

## ***From Maria Melts Stasios, Parish Council President***

Greetings on behalf of the Parish Council. Our ecclesiastical year has started off strong and I'd like to share some of events that have happened since our last newsletter.

We had a recent visit from His Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta. He traveled to our parish with Fr. Grigorios Tatsis and they were here on both Friday and Saturday of our Cross Dive weekend. On Friday evening, they shared a documentary on the history of Byzantium followed by an interesting discussion relating similarities to present-day issues. Our parish was the first to see this short film and His Eminence was quite interested in our response. Thank you to the Parish Council, ECY members and Philoptochos ladies who provided our dinner for this event.

On Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, we held our Cross Dive and Blessing of the Waters on Figure 8 Island. This event was held to coincide with the feast day in our church known as the Elevation or Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Congratulations to our ten divers, and to Nick Mueller of Charleston, the retriever of the cross. Thanks too to our parishioner, Ed Mayorga, for designing and crafting the cross which was tossed into the water, another one as a keepsake for the retriever, and a third one for His Eminence to have as a memento at the Metropolis. The crosses were made of olive wood imported from Greece. Thanks too to the Cross Dive Committee, Doug Brown, Bette Parrett, Koula Katsikis and Daphne Snow, and others who assisted in organizing and making this event a success, and to all the parishioners who supported and attended it. We look forward to the continued growth of this event.

As a result of our Friday and Saturday events, I am reminded how fortunate we are to live in a time and place where we can openly celebrate our religious freedom and proudly wear our cross to serve as a reminder and symbol of what our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, sacrificed for us.

Our new church service schedule is underway and we now have an Adult Education program during our Sunday Youth Catechism classes. As a reminder, Orthros is at 8:30 a.m., Religious Education at 9:45, our Divine Liturgy service at 10:30 a.m. and our coffee fellowship follows around noon. Please join us for our services and remind your family and friends of our recent time changes.

We have started our weekly Adult Education classes on Wednesday evenings, our Greek School classes, and our Youth Group meetings among other activities. Please look in the newsletter for more information, or visit our website for the online church calendar. There are also plans for a fall AHEPA dance so watch for that information as well as other social and liturgical events. Please let us know if you are interested in helping lead or support any of our events. We always have room for anyone who is willing to give of their time and talent here at St. Nicholas.

The Parish Council joins me in thanking you for your continued support of our parish. We look forward to seeing you in church and at our other activities, and as always, please let us know if you have questions or concerns.