



THE QUARTER NOTE

Newsletter of the GOMSF Church Music Federation Ministry

A Message From Your Ministry Chair

Dear Metropolis Church Musicians,

As the season of the Nativity and Theophany is upon us, we must reflect that we could never have imagined or predicted the current situation in which we find ourselves this holiday time. As we cope with our isolation, grief, and anxiety it is good to remember that Our Lord came to us as an infant quietly into a dark world rather than a season of bright celebration. His name, Immanuel, means “God with us.” And so we honor Him this year in a dark time, remembering that He is and always has been with us. We pray that the light of His presence, and the comfort of His blessed Mother bring us the light and hope we seek, that His love and compassion gives us a joy that the world cannot give. May we find abundant reasons to give ourselves and our treasures to those around us who are hurting. May we find abundant reasons to find joy in one another’s voices and smiles, even though they may come to us through phones and screens.



It is a joy to reach out to each of you through our Quarter Note at this time of year. You will note that although much is vastly different now, planning and preparations still go on to bring glory to God through the music of the Church. Please take time to enjoy the updates and uplifting features we bring to you here. Be sure to read Chrysanthos Therianos’ encouragement to keep singing with the saints each day of our lives, and note the virtual concerts and workshops available, and take a fun look back through our archive photos.

We love and miss you all. Take care of one another. Reach out in cards, notes, phone calls and e-mails to old friends. Remember that the work of the ministry goes on and we still need many hands to join us on our teams—reach out to us at any time God keep each of you in peace and safety.

May God bless us all with the joy of His Nativity and Theophany!

In His love,
Kay Harkins



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΦΡΑΓΚΙΣΚΟΥ

December 2020

My Beloved Church Musicians,

*“Christ is born, give glory. Christ has come from Heaven, receive Him.
Christ is on earth, be exalted. Sing unto the Lord all the earth and sing praises
in gladness, O you people; for He has been glorified.”
Katavasias for the Nativity of Christ - First Canon*

This is a beautiful season as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Known widely as a holiday that is traditionally filled with many beautiful hymns and songs – both sacred and secular – I know that it has been especially difficult for you to be silenced during these past several months with the pandemic.

Though you may not be gathering as a chant group or choir, I know that this music fills your hearts and hopefully your homes, and we pray for the day when we can come together and our parishes will be filled with your angelic voices.

One opportunity that has come forth during this time of navigating through COVID-19 is that of focusing on education. I was overjoyed to see the interest in your scholarship program this year, providing educational resources for eight deserving recipients. This demonstrates that people are still committed to music and will continue this rich legacy of our faith.

I encourage you to continue to stay the course of your work. Keep producing your educational videos. Look into opportunities for virtual singing. Embrace new opportunities for learning and developing your personal musical skills. Whether you sing in your homes, in your hearts or in your minds, the Lord hears your praises and is grateful for your offering of time and talent.

Wishing you all a most joyous Christmas and may the richest blessings of the Lord be with you in the coming year and beyond.

With Love in Christ,

Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco
✠Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco

Voice Box

Many thanks to Chrysanthy Therianos for her inspiring contribution to our winter reading.



Singing With The Saints!

As a young child growing up in our Holy Orthodox Faith, I marveled at the beauty that surrounded me at the Assumption Cathedral in Denver, Colorado. Our beautiful Panayia Platytera, with her eyes so loving and tender, gazed directly into my soul. She knew me personally. I felt a great longing to know her and yearned for many years to find a way to express my love for her.

I was also surrounded by glorious music from high in the choir loft that gave me an awareness of how the angels sound as they surround the throne of God. Impressed upon my heart during the Divine Liturgy were the faithful from Greece who would know the resplendent hymns by heart. They also knew when to cross themselves, so reverently and at just the right moment of the troparion, when they heard the name of a saint chanted. I had a great desire in my heart to know these hymns so that I, too, could express my love for the Lord.

This moment came when my sisters, Presvytera Stacey and Presvytera Marika and I, twenty-seven years ago, decided to use our musical gifts and form a group called Eikona. We three wanted to know, in English, the hymns that have been passed

down to us for many centuries. In this way, we could express our love, and honor and worship the Lord as our forefathers had through song. When we discovered the Small Paraklesis chanted at our Holy Cross Seminary, I finally found a way to express my personal love for Panayia. I was able to magnify our Most Holy Theotokos, who is more spacious than the heavens! *"Is anyone cheerful? Let him chant."* **James 5:13** At a time when many are missing their usual opportunities to sing, I want to encourage everyone to incorporate liturgical music into their daily lives by singing the hymns of the great feasts and saints of our beautiful Orthodox Church. This will nurture our souls while we nurture our voices. There is an added bonus -- you will improve your sight reading skills as well!

We are surrounded by the saints who fought the good fight. Let us honor them, learn the troparia of these victorious saints, and ask for their prayers through song! The Church, in her wisdom, prescribes certain hymns leading up to the birth of Christ in our services. One of them is the melodious hymn, **Ἡ Παρθένος Σήμερον, Today the Virgin Comes**, composed by St. Romanos. How beautiful it would be to sing this most beloved hymn during our prayers daily. And how much more beautiful it would be if we knew the troparion of St. Romanos himself, who composed such hymnography!

So, where do we find the hymns of the saints and feast days?

A great source is the *Divine Music Project* of St. Anthony's Monastery found [here](#). It has the troparia and kontakia of the Saints for each day of the year. Simply click on "*Menaion*", then on the month and day you would like to access and, voilà, you can sing the saint or the feast of the day!

You will find that many of the hymns of the saints have the same troparion and thus you will know more hymns of the saints than you realize. For example the model hymns, "**Thy Martyr, O Lord**" and "**The Truth of Things**", are the troparia sung for numerous saints throughout the Ecclesiastical year.

An incredible resource to have at your iconostasis (prayer corner) in your home is the **Great Horologion** by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery. This beautifully bound book is worth the investment! It matches the hymns of the music from St. Anthony's and includes numerous services and prayers, troparia of the immovable feasts, and the hymns of the saints each day. It tells the beautiful story of each saint and the hymn to be sung.

Eikona is currently working on developing an App where you will be able to listen to and at the same time, read the music notation for the festal troparia for each day of the year. It will be released in January 2021 in the hope that we may all continually strive to learn these profound hymns of the saints and chant them daily on a moment's notice.

May we all may have piety of soul and grow in our relationship with the saints by honoring them through the chanting of their hymns. May we join these glorious saints and worship Christ, who is Holy, now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen!

+With joyful song,
Chrysanthy Therianos

Wherever there are spiritual melodies, there does the grace of the Spirit come, sanctifying the mouth and the soul.

-St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain



Upcoming Enrichment Activities for Metropolis Church Musicians

Until further notice, all ministry events will be presented in a virtual format. As soon as in-person events are safe for all, we have plans prepared for local 2-Day workshops to begin at the request of Metropolis parishes.

Please note that Assumption GOC in Scottsdale, AZ has agreed to re-schedule our Annual All-Metropolis Conference from the original date of October 2021 to October 2022. Our great thanks go to Father Andrew Barakas and his parish for their support and flexibility.

- **Early Spring 2021 (date TBA).** We will offer another Saturday afternoon on-line open house/workshop with a program of Four "Virtual Vitamins" to keep us learning and singing.
- **October 2021 (date TBA).** Exciting plans are underway for a 2-day on-line symposium for all church musicians. Please watch for updates!
- **Our Church Music Development Team stands ready to assist any parishes needing resources or individual consultation to support their music programs during the pandemic.**

Important COVID-19 Background Information to Remember While We Wait for Vaccine Distribution

As your Leadership Circle continues to plan for future resources and events for our ministry, we are committed to paying attention to the recommendations of the medical and scientific community as well as the guidance from professional music organizations. It is difficult, of course, for us to be patient when we have all become weary of necessary precautions, but understanding the nature of the virus and the effectiveness of preventions against the spread are important for all of us.

The following information has been pivotal in our decisions about when to offer in-person workshops and conferences where singing would be done indoors. It has been well established that because of the airborne nature of the virus, indoor singing will not be safe until a vaccine is distributed and administered widely to the public.

I am very grateful to Hermina Nedelescu, Ph.D. for assisting us in preparing this background information. Dr. Nedelescu is a neurobiologist who utilizes viruses in her research work at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, and a member of the Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Cardiff, CA. **(Continued on next page).**

(Cont.) Chrysanthy D. Therianos

Chrysanthy Therianos, a chanter, composer and pianist, is dedicated to furthering beautiful Liturgical music in the Orthodox Church. Her positions include President of the Metropolis of Denver Music Federation, Assistant Choir Director and Jr. Choir Director at the Greek Orthodox Assumption Cathedral in Denver, Colorado, and former Youth Music Director of the Metropolis of Denver Music Federation.

Chrysanthy is a founding member of Eikona, along with her sisters Presvytera Stacey Dorrance and Presvytera Marika Brown, a vocal group dedicated to sharing the beautiful Orthodox Hymnology to the faithful. Eikona offers workshops, leads liturgical services, and performs concerts throughout America and Canada. Eikona has released 11 CDs of Byzantine Chant in English and in 2021, is offering an App that will help the faithful learn the festal hymns of the saints and feast days.

Chrysanthy is currently writing a 4-part harmony Divine Liturgy and additionally, is preparing for the Byzantine Certificate offered by Holy Cross Seminary. She and her husband, Col. (Ret.) Michael Therianos, have four children and one precious grandchild.

Free Workshops from the Institute of Sacred Arts!

The Institute of Sacred Arts is known for the excellence of its teaching and programs. Your parish can now take advantage of free instruction during the pandemic. You'll want to take time to check out these workshops.

<https://www.svots.edu/headlines/institute-sacred-arts-leads-free-workshops-across-us>





Continued: Wait for Vaccine Distribution

Here are several things we need to keep in mind as we remain patient:

- The novel coronavirus is an airborne virus that can infect humans when it enters our bodies through our nose, mouth, and eyes.
 - This virus spreads through respiratory droplets or small particles which are produced and suspended in the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks or breathes. This is thought to be the main route the virus spreads.
 - Droplets containing virus can also land on surfaces and a person may get infected by touching the surface that has the virus and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes.
- While touching the virus on surfaces with our hands does not pose a risk, touching our nose, mouth, and eyes after touching the virus on surfaces does pose a significant risk, as does being indoors with others (because of the airborne nature of the virus). Hence our need to be vigilant about handwashing, mask wearing, social distancing, and improving ventilation by opening a window, for example. [Link](#) (scroll down to “Spread”).
- There is no “herd immunity” for this virus. Typically, “herd immunity” is discussed as a desirable result of wide-scale vaccination programs. The phenomenon of herd immunity does not confer immunity to the virus itself. [Link](#).
- The novel coronavirus causing Covid-19 may become “endemic.” The term “endemic” means that a virus is prevalent in humans much like polio and measles, which we treat with vaccines. References:
 - (1) Morens MD and Fauci SA. Emerging Pandemic Diseases: How We Got to Covid-19. Cell. Vol. 182, Issue 5. 2020 [https://www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092-8674\(20\)31012-6#%20](https://www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092-8674(20)31012-6#%20)
 - (2) Shaman J and Galanti M. Will SARS-CoV-2 become endemic? Science. Vol. 370, Issue 6516 <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/370/6516/527/tab-pdf>
- Once the novel coronavirus has been introduced into our environment, it becomes established among humans and will need to be kept at bay with a safe and effective vaccine along with other mitigation strategies (e.g., masks). The good news is that because the novel coronavirus does not appear to significantly mutate, it may be well-controlled by means of a vaccine aimed at protecting the population from Covid-19. While there are already promising results from vaccine trials, vaccines, unlike treatments, do not immediately change standard of care. Vaccines must undergo a rigorous review process which takes time. Questions to consider are (1) How well does the vaccine prevent severe Covid-19? (2) How well does the vaccine prevent infection? and (3) How well does the vaccine work across different age groups including the elderly? <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/370/6518/763/tab-pdf>
- Until the vaccine can be safely and widely distributed and administered, we can still have confidence in important, proven, and effective protective measures such as mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing, good ventilation, and gathering outdoors rather than indoors as much as possible. These methods are effective in slowing the spread of virus and are extremely important to keep the population from being so overwhelmed by illness that our hospitals and health care systems are unable to provide adequate care for those who would become seriously ill with the virus or other illnesses.

Since it will take time for all groups of the population to be immunized, our decision not to schedule in-person workshops or conferences until it becomes safe to do so is a reflection of our love for one another.

Gift Suggestions: Acclaimed Choral Music of the Orthodox Faith

If you are still looking for meaningful musical gifts that keep on giving, look no further than these three remarkable recordings featuring musicians from our own Metropolis.

Capella Romana - *Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia*: This groundbreaking album made it to the very top of the Billboard classical chart this year. *Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia* is the first vocal album in the world to be recorded entirely in live virtual acoustics. It brings together art history, music history, performance, and technology to re- create medieval sacred sound in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia as an aural virtual reality.

Benedict Sheehan - *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*: Benedict Sheehan's landmark setting of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom in English grows out of the tradition of the great Russian liturgy settings by Rachmaninoff, Gretchaninoff, and Tchaikovsky. Reminiscent of medieval Eastern chant, minimalism, American folk singing, and the high tradition of Western church music, it is also hailed by Metropolitan Tikhon of the Orthodox Church in America as "a new milestone for Orthodoxy in America."

Special from **Dynamis Byzantine Ensemble**
Christmas Virtual Choir Release
A Journey from Lent To Holy Week
The Hymns of Saint George and Bright Monday



Christmas Concerts Available Through Online Streaming

Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral's 23rd Annual Christmas Musicfest Under the Byzantine Dome - This was a live event that occurred on December 6th, but the full performance is available to watch any time on their [Facebook page](#). "Featuring the St. Sophia Cathedral Choir directed by Jim Kollias with soloists Michelle Patzakis and Christopher Yokas, all presenting Orthodox Christmas hymns and chants from the Vespers, Matins and Divine Liturgy of Christmas plus several Christmas selections by Johann Sebastian Bach along with traditional carols of the Christmas season."

Christmas with Cappella Romana - Free livestream premiering Saturday, December 12th, 7:30pm P.S.T. and airing through January 7th. Watch the preview [here](#).

From the Archives

January 21, 2006 - Recording of the All English Divine Liturgy at Capitol Records, Hollywood, California

Including: Melanie O'Regan, Helene Ballas, Diane Pruett, Charlotte McCarthy, Urania Pallad Simms, Constance Callinicos, Steve Counelis, A. Electra Koutsoukos, Doraly Spiropoluos, Carlos Garcia, Katherine Lambros Spilos, Stacia Counelis, Michele Patzakis Prappas, Suzanne Gilman, Brittany Henderson, Soula Harrington, Thallias Roussos, Nicole Kranidas French, Efrain Martinez, Michael Odegaard, Michael Moeller, George Scarlatis, Nick Perdaris, V. Rev. Father John S. Bakas, Brent Noyes, George Miserlis, Christopher P. Yokas.



Congratulations to our Church Music Development Team Leader, Christopher Hondros and his wife, Darlene, on the birth of baby Kassiani on December 8, 2020. Welcome to this new little singer!



Send Us Your News!

We love hearing all that's going on with music in your parishes. *The deadline for our Spring Newsletter is February 15, 2021!*



Music Directors! Please Note!

Thank you for printing and sharing this newsletter with the church musicians in your parish who do not have e-mail, Internet access, or personal access to a computer, and please let us know if these folks wish to have hardcopies of important information sent to them via the postal service. Also, please remember that church musicians may now update their contact information and access the calendar, forms, and documents through our online platform, Charms Office Assistant. Please click [this](#) link for easy directions to access this service.

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