



METROPOLIS OF
SAN FRANCISCO



Beloved Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.”

I Corinthians 3:9

These words of Saint Paul are a challenge to us all as we recognize that we are the Church, and each of us has a role in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, emulating Him in all that we do. ***Building Up the House of God*** is a commitment made by the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco to place special emphasis on developing and sustaining innovative programs and ministries aimed to provide spiritual nourishment and emotional support for the thousands of faithful we serve.

The Church has the great responsibility to provide for our people in ways that relate to their lives in an ever-changing society. What good are ornate churches, gymnasiums and educational facilities if we are not doing the work of the Lord? We can have the most beautiful buildings but if they are not filled with God’s presence, God’s work, and God’s love in us, they become nothing more than museums instead of thriving communities of spiritual renewal, worship and service. It is when we finally become committed to ***Building Up the House of God*** that the work of the Lord truly begins.

With Love in Christ,

Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco

✠Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco



A FAMILY-CENTERED House of God

Building Up the House of God is a continual process, one that the Metropolis is devoted to, and one that our parishes strive to achieve on an ongoing basis. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos has initiated a five-year program that focuses on building up our communities, with a specific theme each year. The first year will be dedicated to developing ministries for the **Family**. In year two, the theme will be **Worship**. The third year will focus on **Fellowship**.



for people comprise the Church and without people nothing else can be accomplished. Our parish life begins with the gathering of the people, those who have been called out by God and have joined the Body of Christ.



The fourth year will be devoted to **Service**; and the fifth year will center on **Witness**. These themes are interrelated and interconnected, for they are a part of each parish and within all the ministries of our Metropolis.

These five themes have been selected because they form the core of the life of the Church. Ministering to families and strengthening the fellowship within our communities is vital to this cause,



His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos states, "The family is at the core of our church, as we are all one family in Christ. We need to work together as a family, showing love, respect and support to those around us, and join together in prayer as a source of strength and inspiration. Our society has placed great challenges on the stability of the family, but as a Church, we are obligated to combat the social pressures and emphasize the importance of sustaining the family as a whole, as well as providing for the

individual needs of each member of the family throughout their lives."

As part of the Metropolis Family Wellness Ministry, some parishes are offering monthly family night activities; others provide child care so parents can enjoy an evening out; some facilitate support groups for grief and bereavement, weight loss, and addiction, while others provide special classes to help families in their personal financial struggles during this economic downturn. The Metropolis has also offered

"The human family constitutes the primary and essential element of human society...peace in society will be a direct result of peace in the family."

St. John Chrysostom

marriage enrichment retreats for our clergy couples addressing the special challenges faced by our priests and presbyteres by providing love and support for their marriages and ministry.



A WORSHIPPING House of God

Worship is integral to our lives as Orthodox Christians, and our parishes anchor their ministries in the worship life of the Church, beyond Sunday liturgies to weekday



feasts, Paraklesis, Vespers, and more, witnessing to what the Church is foremost – a worshipping House of God.



Beyond worshipping together, many parishes maintain prayer lists of those who are sick or otherwise in need, and our parishioners openly seek the counsel of our clergy during times of personal struggle.

Orthodox worship is musical worship, and the parishes in our Metropolis offer hymns of praise to God in a variety of ways. While some parishes have large polyphonic choirs, others have congregational singing, Byzantine Chant, and active children's choirs, making our rich musical tradition accessible in a variety of ways. All of these efforts are supported through ongoing educational programs and trainings offered by the Metropolis Church Music Federation.

The Church Music Federation continues to be dedicated to providing resources to parishes to help them establish and sustain music programs for

adults, youth and chanters. The Federation also offers Church Music Institutes throughout the Metropolis

“Pray not only for yourself, but for all the faithful, for the whole body of the Church without separating yourself from other believers, pray in a state of union with them as a member of Christ’s Church...Prayer for others is beneficial for the one who prays: It purifies the heart, strengthens faith and hope in God and stimulates love for God and neighbor.”

St. John of Kronstadt

as a means of expanding the knowledge and repertoire of Church Musicians. These are provided free of charge throughout the Metropolis.



noble
Students

Church
Music

Byzantine
Chant

Choir

Lenten
Retreats

Youth
Choir

BUILDING UP THE HOUSE OF GOD

A SERVING House of God

The Metropolis Philoptochos has shown enormous commitment to serving others and doing the work of Gospel through their ministry. Since 1985, they have served thousands of children with cancer and their families through the Camp Agape Kids 'n' Cancer summer camps held regionally in the Metropolis.



They also provide transportation for young cancer patients to receive life-saving treatments.

Philoptochos has also shown tremendous commitment and

Aid Endowment Fund which has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars of support to young men and women from our Metropolis who are attending Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology. The Ladies Philoptochos Society of the Metropolis has long been guided by the words Saint Paul preached to the Philippians, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Cultivating and training the lay leadership of our parishes has also been a focus of the Metropolis in recent years, as special one-day seminars have been offered regionally to bring to the forefront the importance of a unified, Christ-focused vision for the Church. Attendance at these seminars includes parish council members, Sunday School teachers, youth advisors, Philoptochos members, dance and sports instructors, and church musicians.

It is important to create a strong synergy between the clergy and lay leaders of our parishes. The old way



of thinking that the priest takes care of the church services and the parish council takes care of the business does not reflect who we are as Orthodox Christians. The Church is here for a very specific and focused purpose: salvation. The parish council, as the lay leaders of the church should serve as models of the faith; they must "walk by faith and not by sight". Anyone in a position of leadership in a parish needs to be fully engaged in the Liturgical and Sacramental life of the Church and set an example of Orthodox Christian living.



"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ."

Colossians 3:23 – 24

vision through the Bishop Anthony Philoptochos Seminarian/Student



A LEARNING House of God

Though many understand that education is a life-long process, there is often the misconception that religious education is for



children only, beginning and ending with Sunday School. The Metropolis committee on Christian Formation and Religious Education emphasizes learning through all



generations, creating new educational opportunities such as utilizing technology to offer online webinars accessible to people through their personal computers. A new online Lenten Book Club has connected people across the globe who share their experiences and deepen

their knowledge in the faith. The Metropolis also offers trainings for Sunday School teachers, and provides a resource sharing center on the Metropolis Religious Education website.

Some parishes in the Metropolis of San Francisco are offering pre-school and elementary school programs.

There is no greater gift we can give to our children than that of education; and to have the opportunity to incorporate the teachings of our Orthodox faith as part of a daily curriculum is a

tremendous means of strengthening the lives of our children and keeping them close to the Lord. As both Orthodox Christians and Hellenes, we are inheritors of a very strong educational legacy, and thus we must honor and

promote this within our Greek Orthodox communities.

Through the efforts of the Committee on Greek Education and Culture, the Metropolis serves as a tremendous resource for Greek language schools at many of our parishes. This

committee also offers teacher training programs, instructional assistance for parish language instruction programs, and coordinates an annual Greek Village Camp where young students are immersed in the Greek language,

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

culture, traditions and worship. This ministry also works diligently to develop programs which impart historical knowledge of our Hellenic heritage, values and traditions so that we will always honor and cherish our ancestry.



A YOUTHFUL House of God

Through innovative youth programs, our Metropolis provides a foundation in the faith by offering retreats, camps and special



events that create an environment of fellowship while building friendships that will last a lifetime. Annual Lenten retreats provide insight into the mystery of Christ's Crucifixion and

Resurrection, guiding participants in deepening their spiritual disciplines including fasting, prayer, and

the Sacrament of Confession. Retreats for Altar Boys focus on the importance of Acolyte service in our worship, and also provide a forum of vocational development for future service in the Church. Summer Camp has been a mainstay in the Metropolis with hundreds of youth gathering each year at Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center for a fun-filled week of outdoor activities, art, sports, and worship, all offered within a safe and loving Orthodox Christian environment.



In addition to the many diverse youth programs offered by the Metropolis, our parishes offer a wide array of activities including GOYA, Jr. GOYA, HOPE and JOY. Many communities offer special programs for families with small children, known affectionately as "Little Lambs", as a means of providing support for young mothers and their children. This program offers a safe, Christ-centered environment for their children to begin nurturing friendships with other Orthodox from the early formative years. Sports programs are also very popular, as are local retreats, regional Olympic Games, and community outreach

activities to Project Mexico and Saint Innocent Orphanage.

Another strong program that promotes both our Christian and Hellenic Culture

is the Metropolis Folk Dance and Choral Festival which annually attracts thousands of dancers, singers, musicians, family and friends to witness the award-winning performances and the camaraderie of this dynamic ministry. This program intertwines Faith, Dance and



Fellowship by offering daily worship as well as workshops which bring faith-based guidance to problems



our youth face every day. FDF is motivated by friendship and by the unity of all the participants who share the common threads of our faith

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 19:14

and heritage. Over the years, FDF has grown to very much resemble a family reunion. All one has to do is witness the smiles, laughter, hugs and tears shared by those from near and far who cherish every moment together to see the deep impact of this ministry. A remarkable ongoing legacy is also found in many aspects of FDF. Dancers from the 1970's are now parents, directors and judges. Grandparents have mentored their children and grandchildren on native instruments and music, passing down to them the history of their ancestors and instilling in them a deep-rooted connection to generations past, along with the obligation to share their knowledge with generations to come.



A HOSPITABLE House of God

For nearly 30 years, Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center has provided hospitality to thousands of people on an annual

provides a tranquil setting where one can experience the beauty of God's creation and enjoy a respite from the fast-paced world.

"Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, who have borne witness of your love before the church...that we may become fellow workers for the truth."

3 John 5 - 8

basis. Offering programs like Family Camp, Elderhostel, clergy retreats, reunions and more, Saint Nicholas Ranch offers something for everyone. Located on 230 acres in the foothills of Kings Canyon Sequoia National Park, the Ranch is surrounded by rolling hills, ancient oak trees, a lake, apple orchard, olive grove and sports fields. Saint Nicholas Ranch

Our Metropolis is also blessed with three monastic communities which offer a place of prayer, renewal and spiritual focus for our faithful. Pilgrims from around the world journey to our Metropolis each year to seek guidance and comfort at these monasteries where the centuries-old



discipline of Orthodox ascetic life is followed, and where peace and tranquility abound.



St. Anthony Monastery
Florence, Arizona



Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring
Dunlap, California



St. John the Forerunner Monastery
Goldendale, Washington



The Commission for Orthodox Missions and Evangelism assists the Metropolis the planting of new parishes in both urban and suburban areas which will serve the needs of the growing Greek Orthodox communities. The Commission works to engage the Orthodox faithful of the Metropolis in understanding that we are all called to make disciples, and to proclaim the message of God's reality, and lead others to that reality through incorporation into the Church. In

A GROWING House of God

cities or towns with a small Orthodox population, the Commission works with the laity as they gather potential members, participate in monthly or bimonthly liturgies, and plan for the future assignment of a full-time priest.

love in the context of relations with others, as love for God manifests itself when His children extend love to one another. This ministry is especially focused on the use of

The Spiritual Renewal Ministry of the Metropolis of San Francisco strives to provide programs through the various regions of the Metropolis which facilitate opportunities for the faithful to establish and further develop grassroots spirituality in local parishes. This creates an opportunity to experience Christ's

"...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forevermore. Amen."

2 Peter 3:18

modern technology to bring retreats, special topics and seminars to anyone interested through posting videos and initiating discussion forums on the Spiritual Renewal website.



METROPOLIS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2010

2011

Aug. 6	Metropolis Young Adult Service Project	Belmont, CA
Sept. 18	Metropolis Council Meeting	San Francisco, CA
Sept. 20 –	Metropolis Senior Camp	
Sept. 24	Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Sept. 24 –	Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring	
Sept. 25	Consecration of the Katholikon	Dunlap, CA
Oct. 2	Spirit of Stewardship Awards Dinner Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church	Southern California Region Northridge, CA
Oct. 15 –	Fall Family Camp	
Oct. 17	Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Oct. 16	Orthodox Girls' Retreat Saint Paul Greek Orthodox Church	Irvine, CA
Oct. 18	Family Wellness Golf Tournament Harding Park Golf Course	San Francisco, CA
Oct. 23	Spirit of Stewardship Awards Dinner Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral	Northwest Region Portland, OR
Oct. 30	Spirit of Stewardship Awards Dinner Ascension Greek Orthodox Cathedral	Northern California Region Oakland, CA
Oct. TBD	Metropolis Church Music Institutes Five Locations Throughout the Metropolis	
Oct TBD	Spiritual Renewal Retreat: Internet and Technology	Southwest Region
Nov. 13	Metropolis Religious Educators' Workshop Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church	Northridge, CA
Nov. 13	Metropolis Christian Education The Twelve Great Feasts	Online Webinar
Nov. 20	Metropolis Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund Holiday Brunch Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church	Redondo Beach, CA
Nov. 21 –	Journey of Faith: East and West	
Dec. 2	Pilgrimage to Rome, Constantinople and Athens with His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos along with His Excellency Archbishop Niederauer of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco	
Dec. 4	Metropolis Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund Holiday Brunch	Northern CA
Dec. 4	Southern California Bible Bowl	
Dec. 7 –	Pan-Orthodox Clergy Retreat	
Dec. 9	Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Dec. 11	Metropolis Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund Holiday Brunch Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church	Chandler, AZ
Dec. 26 –	Orthodox Christian Fellowship Winter Conference	
Dec. 30	Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA

Jan. 14 – 17	Young Adult Ski Retreat	Lake Tahoe, NV
Jan. 22	Metropolis Church Music Federation Winter Business Meeting Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church	Novato, CA
Jan. 28 – 30	Metropolis Presvyteres Retreat Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Jan. 30	Celebration of the Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs	Northern CA
Feb. 17 – 20	35 th Annual Folk Dance and Choral Festival	Ontario, CA
Mar. 1	Lenten Online Book Club Begins	
Mar. 4 – 6	Southern California GOYA Retreat Valley Trails Camp	Castaic, CA
Mar. 6	Forgiveness Vespers	Northern CA
Mar. 26	Bay Area Youth Worker Seminar Ascension Cathedral	Oakland, CA
April TBD	Greek Education Teachers' Workshop	
May 1	Metropolis Council Meeting Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
May 2 – 3	Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
May 27 – 30	Spring Family Camp Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
May TBD	Kids 'n' Cancer Reception	Southern CA
May TBD	Metropolis Oratorical Festival Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
June TBD	Greek Village Immersion Camp Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
June TBD	Metropolis Church Music Federation Conference	
July 10 – 16	Summer Camp – Session I Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
July 17 – 23	Summer Camp – Session II Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
July 24 – 30	Summer Camp – Session III Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
July 31 – Aug. 6	Summer Camp – Session IV Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Sept. 19 – 23	Metropolis Senior Camp Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Oct. 14 – 16	Fall Family Camp Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA
Dec. 26 – 30	Orthodox Christian Fellowship Winter Conference Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center	Dunlap, CA

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