From Our President, Lucy Pappadakes

Dear Friends of the SFGOCM,

Greetings in Christ! I hope and pray that you celebrated the joyous Nativity of our Lord surrounded by friends and family and that the coming year brings good health and prosperity to you and your loved ones.

I want to start by apologizing for delaying the publication of this issue of Keynotes and also by thanking Leon for waiting on me. I don’t know where the autumn went! Well, maybe I do. I have been a traveling fiend this season.

Since last I saw some of you in July at our choir conference in Charleston, SC, I have been a very busy Federation President, indeed! I attended four additional choir conferences, three Church consecrations and one very important meeting with His Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios. I would like to discuss the latter first.

Some of you may be aware that there was some disagreement in Charleston regarding the date and location of the upcoming 2015 choir conference. His Eminence stated His desire to hold the conference in Columbia, SC, in conjunction with the Metropolis Clergy-Laity and the consecration of the Church there, Holy Trinity. The St. Petersburg delegation, however, had previously bid on the conference and the Federation Council members had accepted their bid during the annual meeting. I spoke with His Eminence during the weekend and He offered to discuss the matter with me in more detail at a later date.

In September, I met with His Eminence at the Diakonia Center. After a grand tour of the facility and a lovely lunch, we began our meeting. He wanted me to tell Him what I wished to talk about before interjecting with His own thoughts. I explained to Him our standard procedure of bidding on the conference and added that the community of St. Petersburg hadn’t hosted since the late 1970s and they were very excited about doing so. I also suggested that there may be too much going on in Columbia to add a choir conference to the mix.

When I was finished, He proceeded to outline His vision of our Metropolis as an all-inclusive Church Family. He told me He thought we would be pleased to be invited to share our joyous event with the rest of the Metropolis and couldn’t understand why we wanted to celebrate without them. Further, He felt more people in the Metropolis could learn about what the Federation is and what we can do for their communities by being present during Clergy-Laity, when the rest of the Church organizations are meeting. He asked me to encourage choirs to participate in neighboring communities’ important festivities, such as consecrations and Epiphany celebrations. In the same way that nearby clergy is invited to participate, choirs should also take part. He told me there were four consecrations scheduled for this year – Greenville, SC; Gainesville, FL; Biloxi, MS; and Columbia, SC. The Epiphany celebrations He specifically mentioned were those in Tarpon Springs and the Pan-Orthodox one held in West Palm Beach. I promised to do my best as Federation President to get the word out and try to foster participation by multiple choirs at these grand events in hopes of helping Him achieve His vision.

After saying all of this, He withdrew His request that we hold our choir conference in Columbia in 2015. In 2016, there will be a National Clergy-Laity; therefore, our date and location will be ours to decide. In 2017, the choir conference will be at the same time and place as the Metropolis Clergy-Laity. As such, bidding for...
the conference will only be needed for even-numbered years. Your Federation Board has already met and discussed some of the particulars of this setup so that the transition will be smooth. In any event, we won’t have to worry about the logistics of this change until 2017.

Now, on to the other stuff that had me so busy this fall. I’ll start with the choir conferences…

First, I attended the choir conference of the Mid-Eastern Federation in Columbus, OH, in July. The Guest Conductor was our own Christina Polizos, of Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta, GA. They sang Presvytera Anna Gallos’ arrangement of the Divine Liturgy. Speaking of Presvytera Anna, the Boston Federation also sang her arrangement during their conference in Weston, MA, in October. Nick Kyrus was the Guest Conductor there. As some of you may remember, Nick conducted us in Orlando in 2006. Eastern Federation sang the Limberakis arrangement, with Dean conducting, during their conference in Holmdel, NJ, also in October. Chicago Federation’s conference was in St. Louis, MO, ALSO in October. They sang the new arrangement by Chris Kypros, entitled Liturgy of Hope, with Chris conducting. This was the first time this arrangement had been sung anywhere. Other than me, our Federation supported their conference with a strong contingent from Tampa, Raleigh and Charlotte.

Finally, I’ll mention the three consecrations I attended. The first one was in September at Holy Trinity in Greenville, SC. I’m so grateful to Choir Director Fanya Paouris for still allowing me to participate after contacting her at the last minute. It was so late, in fact, that I didn’t feel right inviting other choirs to join in for this one. What a shame, as it was really a lovely service and the host community went all out.

The second one was at St. Elizabeth the Wonderworker in Gainesville, FL, during Halloween weekend. Choir Director James Thieke has done a wonderful job at this small community. I have to say, the average age of that group is lower than most other choirs of which I am aware. It gave me hope that there is a future for us after all. I reached out to several neighboring choirs and was able to get two members from Daytona Beach to attend. New Port Richey planned to have five participating but they had to cancel the day before the consecration due to the death of one of their choir members.

The third consecration was at Holy Trinity in Biloxi, MS, in November. Choir Director Photine Hagicostas leads everyone in congregational singing. This was the smallest Church of the three and was very quaint. I had also reached out to neighboring choirs for this consecration, not that there are many of them within a reasonable driving distance of Biloxi. Since it was congregational singing, I’m not quite sure if anyone made it but it was a beautiful event, nonetheless. When His Eminence saw me, yet again, He instructed me to conduct the congregation during the Divine Liturgy that always follows the consecration service. I was quite honored.

I met a lot of new people during this whirlwind season. They were all so welcoming, so gracious, so kind to me – I was warmed deep in my soul and I look forward to many more opportunities like these. If this is what His Eminence experiences when He travels to different communities, it’s no wonder He wants us do likewise. We’re more comfortable in our own surroundings but it’s good to get out and explore a little bit by joining our fellow choir friends in singing praises to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In closing, please consider inviting nearby choirs to sing with you when you have an important event in the life of your parish, especially if nearby clergy are attending. We are, after all, an important part of the worship service. And if you are aware of a celebration at a neighboring community, don’t be afraid to invite yourself. The local choir director may not think anyone but their own people would be interested in taking part.

Thank you for allowing me to represent the Southeastern Federation during my many travels this year. I hope to see ALL of you in St. Petersburg in July!

In His Service,
Lucy Pappadakes
SFGOCM President
Home phone: 704-827-2684
Cell phone: 704-813-7129
Email address – lucy_38@hotmail.com

♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪

From St. Stefanos Choir, Hosts of the 2015 Conference

Yes, you are my sunshine--July 23-26, 2015.
Destination: Saint Petersburg, Florida!

Join us and the Kool Kids for a conference you won’t want to miss out on!

Welcome from the city of ruby red sunsets, fresh squeezed orange juice, shuffleboards, pristine beaches, pink flamingos, and its transformation to a world class
city featured in Conde Naste and Boston Globe magazines, filled with fine dining, shopping, museums, and galleries.

Cochairmen John Arambages and Maria Gregory, the choir and community of St. Stefanos in a joyful partnership with the board members of your SFGOCM are eagerly working to welcome you and your families July 23-26, 2015, to the SFGOCM Conference 2015! There is a musical powerhouse set up for this year's conference featuring guest director Christopher Kypros conducting his Liturgy of Peace, along with his trusty sidekick, organist Elia Nicholas.

If you have not attended an SFGOCM conference in years, welcome home to a reunion with old friends from all parishes throughout our Southeast Federation. If this is your first conference, we are waiting to welcome and embrace you and your talents and begin new long lasting friendships.

Strengthen your knowledge of church music through the resources that will be available throughout the weekend for choir directors, organists, psaltai and senior and youth choir members. Share your love and personal commitment to our faith's very important music ministry. Relish the joys that we will share as we worship together and create everlasting memories through fellowship.

Please visit our website www.ststefanos.org for more details! Register early as we anticipate a very large turnout.

We welcome you to the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians Conference 2015! We welcome you to Saint Petersburg. We welcome you to St. Stefanos. We welcome you to our home!

In Christ's service,
John Arambages and Maria Gregory

♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪

From St. John's, Tampa

The members of St. John's choir love to harmonize not only on Sundays, but other times as well.

At the Tampa Greek Festival, the choir was well represented at various booths. We briefly hung up our aprons, to sing during two of the church tours. Under the direction Fr. Stavros, our choir director, Artie Palios, and organist, Jim Leone, we gave a sampling of our liturgical music throughout the year in both Greek and English. We then returned to our posts within the festival.

On December 6th, a group of choir members went to sing Christmas carols at some of Tampa's assisted living facilities. It is always joyful to sing about Christ, but it is also rewarding knowing that we are sharing that joy with others.

The audience joined in. Most were singing, some were tapping along, but all were enjoying. It was a family affair with one choir member bringing his two delightful grandchildren, and another member bringing a service dog in training. The dog also joined in at some parts. In between facilities, the choir members had lunch together.

We look forward to celebrating St. John's name day on January 7th. We will have rehearsal on January 5th time TBD for those from other Tampa Bay area choirs who wish to join us in our celebration.

For those not able to attend our church, we do have live streaming of the liturgy. It is the second best thing to being there.

♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪♫♪

From Socrates Danielides

Lygheri
Danielides
Graduation

Argene and Socrates Danielides are proud to announce that their daughter Lygheri, graduated from De Paul University, Chicago, Illinois, today (June 14, 2014) with a master degree in vocal performance. A recital in partial fulfillment toward her degree was presented on June 8, 2014. She sang a selection of music in Russian, English, German and French.
From Miriam Kotsonis, Secretary, EFGOCM (Eastern Federation)

The 2015 annual conference is being hosted by the choir of Annunciation Cathedral in Norfolk, VA on October 1-4. Our guest conductor for the conference is Christopher Kypros, of Annunciation Cathedral in Norfolk. Chris is the 2014 recipient of the National Forum's Saint Romanos Medallion. The music will be "The Liturgy of Hope" by Chris Kypros. Music and conductor were selected by the EFGOCM members at the Falls Church conference in 2013. Please click on the links below for more information.

Click here for your SAVE-THE-DATE poster (please post in your choir room)
Click here for information on ordering music
Sound Links for learning and practicing the music
Order form for CD recording

From Phillip Thevaos, SFGOCM Vice President

Dear Fellow Church Musicians,

I hope this letter finds you all well.

As was discussed in our annual General Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians (S F G O C M) will be initiating some new programs to increase its music ministry to our Holy Metropolis of Atlanta. To be successful in these endeavors, we need for all parishes to either continue or please renew their S F G O C M membership. Annual dues consist of a minimum stewardship of $100. The first question every person should ask is:

How does paying my annual stewardship benefit my local music program?

The answers are:

1. It makes your church music program part of our greater musical family at the Metropolis and Archdiocesan levels.
2. Members of your church music program can attend the annual S F G O C M Conference without having to pay an extra “individual members’ fee” with their registration.
3. You receive published copies of KEYNOTES—the official bulletin of the S F G O C M.
4. Aspiring church musicians can apply to receive financial aid through the GALLOS/ZANAKOS Music Scholarship Award.
5. Church musicians in your parish can be honored in many ways through the Years of Service awards and the Patriarch Athenagoras Metropolis Service Award.
6. By paying your annual dues, your church musicians can attend regional workshops through the National Forum’s Church Music Institute at little or no individual cost.

The next question should be:

How do I collect my annual stewardship?

Option 1: Stewardship can be paid from either your parish’s general fund or church music ministry fund. Minimum donation for this option would be $100.

Option 2: “Pass the hat” among your local church musicians to collect the annual amount.

Option 3: On the Sunday you designate as Church Music Sunday, pass a separate tray or sponsor a fundraising activity for your congregation and send the entire amount to the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians. The S F G O C M will, in turn, receive 20% of your parish’s donation from the National Forum.

Note: This option does not affect your local parish’s current annual budget expenses.

Whichever option you choose, please know that your SFGOCM Board and Committee Chairs are working diligently to make membership as vibrant and meaningful as possible.

If you choose Options 1 or 2, the $100 should be sent to our own SFGOCM Treasurer, John P. Mitchell. If you choose Option 3, the amount you collect should be sent to the National Forum Treasurer, Hope Demitry. The applicable addresses are as follows:

John P. Mitchell  
13914 Pepperrell Dr.  
Tampa, FL 33624

Hope Demitry  
95 Beechwood Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08618

Best wishes to you and your families for a joyous and Blessed holiday season.

Sincerely,

G. Philip Thevaos, M.D.
From Dr. Bessie Chronakis, St. Barbara

39th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians, Charleston, SC

I attended the 38th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians, hosted by Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Charleston, South Carolina, July 18-20, 2014. Since I was drafted by SFGOCM President Lucy Pappadakes to be a delegate from St. Barbara’s, I decided to write a report to St. Barbara’s choir and community. The conference was preceded by the Church Music Institute on July 17, at which lectures were given by Elia Nicholas, Choir Director and Organist at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Raleigh, North Carolina; Nicholas Maragos, M.D., retired from the Department of Otolaryngology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, and currently in private practice; and Risa Poniros, Ed.D., soprano soloist and vocal coach, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Raleigh, North Carolina. Elia spoke about organ techniques and also about how to organize a community chorus to sing Orthodox hymns; Risa discussed breathing techniques for achieving a good voice. Dr. Maragos described the anatomy of the human voice and explained how to care for it.

Dr. Maragos was Guest Conductor of the Conference choir, which, on Friday and Saturday, practiced the music by Dr. Michael Petrovich for the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and sang the liturgy a cappella on Sunday, with His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios officiating, assisted by Father Aristotle Damaskos, of Holy Trinity Charleston, S.C.; Father Anastasios Yatrelis; Deacon George E. Malanos; and Deacon Daniel Gregoire.

Celeste Alexander, of Atlanta, Georgia, was Director of the Youth Choir, which sang the antiphons, the responses of the litany before the Small Entrance, and the “Trisagion” at the Sunday service.

Diane Stamos Mashead, the Conference organist, gave us pitches on Friday and Saturday.

Dr. Maragos became a student of the piano at age six and has been engaged in playing, singing, directing, and writing music since then. He was a founding member of the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians and oversees research for the liturgical Guidebook, published by the National Forum. The composer of the Conference music, Dr. Michael Petrovich (1922-1989), former Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, was Dr. Maragos’ “mentor, teacher, friend, and colleague.”

At the business meeting, begun at lunch on Friday, July 18, and concluded on July 19, Southeastern Federation President Lucy Pappadakes, of Charlotte, N.C., reported on church music events which she attended in Indiana; Falls Church and Richmond, Virginia; Charleston, S.C.; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Charlotte, N.C.

Among other reports and discussion initiated at the meeting, several suggestions were made about how Federation membership might be increased—e.g., sponsoring church music institutes, forums, or programs for singers and accompanists; giving icons, certificates, or plaques to donors acknowledging membership; organizing formal prayer services on Church Music Sunday; disseminating information about the Federation’s purpose, emphasizing the role of music in the church as a ministry to help all get closer to God.

Scholarship Chairman Dean Johns and other Federation officers explained criteria for music scholarship winners, and Dean Johns announced the winners for 2014: Anthony Giallourakis, Holy Trinity, Clearwater, Florida, and Irene Koulianos, St. Nicholas Cathedral, Tarpon Springs, Florida.

The invitation of St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church in St. Petersburg, Florida, to host the 015 Conference was accepted.

At the dinner held Saturday, July 19, 2014, at the Harbor Club, Maria Keritsis, President of the National Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians, spoke of the importance of involving the young in the liturgy. She reported that the Archdiocesan Department of Religious Education has included the learning of hymns in the fifth-grade curriculum of Sunday School. Work is being done on English translations of hymns. Hymnology is part of the course of study at Holy Cross. Church music institutes are scheduled to be held in various locations.

In his remarks at the Saturday dinner and during the liturgy and lunch on Sunday, Metropolitan Alexios said that the perceived rivalry between chanters and choirs about who should sing what portions of the liturgy in some way manifests a zeal that is good. He noted that conflict about choirs and organs has existed historically between conservative priests and second- and third- generation members of the church. He made suggestions about how church leaders might increase attendance and promptness at church and
especially challenged each participant of Conference 2014 to come to Conference 2015 with at least one other singer.

His Eminence on several occasions commented on the history of Holy Trinity- Charleston. The original church dates from 1910--the existing edifice being “the first church in the United States in the authentic Byzantine style modeled after the Hagia Sophia,” begun in 1951. The icons were painted by Fotis Kontoglu, of Greece, and John Terzis, of Chicago, Illinois, with some restoration in 1988 by Emmanuel Tzirzilakis.

Although there are lots of things to see and do in Charleston, Conference participants do not really have time to be tourists; but the dinner on Friday evening was held aboard the USS Yorktown., in port at Patriot’s Point in Mount Pleasant, S.C., and we were able to take guided tours of this historic vessel after we ate. The Yorktown was built in 1943 to serve in World War II and was in active service until 1970. In 1968 the Yorktown recovered the Apollo 8 spacecraft and the first astronauts to reach, though not land on, the moon.

The next year, on July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong and “Buzz” Aldrin landed Apollo 11 on the moon, and Neil Armstrong sent Earth the message that “The Eagle has landed.”--and, on stepping on the moon: “That’s one small step for [a]man, one giant leap for mankind. A replica of Apollo 8 was in Hangar Bay 1 of the Yorktown. On board the ship also were 28 military planes which flew from the Fighting Lady at some time during her active service. The Yorktown also houses the Medal of Honor Museum, in which recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor from the Civil War to the present are identified and their stories of bravery and heroism are told.

The day of the Hierarchical Service was the 45th anniversary of the moon landing.

The Choir Conference is a special opportunity for singers to learn new music, to meet other individuals in the diocese who also appreciate the music of the Orthodox faith, and to renew friendships and stronger ties established at previous times. Seventy-three adults and seventeen children participated in the 2014 Conference. Inspiring moments occur during practices and in the Sunday service when a choir of ninety dedicated individuals offers praises and petitions to God.

Please support the Music Ministry of St. Barbara’s by joining the choir if you can sing, by contributing financially to the Southeastern Federation as part of the National Forum, and by attending a conference soon.

Dr. Bessie Chronaki
11 August 2014

From Leon Karahalis, St. Sophia, Miami

Having lost a couple of our core singers, our choir is heavily recruiting. Yes, we have discovered that Romanians and Nicaraguans can sing in Greek, perhaps easier than non-Greek Americans.

We are very fortunate to have found Michaela Stancu, a Romanian alto who has been with us for a couple of years. Most recently, a Cypriot alto, Victoria, surprised us by asking if she could sing with us. Michaela and Victoria seem to be fast friends after just a few weeks.

Interestingly, while the GOYA took up our caroling route, they have not sent any singers our way.

All that said, tremendous credit should be given to Mary Alice Kayes, who has taught our core singers so well that four of us sounded like a whole choir. That day, Father Spiros kept glancing up to the loft to see if we had been joined by more, but no … it was just us. I didn’t tell him that I (I was directing) had the ladies surround the “sweet spot”, which is dead center in the loft. Nevertheless, those 3 ladies, the organ and I filled the church. So, yes — 4 voices can fill up the church.

Of course, we’re always on the lookout. I flippantly asked some guy next to me in the coffee line if he sang. He said “Why, YES! I’ve been wanting to get back to it.” He is a Venezuelan doctor married to a Greek American doctor. Unfortunately, as we all know, it is rough for professionals to commit. We’re hoping to see him join us.

This Friday (January 9), we’re going to rehearse at St. Catherine’s in West Palm Beach for the Pan-Orthodox Epiphany on Saturday morning. Join us if you’re around … it’s mostly Kevin Lawrence.

Leon Karahalis

HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL, Charlotte, NC

A fun and memorable time was had by all attendees of the three Holy Trinity Cathedral (HTC) Choirs (Adult, St. Romanos Baritone and St. John Koukouzelis Youth) who attended the 38th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians (SFGOCM) hosted by Holy Trinity in Charleston, SC, on July 17-20. The Liturgy, arranged by the late Dr. Michael Petrovich, was conducted by Dr. Nick Maragos of Rochester, MN, and was done a
The Liturgy was chanted by approximately 75 adult voices and 18 youth voices from all over our Metropolis. Of those voices, 14 adults and 4 youth were from our very own HTC! Highlights of the conference included an evening complete with dinner and tour of the U.S.S. Yorktown at Patriot’s Point in the Charleston Harbor and an evening at Charleston’s Harbour Club near Bay Street in the Battery area of historic Charleston.

Our very own HTC Choir Director Lucy Pappadakes was elected again as the Southeastern Federation President and Dr. Philip Thevaos was elected again as Vice President for the next year 2014-2015. Congratulations to Lucy and Philip!

Congratulations are also in order to our organist, Irina Monzolevskaya. She was one of three recipients in our Metropolis to receive the Patriarch Athenagoras I Award. This award gives national recognition to individuals whose contributions to the music ministry of the church are worthy of distinction. It recognizes their talents and service to the development and perpetuation of the church choirs and musicians in their Metropolis and local community. Congratulations Irina!

The Romanos Baritone Choir (RBC), directed by Philip, was the first of the three HTC Choirs to return from the short summer break and chant during the Liturgy for the Dormition of the Theotokos in mid-August. Their rich, deep, uplifting sound always makes the church resonate. The RBC kicked off the start of our Ecclesiastical year on a great note!

Our summer closed out with August practices in preparation for our 2014 Yiasou Festival. Three small performances were given by our HTC Festival Choir on Saturday, September 6th at 2:30pm, 3pm, and 3:30pm. Each miniature concert gave a brief overview of hymns chanted in an Ecclesiastical year for various services ranging from the Divine Liturgy, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. Between each hymn, a brief description was given by Philip, who was both conductor and narrator. The Festival Choir is comprised of the First Service, Second Service and RBC Choirs. Some choir members have to take time off from their regular duties at the Festival to participate in this choir event each year.

This school year, the St. John Koukouzelis Youth Choir (4th, 5th and 6th graders) will be chanting the Divine Liturgy seven times within the Sunday School year: four Sunday Liturgies and three Saturday Liturgies. Sunday Liturgy dates include Oct. 19, Jan. 25, Feb.22 and March 22. Saturday Liturgy dates include Nov.15, Dec.14 and April 4.

What started out as a special 10-minute performance of the Christmas Katavasies after the Divine Liturgy one Sunday last year, has turned into yet another HTC choir - the St. Romanos the Melodos Byzantine Chanters! Our protopsalti/instructor is Dimitri Petropoulos of Winston-Salem, NC, who has been making the 90-mile trek every couple of months to teach us the hymns, all written in Byzantine notation. On Christmas Day, this group had its initiation by fire when it chanted the entire service (Orthros and Divine Liturgy) in the presence of His Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios! It went pretty well, all things considered. The plan for this year is to chant the service approximately once a month.

All five HTC choirs are looking forward to another strong and spiritual upcoming year of hymns and praises to God through music.

Olga Yamalis

*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
November 2014

Members of the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians

Beloved in the Lord,

"Our Savior has visited us from on high...
And we who were plunged in darkness and shadows
Have found the truth,
For the Lord has been born of the Virgin."
Christmas Matins

As we begin the Nativity Fast or Advent, we prepare ourselves for the Birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Logos (Word) of God, for this, by observing a special time of fasting, prayer and charity.

The society in which we live seems to think of Christmas—when it thinks of it at all—as a sort of secular commercial “winter holiday,” without any religious significance. The Orthodox hymns of this great feast, however, call us all to witness to a miraculous and momentous event: the salvation of humankind. Because God loves us so much, He desires to save us from sin, death and the power of evil by becoming one of us.

“On this day the Virgin comes unto the cave to give birth there
to the Word before all time: beyond all words is this wonder!
Dance with joy, all of creation, hearing these tidings.
Glorify, along with angels and with the shepherds,
him who willingly appears as a newborn baby,
yet he is God before time.
On this day the Virgin bears Him who surpasses all essence,
and the earth holds forth a cave to One beyond our approaching!
Angels sing along with shepherds praising his glory.
Wise men come; led by a star, they journey to find him
who for us is now brought forth as a newborn baby,
yet he is God before time.”
Nativity Kontakion (I Parthenos Simeron)

As we prepare ourselves in a spiritual way, with prayer and fasting and charity, let us pray that God will open our hearts to truly celebrate our Lord`s Nativity, the Feast Day of Christmas:

I remain,

With paternal blessings and with much love in our Lord,

+Metropolitan Alexios

+ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta
“And if the Christmas hymns continue to resound each year in churches scattered all over the world and to be sung as they were sung many hundreds of years ago by the grandfathers and forebears of the present generation, this means that the light shed by the Christmas Star is deeply rooted in human hearts and shines on in them undimmed.”
Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ..................................................Colossians 3:16...........

Destination: Saint Stefanos in St. Petersburg, FL

39th Annual SFGOCM Choir Conference

Kypros Liturgy of Peace
Conducted by Composer Christopher Kypros

Appreciating the Past ~ Anticipating the Future

You Are Cordially Invited to Attend
The 2015 Choir Conference

Thursday July 23rd – Sunday July 26th

Hosted by St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church
3600 76th Street, St. Petersburg, FL 33710
(727) 345-8325

Visit ~ www.ststefanos.org for details on destination, registration, lodging and events.
The 2015 EFGOCM Conference will be hosted by the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Norfolk, Virginia

**October 1-4, 2015**

The Liturgy of Hope
Composed & Directed by Christopher Kypros

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!**
National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians Directory

Mrs. Maria F. Keritsis, National Chairman
9030 Kings Crown Road
Richmond, Virginia 23236
Phone: 804-745-8605 (voice mail) or 804-539-8606
E-mail: MFK9@comcast.net
National Forum Website: http://www.churchmusic.goarch.org

Spiritual Advisor: Rev. Fr. Nicholas G. Bacalis
Sts. Constantine & Helen Cathedral, Richmond, VA

Stewardship
Mrs. Donna Aliapoulios
8157 Pine Tree Lane
Lake Clarke Shores, FL 33406
Phone: 561-586-8157
FAX: 561-586-9270
E-mail: SteveDonna@comcast.net

Treasurer
Ms. Hope Demitry
95 Beechwood Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08618
Phone: 609-695-4033
E-mail: EHopeD@verizon.net

Liturgical Guidebook
Mr. Peter N. Vatsures
68 W. Cooke Road
Columbus, OH 43214
Phone: 614-263-1343 (10 am to 3 pm)
614-442-1109 (7:30 pm to 10 pm)
E-mail: vatspnv@hotmail.com

Byzantine Music Projects
Dr. Angelo Lampousis
c/o Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
10 Mill Road
New Rochelle, NY 10804
Phone: 914-235-6100
E-mail: angelos_lampousis@axionestin.org

Dr. Nicolas Maragos
3625 Lakeview Court NE
Rochester, MN 55906
Phone: 507-288-3379
FAX: 507-284-8855
E-mail: maragos.nicolas@mayo.edu

Youth Initiatives
Ms. Denise Karris
1035 Bluefield Drive
Florissant, MO 63033
Phone: 314-830-3522
E-mail: DKarras916@aol.com

Rev. John Maheras
811 Jerusalem Road
Cohasset, MA 02025
Phone: 781-383-2975
Email: father.johnm@aol.com

National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians is powered by MODx Content Management System and is hosted by the Department of Internet Ministries.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominee</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish of Nominating Choir</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City/State</td>
<td>Zip Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Contact Person submitting Nomination</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>FAX number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City/State</td>
<td>Zip Code</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Choir Director or Parish Priest Signature **

Send completed material including Biographical Data Cover Sheet

1. Regional Contributions  
2. Local Contributions  
3. Federation Activities  
4. Special Achievements / Awards / Contributions

To: Donna Trakas  
Athenagoras Award  
3924 W. San Juan Street  
Tampa, Florida 33629
Metropolis of Atlanta  
Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians
Patriarch Athenagoras I Award
Donna Trakas, Chairman

Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians
and the
National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians

Patriarch Athenagoras Medal
For Metropolitan Service

Metropolis of Atlanta  
Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians
Patriarch Athenagoras I Award

NOMINEE’S BIOGRAPHICAL DATA COVER SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominee</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>City/State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>