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The Gifts of God: Use Them or Lose Them

Martha Berry had a dream to start a school for poor children. Regrettably, she had no books, no building and no money. Her dream was intense enough that she went to the famous Henry Ford and asked for a donation. He obliged by giving her a dime! Rather than allowing that insult to discourage her, she took the dime and bought a packet of seeds, planted a garden and raised a crop. She sold the crop and bought more seeds and planted a larger garden. After her fourth harvest she made enough money to buy the building. She went back to Mr. Ford and thanked him for his donation and showed him what his dime had accomplished. He was so overwhelmed that he donated $1 million and the Berry School for Children was firmly established. In this story, we see the incredible impact that even a dime has.

In the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), Christ tells us about a man traveling to a far away country and he gives goods to three of His servants. To the first he gives five talents, to the second he gives two talents and to the third He gives one talent. In the original, the Greek word for "talents" is the word τάλαντα. In New Testament times, the τάλαντα represented a large sum of money. One Roman talent was worth about 6,000 denarii. One denarii represented a day’s labor, which meant the man with five talents was entrusted with what would have been the equivalent of 80 years salary. The man with two talents, 32 years salary and the man with one talent, 16 years worth of wages. It was no small sum.

So, Christ tells us that “the man with five talents went and traded with them and made another five talents. The man with two talents likewise doubled what he had been given. The final man went and dug in the ground and hid his lord’s money.

After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. The first who had received the five talents brought five more and said, “Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents beside them.” His Lord then said to him: “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.” The second man came and said, “Lord you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.” His Lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”

The third man came and said, “Lord, I know you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid and went and hid YOUR talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is your.” But his lord answered and said to him, “You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the

"Now we start to understand how God feels when He gives us something which He knows will produce infinite good and we tuck it away or bury it never to be used."
outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

In this parable we see many parallels within our own lives. We too have been given gifts and talents by God, some of us the five, others the three and others the one, but to each the Lord has given something and he expects us to cultivate and enhance these gifts. Obviously, we are not all equal in talents and gifts from God but what Christ stresses in this parable is that we have to be equal in effort! We don’t compare our talents with others. If we fall into this trap, we lose our uniqueness. Whatever talent we have, big or small, are to be used for the glory of God and for the edification and assistance of our neighbor.

So the harsh words that the master uses with the one who buried his talent and did nothing with it, like calling him a wicked and lazy servant and casting him into the outer darkness, is warranted since there are certain expectation that must be met.

Let’s look at an example to illustrate our point: In 1960, you go to an Investment firm and give them money and tell them you want 10,000 shares of IBM stock. With dividend reinvestment, the IBM stock would be worth over $180 million today. You go to the investment firm to collect your money and they say, “Sorry, we felt your request was a bit risky so we just put your money in a safety deposit box. Here it is!” Now we start to understand how God feels when He gives us something which He knows will produce infinite good and we tuck it away or bury it never to be used.

May our good and gracious God, who blesses us abundantly with so many gifts and talents, give us the wisdom and the courage to multiple these gifts for the Glory of His wonderful Name and for the enjoyment and benefit of His people.
VISIT OUR YOUTUBE PAGE TO VIEW VIDEO FROM ARCHON SUNDAY
The renowned Cathedral Choir most recently made its Carnegie Hall debut this past May, performing with the legendary Greek vocalist Maria Farantouri.

On May 12th, the Cathedral Choir joined Maria Farantouri in singing some of the most famous Greek songs by the composer Mikis Theodorakis, at the prestigious Carnegie Hall in New York City. The choir joined Farantouri in singing “Άσμα Αμάτων”, “Της Δικαιοσύνης ήλε νοητέ” and more, all to great acclaim in front of a sold-out crowd at Carnegie.

“Salvation is created”-Friday December 14th, 7:30PM

The choir has presented over 40 years of Holiday Concerts. Get your tickets now for an event that is sure to encourage all to musically rejoice in the spirit of Christmas!

To learn more about the choir, visit us on YouTube & Facebook: Archdiocesan Cathedral Choir or www.archcathedralchoir.com
SUNDAY SCHOOL
BY Effie Doscas

Sunday School started with a very strong registration of children. The Sunday School will continue registration for children throughout the year. Sunday School is available for all children with a starting age of 40 days old. The Sunday School has been working on a new curriculum, making a learning experience for all children, from infants through teenagers more complete. Children from 40 days to 3 ½ years old, has a mommy and me style circle time. The children learn simple songs and the most elementary Bible stories. One parent will stay with the child and our wonderful nursery school teachers will instruct the class. There is a new additional class for 4-year old’s, with 3 terrific teachers. The 5 & 6 years old, will learn about the basic symbols and values of our church. Most classes will include a craft project. The next age group, the 7 to 9 years old, will begin their focus on learning how to read the Bible and study the Lord's Prayer. Our 10 to 12 years old will focus on the Sacraments and understanding the Divine Liturgy. We will appeal to our 13 + teenagers with a class that will have more discussions on issues that relate to the church and its teaching and everyday life. Some subjects include "How is our Faith tested?" and "Interfaith Marriages". Units about the Ten Commandments and comparative Religions are planned as well. We also help all students with learning the Lord's Prayer, The Creed, and how to do their cross.

We have registered over 95 children. The families and the children are happy to see one another and to exchange their summer vacation stories. We have wonderful volunteer teachers. If anyone would like to volunteer as a teacher, please contact Effie Doscas at edoscas@ziffster.com.

The children will begin to choose their parts for the annual Christmas pageant. The pageant will take place on December 9, in the church directly following the liturgy.

We would also like to ask for volunteers and donations. We have many students and we need your support. Please volunteer! We have all the material. The lessons are planned: we all help each other. We want our community to grow and we ask your help to do this. If there are any questions, please contact: Effie Doscas- Butler, (917) 836-0149, or by e-mail edoscas@ziffster.com.

We look forward to seeing everyone!!
CATHERDRAIL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

BY Stella Pantelides

Everyone who steps into the Cathedral marvels at its beauty, highlighted by the incredible physical space and iconography. Unfortunately, the physical complex has aged. With self-funded, balanced operating budgets and annual audits, we have already replaced the boiler and are well positioned to undertake this significant capital improvement plan.

What does this plan entail? Several key areas of the Cathedral need rapid improvement including the dome, roof, windows, bell tower, entrance and scaffolding. From bricks to roof tiling, restoration is critical in the fundamental structures of the Cathedral.

It is our collective opportunity and responsibility to leave the Cathedral greater than we received it and to preserve the majesty of this Jewel of Orthodoxy for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. Help us commit to ensuring the Cathedral for the Next Generation.

CATHERDRAIL OFFICE UPDATE

BY Gregory Panagos

I'm happy to announce the grand re-opening of the conference room. After months of hard work from our parishioners, Mr. Niko Caramihai, Stella Pantelidis, Joanne Zervos Maguire, and the generous sponsorship by our Philoptochos, the room has been restored to its intended grandeur!
It is with great excitement and enthusiasm that the HOPE/JOY ministry of our Cathedral has officially begun.

All of our meetings include a lesson, some type of activity that reinforces the lesson, and finally sharing a meal. Our goal this year is to participate in two service projects to give our children the opportunity to become more compassionate along with affecting the lives of others in a positive way. As the children bond with one another and build strong relationships, our hope is that this will assist them in strengthening their faith as Orthodox Christians and becoming active members in the sacramental life of our church.

For more information regarding our HOPE/JOY ministry, please email Diakonissa Georgia at georgia9578@gmail.com and for GOYA reach out to Sotiri Michalatos at sotiri@thecathedralnyc.org.
GREEK ORTHODOX BASKETBALL LEAGUE - G.O.B.L.

BY Sotirios Michalatos

The Cathedral is very excited to announce their participation in this year's Greek Orthodox Basketball League! This is the first time in a few decades since the Cathedral has made a presence. Under the direction and efforts of coach, John Pyrovolakis, the team has weekly practices and will play a total of 9 games with other parishes in New York. It is an exciting time for the youth of the parish to grow physically, spiritually and socially. The team consists of 9 players filled with heart, love and passion.

This team creation and league involvement is even more exciting for the fellowship and bonds that have begun to grow. Our ultimate goal and hope as Orthodox Christians is to grow closer to God and to one another. Our youth has an opportunity to accomplish both by participating in this league. Friendly competition allows the adolescents to meet other Orthodox Christians their age across the city.

If you have a free weekend, many of the games are at local churches and the boys would love support from Cathedral members. Our hope is to grow the team for many years to come. If you would like to find out ways to participate and help out, please email Sotiri@thecathedralnyc.org.
The academic year is off to a wonderful beginning at The Cathedral School. A renewed energy and spirit is felt within the hallways and classrooms. George Papayannis, the new Head of School at Cathedral, has created an excitement within the school community.

Teachers jumpstarted the year with professional development in Boston, collaborating with other educators at the Wonder of Learning exhibit. Teachers at The Cathedral School are empowered to provide the highest quality of education to their students, and enrichment workshops such as Wonder of Learning further their success.

Families are also seeing some exciting changes at The Cathedral School. The athletics program is growing this year, spearheaded by the new Athletic Director and After School Coordinator Katherine Ames. Athletics are an important part of life at The Cathedral School, they teach teamwork and sportsmanship. The Cathedral School has joined the CONSAT Athletics league, an interscholastic sports league comprised of small, independent schools in New York City. “I am excited for our students to show their skills. The goal is to collaborate and compete and to teach the meaning of fair play to all of our students” noted Ms. Ames.

New faculty have been welcomed into The Cathedral School community with open arms. Nursery Head teacher Ms. Ashley Passik, Prekindergarten Head teacher Ms. Haleigh Schellinger, Greek Language and Culture teacher Spyridoula Liakonis, and Upper School Science teacher Ioannis Tziligakis engage students by teaching to the whole child; intellectual, social and emotional.

A key strength of The Cathedral School is that it offers an education rooted in cardinal Hellenic values; reason, knowledge, moderation, citizenship and the arts. The 2018-2019 school year is poised for success with these values as its source of strength.
CATHERDRALE SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPLORE BYZANTINE ICONOGRAPHY

Invited by the Consulate General of Greece, Cathedral School students attended the exhibition of Byzantine Iconography “Theotokos, Hope of the world”. Students explored the artwork on display from Athonias Ecclesiastical Academy of Mount Athos.

Father Gabriel from Athonias Ecclesiastical Academy of Mount Athos guided students through the techniques of iconography and explained the importance of icons and their history in the Greek Orthodox Church. “Our students truly enjoyed the exhibition, in particular the beauty of the mosaics” noted Spyridoula Liakonis, Greek language and culture teacher.

The visit continued with a workshop hosted by Father Lavrentios, also from Athonias Ecclesiastical Academy of Mount Athos, introducing The Cathedral School students to the beauty of Byzantine Iconography and traditional painting techniques.
**2018 STEWARDSHIP AS OF NOVEMBER 2**

Thank you to the 308 families and individuals who have submitted pledges of financial support for our Cathedral in 2018. We encourage all of our Cathedral members and friends to become active stewards.

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The Archdiocesan Cathedral Philoptochos over the summer responded to a great number of social welfare cases.

We were all very saddened by the tragedy of the July deadly wildfires in Attica, Greece. Our Philoptochos contributed to the National Philoptochos appeal to raise money to help those who were so badly affected. The National Philoptochos collected a total of $106,585. We also contributed to the amount that His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, collected from all the parishes. The Archdiocese raised $237,000.

The 2018 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention took place on July 1-5, 2018, at the Boston Marriott Copley Place in Boston, Massachusetts. There was a great participation of many parishes, including ours. True to the convention’s theme, “All Things are Possible to the One Who Believes in Christ”, the participants explored ideas, goals and experiences to be able to help people in need in the best possible way. For further details on the convention please visit: www.philoptochos.org/news/2018-convention

Sadly, our beloved Nadia Allega Novak, née Mandalakis, passed away on Friday, October 5, 2018. Nadia was born in Athens, Greece and moved to New York after the end of the Second World War. She was happily married for many years to Alfred Allega, who sadly passed away. Nadia was later married to Adam Novak who predeceased her. Nadia joined the Archdiocesan Cathedral Philoptochos Society in the late 60’s. She was an active and very generous member of our Society and chaired various events. She has been an Honorary Member of our Philoptochos for six years. Nadia will be greatly missed by her family, friends and the Philoptochos sisters. May her memory be eternal!

We started the fall season with a special invitation to preview the Burberry Fall/Winter 2018-2019 Runway Show, celebrating the first runway of the new Creative Director, Ricardo Tischi, previously with the House of Givenchy. Burberry hosted a reception during the various presentations. It was a successful and a very well attended event that everybody enjoyed.

Our main fundraiser, the Chrysanthemum Ball, will take place on Friday, November 16, 2018, at The Metropolitan Club, New York. This year, we have the privilege of honoring our spiritual leader, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, for his relentless dedication to the Greek Orthodox Church and his inspiring leadership in our community.
The Cathedral Philoptochos continues to work together with the Jan Hus Presbyterian church to provide meals for about 160 homeless and low-income individuals every Tuesday as part of the Feed the Homeless program.

We are current in fulfilling our National obligations:
- Hellenic College Holy Cross Scholarship Fund
- Retired Clergy and Widowed Presbytery Benevolent Fund
- National Philoptochos Emergency Fund
- Ecumenical Patriarchate

Every Sunday, following the Divine Liturgy, our Philoptochos sponsors the Coffee Hour at the Chiotes Family Center.

If you have not yet renewed your membership or wish to become a new member, please visit: http://www.ac-philoptochos.com/chapter-membership/

Thank you for your continued support and generosity throughout the year. Without your help we would not be able to achieve our goals.

HAPPY FALL SEASON! ΚΑΛΟ ΦΘΙΝΟΠΩΡΟ!
Updates!

The fall has kicked off with Cathedral Connect, the young professional organization of the parish, seeing many new faces join the ranks. With a meet and greet to start off the ecclesiastical year, Connectors socialized at the Fat Cat. Live jazz music, ping pong and fun all around gave everyone an opportunity to re-connect and make new connections. The end of October brought a hike to Bear Mountain with a change of pace for professionals always running in the concrete jungle to struggling up the mountain!

Several events are lined up for the end of year including a Skydiving excursion, cooking classes, Transit Museum exploration and Christmas time festivities. If you are interested, stop by our meetings and check out our Facebook page for more information!
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