



# ALOFT

Volume 2, Issue 4

## ♪ Notes from the Director ♪

My Friends,

We should re-visit old themes upon occasion. Sometimes a thought bears repeating.

Scheduling rehearsals are always a challenge! We don't follow a strict rule (such as the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month, for example). Rather the plan is to fit the rehearsals into a timeframe which accommodates the most people and takes into account great feast days and the like. We seem to meet mostly on Tuesdays; that is the extent of any pattern. Summer rehearsals are a bit less frequent than at other times of the year.

Attendance at rehearsals is strongly encouraged, but there are no rules regarding how often a choir member may miss rehearsal. Most special attendance situations evolve from the peculiar circumstances of the individual and are often the result of the choir member and the director communicating with one another to produce an optimum attendance. In the case of some individuals, that equates to little or no practice on Tuesday night.

How do I feel about the rehearsal "attendance problem?" I have two basic reactions.

1) A choir member's contributions are always welcomed and always appreciated, even if they are infrequent. We are all at various stages, levels, and phases in our musical development with

respect to the choir. Because of what I call the "*tyranny of schedules and responsibilities*," we all are forced daily to make decisions concerning how we will spend our limited time, often with significant impact to our families. The decision to attend choir rehearsals can be an anxious one; it can cause considerable worry. The only guideline I have ever been able to come up with is to *attend as often as you can*.

HOWEVER...

2) The lack of attendance at rehearsals is, in fact, self-limiting on the personal level and in the larger view, limits the abilities of the choir as a group. When a choir member does not attend rehearsals he or she deprives them self of valuable learning and musical development. Not only does the choir member not learn the basic hymns very well; their non-attendance deprives the group of any possible fruitful learning from the absent choir member. We learn and grow in knowledge from one another. It is a two-way transaction but it is often perceived by the individual as though it were not. I wish that I had a nickel for every time choir members skipped a rehearsal and said (to themselves) "no one will miss me."

Truth be told, we miss you more than you can ever know!

Robert Paul



REV. STEVEN TSICHLIS  
Pastor

REV. STEPHEN KARCHER  
Assistant Pastor

ROBERT A. HENNING  
Choir Director

ROLAND JENSTER  
Organist

### CHOIR OFFICERS

DR. JIM MANOS  
President

JIM MANTRAS  
Vice President

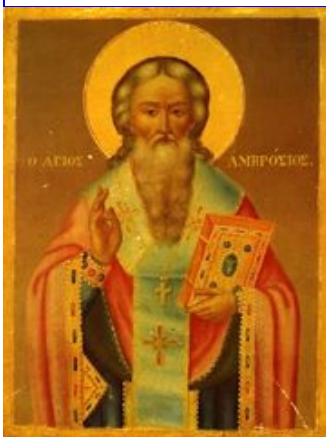
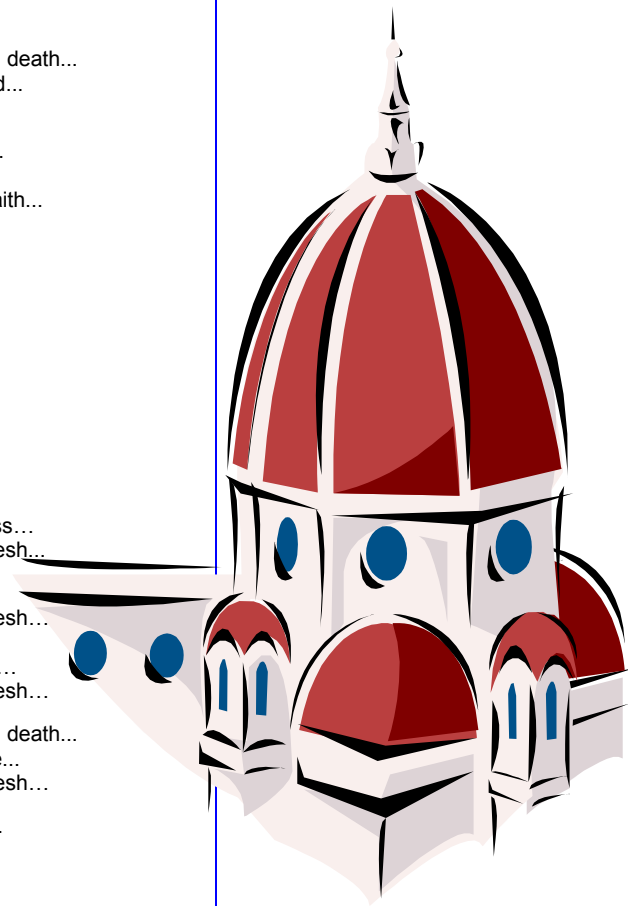
ANNE MANTRAS  
Secretary

JOHN SMITH  
Treasurer

### Mission Statement

"To Provide a Music Ministry worthy of the Worship of the One, True God, our Lord Jesus Christ and Support the Goals and Mission of St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church in the Community and Abroad to the best of our abilities"

December 6th	1st Tone Apol. Kont.	Του λίθου σφράγισθέντος: The stone that had been... Κανόνα πίστεως Your righteous acts... Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον Today the Virgin...
December 13th	2nd Tone Apol. Kont.	Οτε κατήλθες: When You descended to the realm of death... Ἐν πίσει τοὺς Προπάτορας By their faith You justified... Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον Today the Virgin...
December 20th	3rd Tone Apol. Apol. Kont.	Εὐφραίνεσθω τὰ οὐράνια: Let the heavens rejoice... Ἐτοιμάζου Βήθλεεμ Make ready, Bethlehem... Μεγάλα τὰ τῆς πίστεως How great is the power of faith... Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον Today the Virgin...
December 24th	Great Vespers and the Liturgy of St. Basil on Christmas Eve	
December 27th	Divine Liturgy of St. James, Brother of the Lord	
January 3rd	1st Plagal Tone Apol.	Τον συνάρχον Λόγον: Eternal with the Father... Ἐτοιμάζου, Ζαβουλών Make ready Zebulon...
January 10th	2nd Plagal Tone Apol. Kont.	Ἀγγελικάι δυνάμεις: When the angelic powers... Ἐν Ἰορδάνη In the Jordan... Ἐπεφάνης σήμερον You have revealed Yourself...
January 17th	3rd Plagal Tone Kont.	Κατέλυσας τῷ Στάυρῳ: O Lord by Your sacred Cross... Ὁ μήτραν παρθενικὴν For our salvation You took flesh...
January 24th	4th Plagal Tone Kont.	Εξ ὕψους κατήλθες: From on high did You... Ὁ μήτραν παρθενικὴν For our salvation You took flesh...
January 31st	1st Tone Kont.	Του λίθου σφράγισθέντος: The stone that had been... Ὁ μήτραν παρθενικὴν For our salvation You took flesh...
February 7th	2nd Tone Apol. Kont.	Οτε κατήλθες: When You descended to the realm of death... Χαίρε, κεχαριτωμένη Rejoice, O woman full of grace... Ὁ μήτραν παρθενικὴν For our salvation You took flesh...
February 14th	3rd Tone Kont.	Εὐφραίνεσθω τὰ οὐράνια: Let the heavens rejoice... Τῆς σοφίας ὁδηγέ O You Who are the source...
Great Lent begins February 15th		
February 21st	4th Tone Apol. Kont. Megal.	Το φαιδρὸν: When the tidings of the resurrection from the angel... Τὴν ἀχραντον Εἰκόνα Σου Your sacred Icon Christ our God... Τὴ ὑπερμάχῳ To you as champion... Ἐπί σοί χαίρει All creation rejoices...



## Hymnographer

### Series

## St. Ambrose December 7th

St. Ambrose is said to have composed the great Latin hymn, Te Deum as portion of which is translated below:

*We praise Thee O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord  
All Earth do worship Thee: the Father everlasting  
To Thee all Angles cry aloud: the Heavens and the Powers therein.  
To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim: continually do cry.  
Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabaoth.  
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty: of Thy glory.  
The glorious company of Apostles: praise Thee.  
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets: praise Thee.  
The noble army of Martyrs: praise Thee.  
The holy Church throughout the world: doth acknowledge Thee.  
(et cetera)*

The Saint was born in Gaul in 340. and was a member of the Roman Senate. An weariless opponent of Arianism, he was elected Bishop by acclamation on 374 after the death of the Arian Bishop, Auxentius. A great Father of the Church, he wrote many works in Latin. He was a fearless accuser of emperors when they transgressed the law of God. Having lived fifty-seven years, he reposed on April 4th, on the eve of Pascha in the year 397. The powerful Mariology of Ambrose of Milan influenced contemporary Popes like Pope Damasus and Siricius and later, Pope Leo the Great. Central to Ambrose is the virginity of Mary and her role as the Mother of God. Ambrose displayed a kind of liturgical flexibility that kept in mind that liturgy was a tool to serve people in worshipping God. His advice to Augustine of Hippo was to follow local liturgical custom. "When in Rome, I fast on a Saturday; when I am in Milan, I do not. Follow the custom of the church where you are." His advice has remained in the English Language as the saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

## Vocal Wisdom

Maxims of Giovanni Battista Lamperti

“The throat feels ‘open’ only when diction controls vibration, resonance and breath-energy as a unit. Good diction alone excites the pneumatic action in the throat, causing it to feel ‘free’ at the same time it commandeers the energies throughout the whole body and mind. Then singing is easy, and a pleasure to both artist and audience.”

(Lamperti, (1839-1910) has been described as “the last master of the old Italian manner of singing.” He was a teacher of the Bel Canto style of singing. We will be examining his maxims, from time to time, to apply them when possible to our choral singing.)

## Church Musicians: Biographies and Stories

### Blessed Maria the Harp Player

Cyril of Scythopolis tells us Maria was a liturgical musician. She served as a harp player and cantor in the Holy Church of the Resurrection of Christ in Jerusalem. Sensing a call to a life of deep prayer and solitude, Maria moved into the desert near Sousakim in the region of the Dead Sea. Maria filled her clay vessel at the pool of Siloam, took a basket of soaked legumes (a common, simple desert food), and moved with her harp into a cave that served as her hermitage for eighteen years. Travelers walking in this region would hear Maria playing her harp, but would not know where it came from.

Abba John and Abba Parammon were journeying to the anchorite Abba Cyriacus when they encountered a desert anchorite who was unfamiliar to them. Drawing near and deep in prayer, lest they were encountering an evil spirit, they discovered a woman living in an underground cave. Maria was reluctant to speak to them, hesitant to reveal either her identity or her location to the public. Maria told them her story: She had never left her cave nor spoken to anyone until encountering them, and her pitcher of water and basket of legumes never ran out.

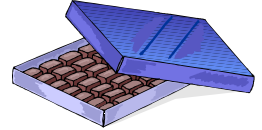
On their way back to their own monastery at Chariton, John and Parammon discovered Maria’s dead body and buried her in her own hermitage cave. The entrance was sealed with stones. Her feast day in September 29th.



## Sees Candy Sales

The Choir Sees Candy Sale has begun again; the sale started on November 15th and concludes on December 20th. Even though the retail price has gone up to the \$15.60 a pound, We are charging \$15.00 a pound. Talk to Nanette about special discount for choir members only.

While Nanette has been kind enough this year to organize the sale for the choir, she will need all of us to help in the sale. Please ask her what you can do to be of assistance. Thank You!



## Rehearsal Schedule

Tuesday, December 1st 7:30pm

Tuesday, December 8th 7:30pm

Tuesday, December 15th 7:30 pm

Tuesday, December 22nd 7:30pm

Tuesday, January 12th 7:30pm

Tuesday, January 19th 7:30pm

Tuesday, January 26th 7:30pm

Tuesday, February 2nd 7:30pm

Tuesday, February 9th 7:30pm

Tuesday, February 16th 7:30pm



## New Choir Officers Election-Nominations Requested

Periodically the choir elects a new Board of Officers. We will be having an election in the next few weeks. The current Board asks for your participation. If you are interested in any office on the Board, please let one of the Board members know that you wish your name to be placed in nomination. The current Board members are listed on the front page. You may ask a Board member about the Duties and Responsibilities associated with any office in which you are interested. Please consider helping. The burden is not too great.

## New Members



The truth is that many people wait to be asked to help or join in a group. A select few will offer their services unbidden, but they are the exception. We need new choir members to continually grow musically and enhance our sound and repertoire. Chances are good that the only way these new members will come into our ranks is if you ask them! If you know of someone who has singing ability and a willingness to give time to choir, then please, by all means, ask them to come to a rehearsal and give it a try!



Coffee  
Hour

## Choir Coffee Hour

Choir Coffee Hour comes around on the first Sunday of every month (December 2009 is an exception). It is especially important for all of us to help with this effort so that the burden is not borne by the few. Please mark your calendars!

**Choir of St. Paul's Greek  
Orthodox Church**  
4949 Alton Parkway  
Irvine, CA 92604-8606



METROPOLIS OF  
SAN FRANCISCO