the soul. Since every one of us is sin-sick in some way or another, we should treat every person as a sick man in need of a cure.

It is true that some are actively engaged in the life in Christ offered by the Orthodox Church. Others, for some

reason, are not. Some care about the faith; others couldn’t care less. The former find the Christian life up-lifting and are easily identifiable as Orthodox Christians. The latter struggle with the Christian life. They are not easily identifiable as Christians. They may not live their life in accordance with the Gospel. They are unengaged and forgotten in their parish.

Yet both the pious and the impious are in need of the same healing that comes from a living encounter with the living God.

A church that loves only those who are “good,” fails in its mission as a Church. If a parish only welcomes those who are spiritually healthy and shuns the sick, then they are failing to exist as the Church that Jesus wants. Jesus said, after all, in the Gospel of Matthew:

“And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” (Matthew 9:11-13)

Christians fail when they love only those whom they deem as “good” or “righteous,” while neglecting “unrighteous” and “sin-sick.” We must love those who hurt because of their sins even more than the “righteous.”

We must love the one who is sick the most. We should encourage the sinner and the downcast to come to Liturgy all the more.

The Church is a hospital and we should want it to be filled with sick people who want to do whatever it takes to be well.

The Church is a hospital, not a club or police-station. It is sick bed, not a holding-cell. It is a place for weak hearts to be made strong, for the despairing to be given hope, for spiritual cowards to be edified so they can bravely face the reality of their sin and the necessary path to healing.

The Church must encourage all of its members as a mother encourages all of her children. If a mother showered all of her attention only on some of her children and neglected the others, her motherhood fails.

If the Church shows attention to the “good” children and neglects or even worse, drives away, the “bad” we would fail as Christians.

May it not be so! Instead, let us have a correct view of what the Orthodox Church is and is called to be: a hospital called to offer the healing to all equally, with abundant love, vigilant attention, and concern for the weak along with the strong.

- Fr. Michael

QUOTES FROM SOME CHURCH FATHERS ON OUR SINS AND THE SINS OF OTHERS...



**FOR THE
REFRIGERATOR
DOOR...**

"We have within us deeply rooted weaknesses, passions, and defects. This can not all be cut out with one sharp motion, but with patience, persistence, care and attention. The path leading to perfection is long. Pray to God so that he will strengthen you. Patiently accept your falls and, having stood up, immediately run to God, not remaining in that place where you have fallen. Do not despair if you keep falling into your old sins. Many of them are strong because they have received the

force of habit. Only with the passage of time and with fervor will they be conquered. Don't let anything deprive you of hope."

- St. Nectarios of Aegina

"...should we fall, we should not despair and so estrange ourselves from the Lord's love. For if He so chooses, He can deal mercifully with our weakness. Only we should not cut ourselves off from Him or feel oppressed when constrained by His commandments, nor should we lose heart when we fall short of our goal...let us always be ready to make a new start. If you fall, rise up. If you fall again, rise up again. Only do not abandon your Physician, lest you be condemned as worse than a suicide because of your despair. Wait on Him, and He will be merciful, either reforming you, or sending you trials, or through some other provision of which you are ignorant."

-St. Peter of Damascus

"Do not be irritated either with those who sin or those who offend; do not have a passion for noticing every sin in your neighbor, and for judging him, as we are in the habit of doing. Everyone shall give an answer to God for himself. Everyone has a conscience; everyone hears God's Word, and knows God's Will either from books or from conversation with other people. Especially do not look with evil intention upon the sins of your elders, which do not regard you; "to his own master he standeth or falleth." Correct your own sins, amend your own life.

-St. John of Kronstadt

"God, Who is by nature good and dispassionate, loves all men equally as His handiwork. But He glorifies the virtuous man because in his will he is united to God. At the same time, in His goodness he is merciful to the sinner and by chastising him in this life brings him back to the path of virtue. Similarly, a man of good and dispassionate judgment also loves all men equally. He loves the virtuous man because of his nature and the probity of his intention; and he loves the sinner, too, because of his nature and because in his compassion he pities him for foolishly stumbling in darkness."

-St. Maximos the Confessor

The Church is a hospital for sinners... not a museum for Saints



GREEK FESTIVAL

VISIT THE NEW FESTIVAL WEBPAGE:

www.bellinghamgreekfest.org

FESTIVAL COOKING: Will take place every Tuesdays *and* Thursdays at 10:30 am until the festival. For more information, the contact person is Joyce Piantes (360) 224-5211.

Pressure Washer needed: to help wash the kitchen area. Contact: Joyce Piantes.

Raffle Tickets: For the second year, Bellingham Travel and Cruise has donated a \$1,500 travel voucher as the grand prize. Packets of 10 tickets have been mailed out to all parishioners. Please try to sell as many as you can to help support your church!

PLEASE HELP FIND SPONSORS FOR THE FESTIVAL: Please consider asking your employer, places where you are a frequent customer, your favorite restaurant or coffee house or any other organizations if they would sponsor our festival. Forms are available in the festival website, www.bellinghamgreekfest.org. Printed sponsor forms are available at the coffee hour or at the church office. Contact: Harieklia Bryant, klial1@mac.com.

ATTENTION ANYONE WORKING IN A FOOD BOOTH: You will need to get a health permit, which you can attain online at www.foodworkercard.wa.gov. Please note that this is the only authorized testing site in Washington State. If you have one already, please bring a copy so the Festival Committee can have it on file.

New Festival Items: Gift certificates, kids' play area, face painting.

Please note that during the festival, parking will not be allowed in the parking lot in front of the Church office.

Dear Parishioners,

Below is a list of major food items and miscellaneous items we use in preparation for the St. Sophia Festival. We kindly ask for your help in helping us defray the parish's expenses. While monetary donations are preferred, since they allow maximum flexibility in purchasing, donations of food and other items are always appreciated. Please check with the Festival committee before making food donations to make sure these items are still needed.

Thank you!

The St. Sophia Festival Committee

Meat			Vegetables		
	Quantity	Cost		Quantity	Cost
Lamb legs lbs	150	\$657.00	Cucumbers cases	16	\$880.00
Lamb Whole lbs	140	\$875.00	Tomatoes cases (Roma)	36	\$1,085.00
Chicken lbs	1120	\$2,240.00	Lettuce mix cases	4	\$80.00
Pork lbs	500	\$960.00	Spinach bags	15	\$68.00
Gyro Meat cases	122	\$3,920.00	Dill bags	6	\$67.00
Ground Beef 10lb	17	\$395.80	Parsley Bags	24	\$109.20
Sausage lbs	100	\$350.00	Green Onions Bags	18	\$58.05
Pita cases	63	\$1,480.00	Onions chopped bags	34	\$546.00
			Peppers cases bell	15	\$452.00
Baking Items			Paper/Plastic		
	Quantity	Cost		Quantity	Cost
Flour 50lb (all purpose)	6	\$120.00	Paper Towels cases	10	\$125.00
Sugar 50lb	6	\$165.00	Coffee cups case 8 oz	1	\$180.00
Honey gal (Money)	10	\$350.00	Plates		\$400.00
Olive oil gal	8	\$104.72	Coffe cups (Greek) case 4 oz	1	\$180.00
Walnuts cases	6	\$205.00	Napkins		\$200.00
Yeast Dry cases	2	\$50.00	Spoons		\$35.00
Rice 25lb	15	\$375.00	Forks		\$50.00
Butter	500 lbs	\$1,500.00	Knives		\$50.00
Margarine 30lbs	2	\$61.80	Gyro wraps		\$500.00
Eggs Doz	150	\$225.00	Styrofoam cups	250	\$100.00
Evaporated milk	20	\$21.40	Miscellaneous		
Chicken Base lbs	100	\$300.00		Quantity	Cost
Cooking Oil gal	8	\$200.00	Propane		\$500.00
Parchment Paper	2	\$141.00	Olives 5gal	2	\$200.00
Grape leaves 5 gal	5	\$380.00	Red Wine Vinegar 1gal	5	\$200.00
Colq Cheese 5lbs	24	\$200.00	Seasoning large pk	20	\$200.00
Yoqurt lbs	22	\$150.00	Tent Rental/Setup	6	\$6,000.00
Filo cases	13	\$715.00	Garb bags cases	10	\$175.00
Powder sugar lb	75	\$75.00	Alum Foil	2	\$100.00
Tzatziki sauce gal	22	\$360.00	Saran Wrap	4	\$150.00
			Spices		\$400.00
Beverages				Quantity	Cost
	Quantity	Cost	Lemon Juice gal	20	\$200.00
Soda Pop Cases	250	\$2,550.00	Pepperoncini (greek) case	3	\$100.00
American Coffee	75Lbs	\$250.00	Feta Cheese 5 gal bucket	10	\$375.00
Water Cases	20	\$99.80	Oranges case	1	\$50.00
Greek Coffee	75lbs	\$300.00	Bread		\$600.00
			Lemons case	2	\$50.00
			Creamer Liquid case	1	\$180.00

CONTRIBUTION FORM

Payment Information for Cash Contributions

Check inclosed for the amount of \$ _____ Please make checks payable to St. Sophia Grael Orthodox Church

Send Payment to
 St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church
 Attn: Festival Committee
 510 E. Sunset Drive
 Bellingham, WA 98225
 Phone 360-734-8745 E-mail: greekfest.bellingham@gmail.com

Thank you...

*to those who turned in their 2013 St. Sophia Stewardship
Commitment Card:*



Fr. Michael and Elizabeth Tervo * Deacon Peter & Cathy Alex * Sam & Yanolla Boulos * Gebran & Wafa Gholam * John Tsoulouhas * Hariekliya Bryant * Areti Moularas * Christos Christophorou * Victor & Dorine Boulos * Cynthia Chahine * Nahla Gholam * Fawzi & Samia Boulos * Valerie Reed * Marco & Marie Boulos * Yanni & Christina Gholam * Alex & Ortance Youseff * Fayez & Fares-Boulos * Georgia Sentkowski * Chadi Moussi * Roger Hulbush * Bryant & Tamara Mattson * Gabriel & Jaimee Twining * Riad Youseff * Angelina Todd * Samantha Raney * Gabriella Boulos * John Harriman * Kim Weil * Alexandros Christophorou * Tim & Voula Parks * Elizabeth Morgan * Nikitas & Tasia Tsoulouhas * Manoli & Marina Polichronakis * Mary Hulbush * Demetrios & Terpsithea Totskas * Partena Karipikis & Anthony Rodriguez * Sorin & Ilana Rotea * Dalene Piantes * Thelma Stasinis * Niki & Ray Welton * Dymond Nicon * Nadim & Angeline Moussi * George & Ibtissam Mansour * George Mansour III * Sarah Janine Mansour * Norma Nina Mansour * Vasile & Ioana Aluhas * Gianni Tsoulouhas * Pete Besas * Stephanos & Paula Margaritis * Loree Foote * Helen Griffin * Kallee & Justin Dalton * Doug & Dena Lien * Paul & Anna Richardson * George & Judith Moularas * Brooksana Raney * Jim & Eleni Zourkos * George & Marie Miles * Christos Tselios * Roni & Jon Walsh * Prokopis & Rina Contoravdis * Louie & Evelyn Lallas * Charles & Vasiliki Margaritis * Gus & Maria Iivanakis * Forest & Holly Grow * Theodosios & Eleni Kipelidis * Richard & Zeina Evans * Georgia Karavias * Curt & Salome Wolters * Demetrios & Eleni Soteriou * Joyce Piantes * Jim & Panagiota Agouridis * Dan & Effie Eisses * Irena Lambrou * Chris & Helene Pantoleon
(As of 8/1/2013)

Milestones

Baptism- Feras Maseo Evans, June 8th; Godparents- Fayez and Alisar Boulos

Baptism- Levi Dalton, June 22nd; Godparent- Pantazis and Katina Samolis

Baptism- Ari Raphael Walters, June 30th; Godparent- George Cosmas

Congratulations to Michael Lien, who graduated from the University of Washington with a BS in Chemical Engineering on June 15, 2013. Michael is the son of Douglas and Dena Lien.

Correction: Joanne Meras' name was mistakenly omitted from the list donors who made an Easter offering.

SAVE THE DATES!!!

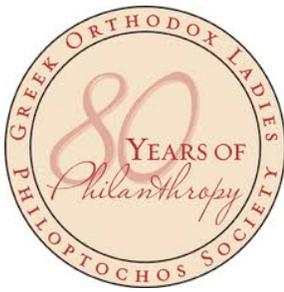
St. Sophia & Her Three Daughters Parish Feast Day Services

Monday, September 16th

6:30 pm Great Vespers for St. Sophia; light refreshments to follow in the fellowship hall

Tuesday, September 17th

9:00 am Matins/Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Luncheon to follow



St. Sophia Philoptochos

Dear Philoptochos members,

There will be a meeting this Sunday, August 11; location to be announced after liturgy.

The votes are in: next year's dinner/dance fundraiser is May 3, 2014. Thanks to all who voted.

We will have a space at the festival to share what Philoptochos represents and our philanthropic role in the Orthodox church and our community. I will be looking for volunteers to manage the booth; let me know if you are interested.

Conversation for a luncheon/bake sale the Saturday prior to Thanksgiving is still in progress; we will discuss this at the meeting.

We are donating school supplies for the Vacation Bible School to create a project to donate to a local elementary school.

The patio sale was a successful and fun event. We raised \$950, then Yanni Gholam donated \$50 to make it a thousand; then Elaine Kipelides donated another \$50 in memory of her sister; we emptied George Mansour's wallet and the final amount to go to the "roof fund" is \$1066. Thank you to all who provided merchandise, time and money. The check will be presented to the parish council president Peter Besas this Sunday.

In Christ I remain your sister in Philoptochos,
Harieklia Bryant

Coffee Hour Offerings

August 4 Mary Hulbush, Dena Lien and Cheri Webster
August 11 Eleni Kyriazis and Effie Bachelor
August 18 Dorine Boulos and Marie Boulos
August 25 Ibtissam Mansour and Angelina Moussi

September 1 and 8 NO COFFEE HOUR
September 15 Georgia Sentkowski, Kathy Alex and Cheryl Lallas
September 22 Marina Polychronakis and Eleni Pantoleon
September 29 Wafaa Gholam and Cristina Gholam

Thank you for finding a substitute and notifying Georgia Sentkowski georgia2608@comcast.net if you are not able to provide for coffee hour on your scheduled day.

Prosophoro Baking

Aug. 4 Kim Weil (4)
Aug. 11 Tasia Tsoulouhas (5)
Aug. 18 Tamara Mattson (5)
Aug. 25 Evelyn Lallas (5)
Sept. 1 Brooksana Raney (5)
Sept. 15 Tamara Mattson (6)
Sept. 22 Tawni Martini (5)
Sept. 29 Harieklia Bryant (5)

Epistle Readers

Aug. 4 Alicia Morgan
Aug. 11 Anastasia Boulos
Aug. 18 Gebhran Gholam
Aug. 25 Marcella Boulos
Sept. 1 Sophia Chahine
Sept. 8 Gabe Martini
Sept. 15 Juju Gholam
Sept. 22 Jason Morgan
Sept. 29 Andriana Boulos

Sunday Altar Server Schedule

Team 1- Aug 4, 18; Sept. 1, 15, 29

A. Christophorou, E. Christophorou, P. Tervo, N. Mattson, Bassam Najib Boulos, J. Morgan, G. Grow, N. Eisses

Team 2- Aug. 11, 25; Sept. 8, 22

N. Tsoulouhas, C. Kyriazis, N. Kyriazis, A. Kyriazis, E. Cretu, F. Cretu, Emilio. Bessam Victor Boulos, C. Grow

Iconography Workshop



Three day icon painting retreat using the icon, 'Sweet Kissing', as the prototype. Experienced and new painters are both welcome.

Heather Sommer, instructor

Heather Sommer is an accomplished iconographer whose work can be found in churches and private collections across the country.

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, Bellingham, Washington
September 28, 9-5pm; September 29, 1-6 pm; and October 5, 9-1pm

Class fee - \$350.00, includes all materials and supplies
-Limited to 12 students-

For more information and registration, please contact Brooksana Raney (360) 441-0144 or
redheadbby@yahoo.com

Bookstore News

1. POCKET PRAYER BOOK FOR ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

Together with the devine liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.....\$7.00

THE ORTHODOX WAY by Bishop Cellists Ware.....\$15.00

Bishop Ware shows the meaning of Orthodox doctrine for the life of the individual Christian. Doctrinal issues are seen not as abstract propositions for theological debate, but as affecting the whole of life.

THIRSTING FOR GOD IN A LAND OF SHALLOW WELLS by Mathew Gallatin \$12.00; A former professor of philosophy, he expresses many of the struggles a Protestant will undergo in coming face to face with Orthodoxy.

SEVEN DAYS ON THE ROADS OF FRANCE , 1940. By Vladimir Lossky \$15.00

Lossky describes seven tragic days in his life and in the life of France.

THE ASCENT OF CHRISTIAN LAW by John McGuckin.....\$24.00

What did Christianity do to build a civilization? This book is some form of an answer.

It is part history, part philosophy; a historical study of Christian law from an Orthodox Perspective.

PICTURES OF GOD; child's guide to understanding Icons.....\$12.95

BOOKCLUB SELECTION FOR THIS COMING September: THE SCENT OF HOLINESS; LESSONS FROM A WOMEN'S MONASTERY. By Constantina Palmer.....\$18.95

If you're a woman who's read of Mount Athos and longed to partake of its grace-filled atmosphere, this book is for you. Men who wish to understand how women's spirituality differs from their own will find it a fascinating read as well.

The bookstore also has Greek coffee, candy of different kinds, Gliko, mountain tea; There is incense in different scents available in various sized packaging; We can order icons, crosses and many other Orthodox items.

We are getting ready for the festival and will have many new things; our t-shirts and sweatshirts will arrive the last week of August; there are a few left from last year as well as the zippered shopping bags. We have CD's and lots of cards for that special occasion. Many of our books come in an E format and we can special order any title.

STOP BY AND TAKE A LOOK!



ST. SOPHIA YOUTH



Vacation Bible School "St. Paul in Athens"

August 19-23, Monday-Friday, 9 am-12 noon.

Ages 5-incoming 5th graders.

If you plan on having your children attend, please fill out the registration form promptly and hand it to either Georgia Sentkowski or Mary Hulbush. Registration forms are available in the church hall. Cost is \$10 per child for the first and second child in a family, third child free. Snack provided. Please see Fr Michael or Presvytera

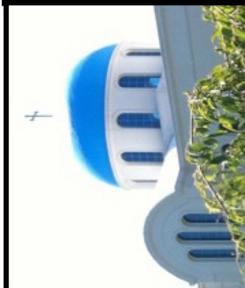
Elizabeth for questions. Thank you to our talented team of volunteers!



**AUGUST-
SEPTEMBER**

2013

MONTHLY BULLETIN



St. Sophia
Greek Orthodox Church

