Editor's Note

It surely would be wonderful to get this kind of submission every month for Notable Notes. Give it a try!

Your faithful servant in Christ,

Leon Karahalis
Notable Notes Editor

Notable Links to Scholarship 100 and Athenagoras Awards Forms

Click here to link to the Patriarch Athenagoras Awards Forms and Guidelines PDF. There is also a form attached as well as a letter from Stan Evdemon regarding same.
Click here for the Scholarship 100 Application form!

Note from our President, Margaret Sarafoglu

President's Message

I hope all of you are getting ready for conference. Don't forget to order the music. The Greek and English are spiral bound together. But more important, your choir or you must be current in your dues. All choirs are members of the federation but must pay stewardship of $100.00 to participate in the conference.

The CMI flyer should be out shortly. The date is Thursday, July 28, 2011. "There Is Room for All of Us at the Table" has an exciting line-up. First, Jessica Suchy-Pilalis, nationally known, Protopsaltis will discuss the origin and development of chant in our jurisdiction and will organize a group to chant Vespers and Orthros. Then, nationally known choral director and composer, Dr. Yiorgos Vassilandonakis will discuss choral and vocal techniques. He has recently moved from the San Francisco Federation to Charleston, South Carolina. Finally, Fr. Barnabas Powell, AKA Chuck Powell, prior to attending seminary, worked for the Orthodox Christian Network, is knowledgeable as well as entertaining. This is not to be missed.

All of this before the "Family Reunion" starting on Friday morning with Past Presidents and the person who started our Federation, Presbytera Anna Gallos. We are singing her Divine Liturgy Opus II.

Please see the last page of this notice for an outline of the Church Music Institute (CMI) which is planned for Spartanburg!

Yours in Christ’s Holy Music Ministry,

Margaret Sarafoglu

Returning to Our Roots

As you all know, we are celebrating the beginning of our Federation by returning to the parish where our conference first was held, St. Nicholas in Spartanburg, South Carolina. The excitement grew into the Federation that we all have learned so much from.

Although this is labeled "Keynotes, I must point out that the differentiation between “Keynotes” and “Notable Notes” is that “Keynotes” is supposed to cover all of our parishes. Unfortunately, I receive virtually nothing from any of our regular members, so this edition is mostly from our officers.

Please feel free to contribute articles and photos in the future.

Leon Karahalis, Keynotes and Notable Notes Editor

Read on for highlights from the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians Annual Meeting

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Choir Leaders Meet with Hierarchs

On March 16, 2011, the National Forum participated in an unprecedented meeting with the Holy Eparchial Synod of our Archdiocese. Archbishop Demetrios extended the invitation to National Chairman Vicki Pappas, and posed four agenda items: 1) development of choirs and recruitment of new members, 2) the process of developing the Liturgical Guidebook, 3) youth choirs, and 4) relationships between chanter and choirs.

Vicki selected the leadership team with respect to the agenda items. Our Federation's Maria Keritsis, as chair of the Administration Committee, was included. The leadership team also included Dr. Nick Maragos and Peter Vatsares, Chairs of the Liturgical Guidebook; Joanne Kambouris, Chair of the Youth Music Initiatives Committee; and Dr. Angelo Lampousis, Chair of the Byzantine Music Committee.

In a positive and cordial atmosphere, the Metropolitans expressed their interest and concern over a number of issues related to our Orthodox church musicians. There was also sharing of National Forum initiatives and products. Some of you received a copy of the summary from Vicki, but for those who did not, here is a short synopsis of the topics discussed:

Regarding choirs:
1. Hierarchs wanted to convey how important and vital a role the choir plays in praying with clergy and congregation.
2. Singing in the choir is a ministry; the music should be “artful prayer”
3. Choirs should support prayer and create a flow.
4. The Metropolitans asked that the traditional melody of Agios Theos and the Virmatos be sung when they celebrate.
5. Continued and deeper education of choir directors and members is important.
6. Rehearsals are important so that choirs are prepared.
7. Parish clergy are urged to communicate religious education to their choirs.
8. More 25-45 year olds need to be recruited to fill “the gaps” in choirs.

Regarding youth:
1. The hierarchs and the Forum are both concerned over few young people participating in choirs.
2. Similarly, both stress the importance of teaching our youth the hymns of the church (whether in hymnology, retreats, camps, etc.)
3. There is a need for stronger collaboration between church musicians, youth workers, and camp directors.

Other issues that were addressed:
1. Relationships between choirs and chanter: the Forum's work in developing instructional materials for aspiring chanter; a listing of the various Metropolis' schools of chanting
2. The hierarchs commended the Liturgical Guidebook and wish to be included as part of the process.
3. The need for a common English translation for Christmas Anesti was discussed so that church musicians could set the agreed upon text to the transitional melody.

The Forum delegation met immediately after the meeting and developed a summary of the meetings and an initial template of action items. The Church Music Federation Presidents of all the Metropolises met the last week of March to further develop a plan of action. Some of these plans already fall under the Eastern Federation's initiatives as identified by the last Executive Board meeting. More information to follow.
National Forum

EFGOCM Participates in National Forum President’s Meeting

Presidents from each Federation met with National Forum Chairman, Vicki Pappas on March 31-April 2nd to discuss issues and initiatives that affect all Metropolises. Father Tasso Gounaras hosted the delegation at Holy Trinity in Indianapolis. Although some time was allotted for sharing ideas from each Federation, the majority of the meeting time was spent preparing a plan of action on the concerns identified at the Holy Eparchial Synod meeting (see the article on Choir Leaders Meet...). The Eastern Federation Board will take this plan and develop implementation strategies and goals for the upcoming two years with the direction from Metropolitan Evangelos. Not surprising, the Metropolitans were concerned about the youth (or lack of) in our choirs which is the EFGOCM’s initiative for the upcoming year. We will have more information on this in our next First Mode.
This CMI is co-sponsored by the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians and the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians. Funding for this CMI was made possible, in part, through a grant from Leadership 100 to the National Forum.

12:30-2:30 - DEVELOPING CHORAL SOUND IN THE ORTHODOX LITURGY- Dr. Yiorgos Vassilandonakis

- Techniques of training singers
- Create a blend
- Create energy in tone
- Fix diction and sound projection
- Use of the organ
- Warm up exercises

2:30-4:30 - MAKE HIS PRAISES GLORIOUS- Fr. Barnabas Powell

4:30-6:30 - "CHANTS" ENCOUNTER- Jessica Suchy-Pilalis

1) In the beginning, there was…
2) Setting the stage