



The Quarter Note

Newsletter of the GOMSF Church Music Federation Ministry

Summer 2019

Welcome to our June newsletter from our new Ministry Chair! So much is in the works, and we invite you to read and enjoy the news and updates from around the Metropolis. Check out our new online communication and management platform, Charms Office Assistant, which will allow you to update your contact information, and access the calendar, documents and forms you'll need to stay involved with the programs and activities of the ministry. Please make plans to attend the first ever Plenary Information and Planning Web Based Meeting on August 10. Wonderful plans are in the works—stay tuned.

Remember to mark your calendars to return to beautiful St. Nicholas Ranch & Retreat Center for our conference November 15-17, 2019. Please don't hesitate to contact me or any of our Ministry Team Leaders with your good ideas, suggestions, or helpful comments.

Dear Metropolis Church Musicians,

A blessed and happy summer to all our singers, chanters, music directors, and organists.

It is my honor to announce that upon the recommendation of the Executive Board, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos has appointed Kay Harkins as our new Ministry Chair of our Church Music Ministry. For over two years Kay and I have diligently worked through the guidance of His Eminence to lead our Church Music Ministry into a time of renewal. His trust in her, our previous board, and our new Leadership Circle Ministry Team Leaders are all on board as we enter an exciting future. More information will be forthcoming, but I wanted to share with you this wonderful news.

In Christ,

Elizabeth Levy, Past President

Metropolis of San Francisco Church Music Federation Ministry

In Remembrance ~  **Mario Di Giovanni**

With permission from Kathy Di Giovanni, Mario's beloved wife, is a letter written by Metropolitan Gerasimos. It was read by Rev. Fr. Tom Zafares at Ascension Cathedral in Oakland, California during Mario's funeral on June 25, 2019



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΦΡΑΓΚΙΣΚΟΥ

July 2, 2019

✠Saint John Maximovitch, Archbishop of Shanghai and San Francisco

Beloved Family and Friends of Mario DiGiovanni,

***"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me,
though he may die, he shall live."***

John 11:25

I extend to you my sincere sympathy upon the passing of your beloved husband, father, brother, and friend, Mario. Though his time on this earth may have ended, he is now beginning a new life with the Lord where he is free of pain and suffering and now reaps the reward of eternal life. I am reminded of the words of the Psalmist David when he says, ***"I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will sing praise to my God while I have my being,"*** Psalm 104:33. These words truly inspired Mario and he fulfilled them until his last breath.

For nearly 30 years, Mario could be seen – and heard – in the Ascension Cathedral Choir. He loved music, and the opportunity to share his voice by singing praises to God brought him great joy and fulfillment. He offered his best both musically and administratively for the betterment of his parish choir, and this brought him great joy and fulfillment. Mario was one to think outside the box when it came to music ministry, and was truly a pioneer with the Church Music Federation and building up their infrastructure. Whatever Mario did was always in the best interest of the organization. He did not want any accolades, and though he was rightfully awarded recognition for his efforts, this was not his motivation. What motivated Mario the most was to share a positive and harmonious musical environment with his peers, and to see the music of our Church flourish.

Now, Mario has joined the ultimate choir – the angels in heaven – and he is with them ceaselessly praising God. His voice may be gone from the choir on this earth, but it will not be forgotten. His good works, his passion of music, and his commitment will always be remembered. Instilling those same characteristics in others will be the ultimate gift to Mario's legacy, so that his good works will continue to be realized for the next generation and beyond.

I convey to his beloved wife, Kathy, and his children Dominic and Anna, my heartfelt sympathy, and I pray that the God of peace and mercy grant you His strength to sustain you through your loss. May his memory be eternal!

With Love in Christ,

✠Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco

From the Archives...



14 th Annual Convention Federation Of Greek Orthodox
Church Choirs Of The Western States
July 22 to 28, 1957

DENVER, COLO.

ARAPOSTATHIS

A blast from the past...1957 14th Annual Convention in Denver. Talent show hi jinx with Florence Nicholas, Plato Arapostathis, Athena Zarkos Harmon, and Bill Demos doing their rendition of Harry Belafonte's big hit, "Day-O!" Check out those matching costumes. Many thanks to Elaine Arapostathis for this great photo. Do you have any historic photos, memories, stories, or documents from the past? Please send them to us at sfchurchmusic@sanfran.goarch.org

From your Ways and Means Team Leader, Sarah Gyurkovitz
Thank You for your Partnership in Our Work!

Our deepest gratitude to the 15 parishes and 81 stewards that pledged to our ministry for the 2018-19 year. We cannot do our work without your generosity, and we truly appreciate your faithfulness. Our new fiscal year will begin in September, and you will be receiving stewardship forms later this summer. Please remember that dues will no longer required of parishes. However, parishes are encouraged to continue their participation in the ministry by their donations as well as by sponsoring the stewardship for their church musicians, which several parishes have faithfully done in the past. Efcharisto!

A special thanks to these faithful parishes who responded to this year's appeal:

Annunciation, Sacramento, CA
Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco, CA
Saint Anthony, Pasadena, CA
Ascension Cathedral, Oakland, CA
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, Long Beach, CA
Assumption, Scottsdale, AZ
Saint Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA
Saint Basil San Juan Capistrano, CA
Saints Constantine and Helen, Cardiff, CA
Saint Demetrios, Tucson, AZ
St. Harlambos, Peoria, AZ
Holy Cross, Belmont, CA
Holy Trinity Cathedral, Phoenix
Saint Spyridon, San Diego, CA
Resurrection, Castro Valley, CA

Find your Happy Place!

Greetings from your GOMSF Church Music Federation Leadership Circle. We enthusiastically invite each of you to consider joining a Ministry Team where you can enjoy sharing your talents. Just offering a few hours a month will make a big difference in the way we are able to deliver the programs and resources we will be offering.

A variety of work is available. We particularly need folks who have some visual art and tech savvy for our communications and newsletter design, those who are willing to reach out to small parishes in your area to assist them with the resources and programs that can be tailored to their needs, and those who would love to work with the rich historical material to create a dynamic archive.

Please let us know where you would like to serve or have any questions for the Team Leaders. Just send a message to sfchurchmusic@sanfran.goarch.org and we'll respond to you right away. (Please see the minutes of our April meeting for a list of the kinds of tasks done by each team.) <http://sfchurchmusic.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/4.13.19SecondaryBusinessMeeing.pdf>

Ministry Teams

Church Music Development: Christopher Hondros, Team Leader

Events: Athena Anastos and Liz Levy, Team Leaders

Ways and Means (finances and fund raising): Sarah Gyurkovitz, Team Leader

Communication and Outreach; Vasiliki Kyriakakis, Team Leader

Records and Archives: Meg Jakovas, Team Leader

The Voice Box



**Tips, Hints, and sources for singers in the church, whether they sing in the loft,
the chant stand, or in the nave.**

Every singer can make a better sound!

Here's a tip...and it's Jaw Dropping!

Did you know that any voice becomes richer and more resonant simply by making more room in the throat and mouth for the sound? You can do that by simply dropping your jaw when you sing any vowel sound. Try singing all the vowel sounds with your mouth open in a way similar to the way you talk. Then try it when you open your mouth vertically as much as possible, while still making the vowel sound. Wow. So easy to improve the sound of your voice, no matter where you sing. Make a joyful sound unto the Lord!

UPCOMING CONFERENCE!

You asked, we listened! We are returning to **St. Nicholas Ranch & Retreat Center November**

15-17, 2019 for another wonderful, enriching conference. (This time without the August heat!)

Please mark your calendars - more information and registration materials will be on the way by mid-summer. Rooms will be available on Thursday night November 14 if you want to begin to book your travel.

Send Us Your News!

What's happening musically in your parish and region? Our newsletter is published 4 times a year. The next deadline is August 15, 2019. Please send us your stories and photos, especially those about your youth. We'd love to hear from you!



These young singers at Saints Constantine and Helen, in Cardiff, California are among several children who are faithful regulars in their church choir each Sunday. Their director, Sarah Gyurkovitz, tells us that these girls' enthusiasm and hard work are an infectious example to the adults, and she suspects that one of them will direct her own parish choir one day!

Arizona Choral Music Event Posts New “O Pure Virgin” Video

By Eva Canellos



It was all smiles and singing at the recent **One Day, One Hymn, One Church** Pan-Orthodox choral music event in Phoenix.
Photo credit: Kristen Bruskas

With happy hearts and vibrant voices, Orthodox Christians from throughout Arizona learned a beautiful new English rendition of the beloved hymn “O Pure Virgin” (“Agni Parthene”) and made an inspiring video recording of their performance during a recent pan-Orthodox choral music event in Phoenix. The event, titled “One Day, One Hymn, One Church,” was the second of its kind and brought choir singers and non-choir singers together in musical fellowship at Sts. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church.

The hymn by St. Nektarios of Aegina contains the exquisite, repeated phrase, “Rejoice, o unwedded bride!” The music was arranged for Youth Choir and SATB by Rev. Michael Pallad, who also conducted the group, and the English text was by His Grace Bishop Basil Essey of the Antiochian Archdiocese. “Everyone did a great job,” Fr. Pallad said. “In keeping with the name of the event, we came for one day, we learned one hymn, and we’re all one Church.”

Judging by the glowing reviews and comments on Facebook, the participants were touched by the experience as well as the beauty of the video. The event was sponsored by Orthodox Christian Choral

Fellowship (OCCF), a nonprofit group that brings Orthodox Christians together in fellowship to experience the joy and benefits of group singing.

You can watch the video at: www.facebook.com/occfellowship. The musical score is available for purchase at the OCCF website: www.occfellowship.org

Arizonans should mark their calendars for the next “One Day” event, which will be on Sat., Sept. 21, at Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Scottsdale. Registration will open in August.

For more information, contact OCCF at info@occfellowship.org.

YOUTH CORNER: Singing Sundays: Involving Young People in Liturgy

By Eva Canellos, Holy Cross Church, Belmont, CA

For church musicians, every Sunday is a “Singing Sunday.” But for our young people at Holy Cross Church in Belmont, California, a “Singing Sunday” is a special Sunday when they sit with their friends during liturgy and sing a few hymns to the Lord with their sweet, angelic voices, the culmination of weeks of music lessons in their Religious Education classes.

Each year, our church holds three to four of these “Singing Sundays.” We started them six years ago so the students could participate in the liturgy singing the hymns they learned in class. We hope that by learning the hymns and singing them in church, our youth will grow closer to Christ, understand more about our faith, and enjoy attending services. I hope this article will be helpful for parishes that wish to start a similar program.

Benefits of Classroom and In-Church Singing:

Numerous studies show that group singing has wonderful benefits for our physical, mental, and emotional health. Singing makes us feel better! This Sunday School music program has many additional benefits:

- It teaches young people the beautiful hymns of our faith.
- It teaches them what we believe through the texts of the hymns.
- It offers students opportunities to sing in church.
- It reminds them they are active participants in the liturgy.
- It serves as a springboard for students who might join the choir.
- It doesn’t conflict with the “main” Sunday School lesson.
- It can be adapted for use in most parishes.

Naturally, there are some students who don’t want to sing during liturgy, and they don’t participate in the Singing Sundays. But there are many others who love it and sing beautifully. The congregation seems to love it, too. Why not? There’s nothing better than hearing these young people’s amazing voices singing praises to God!

How to Start: If you wish to start such a program in your parish, you’ll need:

- Your priest’s blessing, and support from the Sunday School director and teachers.
- A teacher who knows the hymns and is good working with kids.
- A convenient way to integrate music lessons into the Sunday School curriculum without upsetting the main lesson.
- Advanced scheduling of the Singing Sundays so the dates are set at the beginning of the year.

The teacher can be an experienced choir member who has the desire and enthusiasm to teach young people. I'm the music teacher at our parish. I am a long-time choir member with only a small amount of musical training, but I know the hymns very well, and I am good working with kids because I smile, encourage, praise, teach in simple, age-appropriate words, and use lots and lots of movement and energy. I don't teach hymns exclusively. That would be the kiss of death. I incorporate fun Christian songs into the lessons and have the students clapping, jumping, and taking turns being song leaders. I teach music in grade groups: PreK to 2nd, 3rd to 5th, and 6th to 8th. The music lessons are rotated each Sunday, so each group gets music once every three weeks. Currently, there are no music lessons for the high school students, but I hope to add them soon. I teach just a 15-minute lesson, after the regular lesson is finished.

Which Hymns to Use? The hymns that I teach are deliberately chosen from the second half of the liturgy so that late-comers will be able to sing them. The hymns are in two blocks. First Block: "We Praise You" ("Se Imnumen" - Consecration of gifts) and "It Is Truly Fitting" ("Axion Estin" - Megalynarion). Second Block: "One Is Holy" ("Is Ayios") and "Praise the Lord" ("Enite" - Communion hymn, with choir). We use English music written by Steve Cardiasmenos and Tikey Zes, but music in any language and written by any composer can be used. The melodies should be simple so that even the youngest students can learn them through repetition. Our students sing a cappella on the three hymns that they sing by themselves, and we use the organ on the fourth hymn which they sing with the choir. I hand out lyric sheets to most students and music to those who request it. Teachers also usually sing along. A sample music lesson is included after this article.

Logistics: It's important to publicize the Singing Sundays in advance. I remind the students often, "We have a Singing Sunday in two weeks!" I also send out reminder emails to teachers and parents. On Singing Sundays, the Narthex greeters give out notes to families to remind them that the students should sit together in the designated section (front-right), where the pews have "Reserved for Students" signs. Since I sing in the choir in the loft, I walk downstairs quietly before it's time to conduct the students, then back upstairs after they sing each block of hymns. I lip-sync rather than sing when I conduct the students because we want to hear them, not me. Rather than conduct with traditional beat patterns, I conduct with an encouraging, energetic style and sometimes move my hand up and down to signal which way the pitch is moving.

Students in the Choir: We also have 13 students (and some parents) who have joined the choir as full members and sing all the hymns and responses upstairs with us every Sunday that they're in church. I'm grateful that our pastor, Fr. Peter Salmas, has given his blessing not only for the Singing Sundays, but also for these young people to participate in the choir. They sing until Holy Communion, at which point they receive the sacrament and head to Sunday School.

We do not ask the students in the choir to rehearse on weeknights with the adults because they have homework and other commitments. Instead, we hold rehearsals with the students after liturgy on certain Sundays. However, they learn most of the music by singing regularly in the choir. In addition, our choir director, Chris Canellos, picks certain hymns or verses for the students to sing by themselves each week.

Give It a Try! There are many ways to encourage young people to participate and sing in the services. If you try this program, don't be discouraged when you hit the inevitable bumps in the road. I had a kindergarten student who would literally "Boo!" every time I entered the classroom to teach music. But now, he's one of our best singers and jumps out of his chair when I ask for a volunteer to lead a song. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, cecanellos@aol.com, or 650-400-1610.

Sample Sunday School Music Lesson Plan: 15 Minutes

Fun Song: "This Is the Day" 3-4 minutes

Hymn: "It Is Truly Fitting" (Megalynarion) 8-9 minutes

Pass out hymn. Lyrics for most. Music for those who want.

I sing it once while they follow or sing along.

We sing it together.

We read through the words together.

I ask them what some of the difficult words mean, and we discuss them.

Further discussion of hymn: who are we singing to, who is the Theotokos, where do we sing this in liturgy.

Sing it together again. Praise them, make corrections, go over tricky areas.

Stand and sing it again.

Fun Song: "Allelu Allelu" 2-3 minutes

The Best New Thing!

We are pleased to announce that now registering for conferences, applying for scholarships, easily keeping our database up to date will be much more efficient and user friendly. We are initiating the use of Charms Office Assistant, an online platform that will allow us to integrate the management of our communication, finances, and record keeping, and will soon allow us to take payment for stewardship and registrations online, something many of you have been asking for a long time. This platform was originally developed for use by school music programs, but is being widely used for churches and civic groups. It will be used as an adjunct to our website, and will allow church musicians to electronically update their own contact information, register for conferences, access the calendar, and much more through a secure portal. Please see the document below to follow the easy instructions to set up your own password and update your profile.

ALSO, NOTE THAT E-MAIL FROM THE MINISTRY WILL BEGIN TO ARRIVE VIA OUR CHARMS DATABASE IN AUGUST. BE SURE TO KEEP THESE E-MAILS FROM GOING IN YOUR SPAM/JUNK FILE.

MUSIC DIRECTORS! If you have members of your choir or chant groups who are not currently registered to receive our newsletter and e-mail updates, they can also easily create a profile and set up their own passwords. That way no one needs to miss out on knowing about the many programs and resources offered by our ministry.



How to access member information in Charms

Our ministry is now using Charms Office Assistant to manage our database, ministry finances, and many of our documents. Please note that Charms Office Assistant is a program originally designed for school music programs, but many churches and civic groups use Charms to easily facilitate communication and paperwork. Therefore, you will find some "fun" fields that don't pertain to our ministry (like your grade, whether you own your own instrument, your locker number, and t-shirt size, etc.—which you may disregard but will make you feel young!) We believe that this program will streamline many of our procedures and allow you simple connection to communication, forms, and documents we use in the ministry. Please let us know how you like this program and if you have any questions.

- Log on to www.charmsoffice.com, and click “ENTER / LOG IN” in the upper right corner.
- Locate the “PARENT/STUDENT/MEMBERS LOGIN” section of the web page.
- Login to your account using the following School Code: **GOMSFMusic**
- This will bring up the main “Public” page. This will allow you to look at the “public” calendar for your organization, event list, and handouts and other “publicly shared” files, as well as a few other options.
- **The first time you go here, enter your ID NUMBER** (which is your first and last name, no spaces or dashes, capital letter for the first and last name up to the first 20 characters – Example: Rodolpho Kolettis has an ID of *RodolphoKolettis*) into the ***Student Area Password*** field.

[NOTE: If your first and last name combined is **more than 20 characters**, your ID number is your first initial (in Caps) and your last name – example: Angela Konstantine-Kiotas has ID of *AKonstantineKiotas*]

You will be directed to the Change Password screen, to set a personal password different from the ID, for future use. Re-enter your ID, then create your own personal password, which you will use from this point forward whenever you access Charms. There are also mechanisms to recover/reset a lost Username/Password – when you create your new password, create a “hint” as well. **NOTE: This method of password setting is secure, so it is important that you log in and set your new personal password.**

- Whenever you enter using this Username/password, another more detailed screen appears, with various button options for you to access areas in the Charms account. What appears here is controlled by the Account Administrator.
- Two areas in which you can help the ministry maintain its records:
 - **Update Personal Information** – You may help make changes to your member information page (such as updating phone numbers / cell carriers and email addresses if they change) to help us communicate with you more effectively. You may also be able to indicate which volunteer/resource groups you would like to participate in when this feature is activated. Click ***Update Info*** to save changes.
 - **When our program is set up for online credit card payments, you can make credit card payments for stewardship and conference registration fees.** Click ***Finances*** -- if credit card payment is activated, you will see blue buttons in the four main areas of the financial statement indicating your ability to make online payments.
- The ***Calendar*** may list events, rehearsals, and volunteer/RSVP opportunities.
- Most importantly, the member page allows you to communicate with the ministry and stay up to date on what is happening and to access ministry documents.
- You can also download the Charms App to your smartphone – search your App Store for “Charms Parent/Student Portal” (or “Charms Blue”). It’s the way to stay in touch on the go!

FOR THOSE NOT IN OUR CURRENT DATABASE-

Please use the following link <http://sfchurchmusic.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Charms-Public-Access1.0.pdf> to self-register in Charms. Note that you will create your own password, which should initially be as above (your first and last name, no spaces or dashes, capital letter for the first and last name up to the first 20 characters.)

DIRECTORS PLEASE NOTE: For those in your choirs/chant groups who do not have personal access to a computer, please find or register them into our database and let us know if these folks wish to have hard-copies of important information sent to them via the postal service as our primary form of communication is electronic.

Last, but not Least!

Plenary Information & Planning Web Based Meeting August 10, 2019 10 a.m. to Noon

The Leadership Circle is pleased to announce our first ever business meeting available to all church musicians as a Webinar. Our Organizational Guide calls for two plenary meetings each year to offer ministry updates and receive input from church musicians. Each parish may have four (4) voting Delegates including the priest to cast votes on any measures and proposals on the agenda; however, any church musician may attend the meeting. Please remember that every voting Delegate must be a paid steward of the ministry. Also remember that proxies are allowed, but the person giving his or her proxy to another Delegate must also be a paid steward of the ministry.

This is an important meeting because the main two voting items are the approval of the two-year budget and the approval of the Ministry Team Leaders. Anyone wishing to suggest an item for the agenda must send it to sfchurchmusic@sanfran.goarch.org no later than August 1. An item may be brought as new business later than this time, but may be discussed only if time permits, and may not be voted on at the August 10 meeting.

You will receive a registration form, the tentative agenda, and simple instructions for participating in the meeting by July 11. We are so excited about this innovation, as it means that church musicians may participate in our meetings without the time and expense of traveling to a specific location for the meeting. If you wish to be a voting Delegate at the meeting or give your proxy to another member of your parish and have not yet paid your stewardship, please find this year's stewardship form via this link: <http://sfchurchmusic.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Stewardship-Form-2018-2019.pdf>