

•NEWS FROM THE LOFT•

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

May God grant each and everyone of us a healthy and prosperous new year.



Last month was a busy one for the choir. We prepared for our Metropolitan's visit on our Feast Day. It was a wonderful weekend and the choir did an excellent job!!!!

We came and supported our Ladies' Philoptochos group with set up the Thursday before as we are a family and "pitch in" where needed. Our Dance and Choral School gave a wonderful presentation for our parish at the Luncheon. *Thank you choir and youth choir.*

By now, most of you should have received our first Christmas CD as a gift from our hearts. We hope that it brought and will bring constant joy into your homes. We thank St. Spyridon for all their help and support. Thanks to **Greg Kostas** and **Helen Stamatelatos** for taking on this project.

Christmas Eve services were beautiful! *Christ is Born, Glorify Him!!!* What a beautiful time of year to bring love into everyone's hearts. *Choir, I love you and appreciate all that you do!! Keep up the good work.* ❖

Have a great month!

Katherine Loukatos Meck, Music Minister

•WOMEN OF THE WORD•

We are truly looking forward to continuing our study of St. Paul's letters to the Corinthians in the January, as we have been enjoying lively and meaningful discussions in our weekly time together so far. It was our pleasure to stay after study early in December to help **Diana Fowler** and **Barbara Tzathas** prepare their clever costumes for our children's Christmas pageant.

Our study will begin again on January 13. We gather around 10:15 for coffee and light refreshments, and try to begin our study promptly at 10:30. Please come join us! If you have any questions please contact Maria Platis, Paulette Gallanis, or Kay Harkins. ❖

•BABY & TODDLER PLAYGROUP•

We will be gathering with our babies and toddlers on the second Wednesday of the month, **January 13th at 9:30 am.** We look forward to seeing you there! If you have any questions, please contact **Margaux Merziotis** at (619) 370-6733 or **Zoi Trakas** at (619) 917-3273. ❖

•PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS•

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope everyone enjoyed a very merry Christmas season.

Our chapter celebrated the season with a festive Christmas Luncheon at the Kona Kai on December 6th. **Helen Stamatelatos** and **Kathy Meck** coordinated a beautiful event filled with good food, shopping, and prizes; along with entertainment by the Carlsbad High School carolers, and our own St. Spyridon carolers singing the Calanda (Greek Christmas Carols). We also collected many pajamas and books for the local Pajama Program. Their chapter president attended the luncheon and delivered our donations to children in local shelters and foster homes the following day. Thank you to everyone that participated in this project.

On December 11th Philoptochos hosted the evening reception following Vespers for the St. Spyridon feast day. I would like to thank everyone who participated, especially the chairwoman, **Francesca Captain**, for "getting her feet wet" as a new member on the Philoptochos Board and putting together a beautiful reception.

The Christmas Baskets were once again organized by **Gina Balourdas**. They were absolutely beautiful and greatly appreciated by the 30 homebound parishioners that received them. Thank you, Gina, and to everyone that contributed to this very important project of Philoptochos. Our homebound and hospitalized parishioners are visited regularly by the Good Samaritan group, which is an important facet of Philoptochos and is headed up by **Stephanie Mastorakos**. If you would like to participate in this group please contact Stephanie at (619) 464-3546.

With our En Vogue 2009 event completed and all finances finalized, we were very pleased in December to make the donations to the beneficiaries of the event. Our Philoptochos chapter, Trinity Children's Foundation, and the Armed Services YMCA each received \$8,000 from the net proceeds of En Vogue. Despite the economic climate, we were very fortunate to have the financial success that we did. Congratulations to the chairwomen, the committee and to everyone in the community that contributed to the success of En Vogue 2009.

We will soon be celebrating the feast day of St. Basil the Great, with the Vasilopita Cutting on Sunday, January 3rd. The Ladies of Philoptochos will be baking the Vasilopita, under the direction of **Niki Dougenis** and **Christina Marantos**, in honor of St. Basil and as a fundraiser for St. Basil Academy, an orphanage in Garrison, NY that is primarily funded by the Ladies Philoptochos Society. Our chapter appreciates your financial support of this worthy cause. Please plan to attend church on this Sunday to receive your piece of this traditional (and delicious) New Year's bread.

On Saturday, January 30th, we will hold a general meeting for **ALL** Philoptochos members to attend. This will include a light breakfast, a short meeting, and will feature an Italian cooking demonstration by our own **Janet Burgess**. Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.

Thank you once again, to our St. Spyridon community for your support of Philoptochos, and may God grant us all His Blessings in this New Year! ❖

In His Service, Christine Trompas Tradas, President