Voters undecided on Budget

Many voters, including families, appear to be undecided about Labor’s first Budget, a new opinion poll shows.

According to the Galaxy poll taken for News Limited newspapers at the weekend, 44 per cent of voters were unsure about the effects of the budget, while 33 per cent said they would be worse off and 23 per cent believed they would benefit. Nearly 70 per cent of households with children feared they would end up worse off, or were undecided, despite being a key target of the budget handed down last week.

The most concerned group was the over-50s, with 41 per cent worried they would suffer, a sentiment shared by more than a third of voters earning under $70,000 a year, News Ltd reported.

In good news for the federal government, 49 per cent of voters supported the tax cuts and the majority of Australians supported means testing of the baby bonus and other family welfare payments.

Just 17 per cent of voters believed welfare payments should not be means tested.

The $150,000-a-year household income threshold introduced in the budget was endorsed by 34 per cent of voters, although 22 per cent supported an even lower level of $100,000.

The $150,000 threshold was also supported by 37 per cent of those it would likely affect - workers earning $70,000 or more.

In the preferred economic manager stakes, Treasurer Wayne Swan had turned the tables on his rival, gleaning the support of 36 per cent of voters, ahead of opposition treasury spokesman Malcolm Turnbull on 25 per cent.

A Newspoll before the budget had Mr Turnbull on 35 per cent compared to Mr Swan on 29 per cent.

AAP
On this day in 1977, Memorial Day weekend opens with an intergalactic bang as the first of George Lucas’ blockbuster Star Wars movies hits American theaters.

The incredible success of Star Wars—seven Oscars, $461 million in U.S. ticket sales and a gross of close to $800 million worldwide—began with an extensive, coordinated marketing push by Lucas and his studio, 20th Century Fox, months before the movie’s release date. “It wasn’t like a movie opening,” actress Carrie Fisher, who played rebel leader Princess Leia, later told Time magazine. “It was like an earthquake.” Beginning with—in Fisher’s words—a new order of geeks, enthusiastic young people with sleeping bags, the anticipation of a revolutionary movie-watching experience spread like wildfire, causing long lines in front of movie theaters across the country and around the world.

June 5, 1968
Robert F. Kennedy shot

12:50 a.m. PDT, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, a presidential candidate, is shot three times in a hail of gunfire in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. Five others were wounded. The senator had just completed a speech celebrating his victory in the California presidential primary. The shooter, Palestinian Sirhan Sirhan, had a smoking .22 revolver wrested from his grip and was promptly arrested. Kennedy, critically wounded, was rushed to the hospital, where he fought for his life for the next 24 hours. On the morning of June 6, he died. He was 42 years old. On June 8, Kennedy was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, also the final resting place of his assassinated older brother, President John F. Kennedy.

‘Selling an American Dream: Australia’s Greek Café’
A Nationally Touring Social History Exhibition

Photographer Effy Alexakis and historian Leonard Janiszewski have once again joined forces to produce a major social history exhibition that portrays the significance of Greek settlement in Australia.

On 11 July 2008, the National Museum of Australia in Canberra will proudly launch their exhibition as the first venue of a projected 7 year national tour.

Selling an American Dream: Australia’s Greek Café, puts forward the view that Greek cafes in Australia were a ‘Trojan Horse’ for the Americanisation of this nation’s eating and social habits from the very start of the twentieth century.

For Alexakis and Janiszewski, Greek cafes initially introduced American commercial food-catering ideas, technology and products and later influenced the development of cinema and popular music. The Greek cafe they say, helped ‘transform’ Australian popular culture.

Their new exhibition not only looks at how this was done, but also the personal stories of those involved.

The exhibition brings together historical and contemporary photographs, oral histories and cafe memorabilia gathered over the 26 years that the couple have been researching Australia’s Greek past.

For both Alexakis and Janiszewski, this is their most important display to date as it clearly reveals significant cross-cultural transmissions and transformations affected by Greeks upon mainstream Australian culture.

For its Australian audience, the message is clear: Every time you drink a Coke, enjoy an ice cream or sweet chocolate treat, go to the cinema, or listen to the latest popular music hit, you can thank Australia’s Greek settlers.

Selling an American Dream: Australia’s Greek Café will be on display at the National Museum of Australia in the National Focus Gallery from 11 July to 16 November 2008. The exhibition is part of the Vivid National Photography Festival.

The curators are grateful to the exhibition’s major sponsor, The Nicholas Aroney Trust.
The prices we deserve
By Nikos Konstandaras - Kathimerini

When Calvin Klein was young, his father had a grocery store in Harlem. There the designer learned his first lesson in marketing.

“I would see grapefruits in the fruit-and-vegetable department, and some of them were 29 cents a pound and others were 49 cents a pound, in a recent issue of Vanity Fair. “What’s the difference between the two?” he asked his father. “Some people like to pay 29 cents and some like to pay 49 cents,” his father replied. Leo Klein satisfied the broadest possible clientele by offering the same goods at different prices.

In Greece, it seems that bitter experience of endemic poverty and the proverbal cunning of our merchants have made everyone wary of cheap goods. “Cheap meat goes to the dogs,” old-timers would say. “Cheap meat goes to the dogs,” old-timers would say. Only the desperate would buy cheap things, knowing they were being cheated by the “dogs,” old-timers would say. Only the desperate would buy cheap things, knowing they were being cheated by the “dogs,” old-timers would say. And multinationals closed their factories here and then sold us the memory of hunger resulted in Greeks being amazed at vengeance. And the “good” was also expensive, be it food, clothing, cars, houses or loans. Traditional generosity and the memory of hunger resulted in Greeks being amazed at the capacity for timely performance of Greece’s national administration.

“Karamanlis administration. Greece has simply ignored inspectors’ concerns. No international body embarrasses its members needlessly. The suspension has been turned down for funding from the Kyoto Protocol. The unprecedented suspension, punishment for inaccurate reporting of carbon emissions, combines two of Greece’s international hallmarks: lack of transparency in reporting and an apparently complete lack of concern for the environment.

The immediate problem with emissions reporting stems in part from the fact that the National Observatory of Athens, which until March last year was responsible for atmospheric measurements on the environment ministry’s behalf, overestimated the emissions for 2004 by 37,000 tonnes. That alerted UN inspectors to a faulty algorithm, which, the ministry says, was corrected. But since then, the UN remains unsatisfied as to the transparency of the method. In a December 2007 report, the UN Compliance Committee, which enforces the protocol, said its inspectors requested additional information “to determine whether the national system has the capacity to fulfill the mandatory function” of measuring emissions. By this time, measuring responsibility had moved to the National Technical University of Athens.

The report concluded that “the maintenance of the institutional and procedural arrangements, the arrangements for the technical competence of the staff and the capacity for timely performance of Greece’s national system is an unresolved problem.”

The suspension suggests that, since December, Greece has simply ignored inspectors’ concerns. The suspension would not mean much at the moment, because European carbon trading for the 2008-12 period does not begin until the end of the year - so Greece has some time to correct its reporting deficiencies. Politically and symbolically, however, the suspension means a great deal. It is another demonstration of unscrupulous numbers and lack of transparency of the Karamanlis administration.

The first international opprobrium came from the European Commission in 2004, when it put Greek public finances under supervision. Finance Minister George Alogoskoufis triggered a lack of confidence by upwardly revising post-1996 deficit and debt figures - not once but twice - revealing that Greece did not technically qualify to enter the eurozone. The revisions were justified as an exercise in bringing Greece into line with international accounting standards, but they were overpoliced politically.

The commission’s 2004 warning to Greece bears an eerie resemblance to the UN’s: it demanded “concrete measures to ensure the credibility of the entire statistical system, namely through the adoption of the highest standards as regards the independence, integrity and accountability of the national statistical service [NSS] and the reinforcement of the control and inspection capacities of Eurostat, the EU’s statistical body.

The suspension is, more ominously, another result of the singular contempt in which Public Works Minister George Souflias holds the environment. In another area of deliberate and gross opacity, the environment ministry credited itself with recycling 90,000 tonnes of waste, but its statement was disputed by the UN Environment Programme. A UN team visited Greece earlier this month to subsidise recycling in the country’s most populous municipalities - Athens and Piraeus - because their mayors say that running a separate collection service for recyclables will cost too much.

The subsidy now threatens to bring 446 municipalities into open revolt against the agreements they have signed with the Hellenic Recycling Corporation, under which they are provided with blue bins, trucks and publicity in return for running the parallel collection services.

This newspaper called for Souflias’ resignation almost two years ago, when he revived the Abclosa diversion. In the past two years Souflias has vindicated our position. He has failed to report honestly about recycling, doctoring the figures his ministry receives from the Hellenic Recycling Corporation and sending them up to the Greek government.

He has failed to provide any initiative for renewable energy in collaboration with the finance and development ministries (meaning that Greece is on track to contravene with its generous Kyoto allowance of a 25 percent increase in emissions since 1990). On his watch the country has suffered its worst single-year loss of forest cover ever (297,000 hectares), leaving carbon sinks to the mercy of natural regeneration. Souflias does not seem destined to be proven once and for all as the country’s environmental monitoring and policymaking. He has proven it himself.

By J. Psarrapoulos - Athens News

On April 17, the United Nations suspended Greece for three months from the emissions-trading scheme formed under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The unprecedented suspension, punishment for inaccurate reporting of carbon emissions, combines two of Greece’s international hallmarks: lack of transparency in reporting and an apparently complete lack of concern for the environment.

The immediate problem with emissions reporting stems from the fact that the National Observatory of Athens, which until March last year was responsible for atmospheric measurements on the environment ministry’s behalf, overestimated the emissions for 2004 by 37,000 tonnes. That alerted UN inspectors to a faulty algorithm, which, the ministry says, was corrected. But since then, the UN remains unsatisfied as to the transparency of the method. In a December 2007 report, the UN Compliance Committee, which enforces the protocol, said its inspectors requested additional information “to determine whether the national system has the capacity to fulfill the mandatory function” of measuring emissions. By this time, measuring responsibility had moved to the National Technical University of Athens.

The report concluded that “the maintenance of the institutional and procedural arrangements, the arrangements for the technical competence of the staff and the capacity for timely performance of Greece’s national system is an unresolved problem.”

The suspension suggests that, since December, Greece has simply ignored inspectors’ concerns. The suspension would not mean much at the moment, because European carbon trading for the 2008-12 period does not begin until the end of the year - so Greece has some time to correct its reporting deficiencies. Politically and symbolically, however, the suspension means a great deal. It is another demonstration of unscrupulous numbers and lack of transparency of the Karamanlis administration.

The first international opprobrium came from the European Commission in 2004, when it put Greek public
Unfortunately, some Greek Orthodox people in Australia have not only failed to embrace this mission, this service (in the Greek mind, the word λειτούργημα), but at times have even actively rebelled against the Church by their absence, and consciously fight against her mission!

It is said that we as teachers of the Greek Orthodox Day Schools have to hear from our Anglo-Saxon colleagues their defense of our schools’ credibility from attacks by so-called Greek Orthodox faithful. What they find dubious is the viciousness of these attacks, given our schools’ proven track record, quality of teachers, academic achievement, spiritual education and co-curricular enrichment. As one colleague said to me, “don’t these people know that your students have represented the Independent Sector at National and International Forums? How is it that they have failed to see the fine caliber of young people that your schools produce to the benefit of all Australian society?”

I have say that in being challenged with these questions I have come to some conclusions which bring me to the point of making what I believe are reasonable assumptions about the state of mind of such people.

Everyone has the right to choose a school they believe best serves the needs of their children. None of these comments are directed at those who for one reason or another choose to send their children to a non-Orthodox school. They are, however, directly pointed at those who expend an incomprehensible amount of energy and venom attacking our schools, our priests and bishops, our families and consequently the Church. Words such as ‘revetronism’ come to mind.

One can only assume that they are motivated by the fear of non-acceptance by the Anglo-Saxon hegemony, and jealousy of those of us who are not afraid to embrace our sense of identity and our faith. The pride, dignity and strength of character that our students demonstrate at every public event is clearly a provocation and challenge to those who are ashamed of the great civilisation that has given them and the whole of humanity inspiration and leadership.

For those who live our faith, with whatever individual limitations, this behaviour and attitude would be unforgivable were it not so misguided. Rather, we feel pity for them because, in denying themselves the richness of their heritage, it is unlikely they will ever be accepted as equal members of that hegemony as they do not approach that hegemony with strength of character, confidence or integrity. They’re the ones hanging on the edges of the B-B-Qs and gatherings of which they are not quite a part, laughing heartily at ethnic jokes which are made at their expense. Contrast this with the students of the Greek Orthodox Colleges who enter every forum and any university on their own terms as proud Australians of Greek Orthodox faith.

Their success in the fields of medicine, politics, law, education and business has already been established in the relatively short history of the schools. And this is because they have very strong foundations in a long and illustrious history of 4,000 years!

By Peter Mavrommatis*
THE ‘UNDERMINING’ OF THE SYNODAL INSTITUTION

(Part 1)

The decision of the writer to dedicate his entire ‘Keynote Address’ (at the 10th Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia) to what is, for the Church, an absolutely irreplaceable institution, namely the SYNOD, was certainly a move and a ‘gesture’ adequately declarative of a denounced imminent danger. In other words, it expressed, so to speak, an ultimate S.O.S. to those ‘in the courtyard of the Church’ who are either ‘vigilant’ or ‘indifferent’, if not even to those who ‘transact’ with her, or are merely ‘neighbourly’.

However, the denunciative character of the ‘Opening Address’ in mention would definitely have been less effective had the same agonizing Theologian and Shepherd not presented long ago, and through authoritative systematic writings, the necessary ecclesiological foundation in relation to this contentious problem.

Furthermore, this is an issue regarding the ‘stability’ of the entire Church of God, always ‘militant’ i.e. struggling (both regionally and globally), in the midst of a world that “lies under the sway of the wicked one” (see 1 John 5:19).

It should be stated immediately, nonetheless, that the time allocated for a ‘Keynote Address’ is always limited, as much as the speaker is obliged to adequately expound the reasons which led him to the specific choice of his central theme.

Even so, as is understandable, it was not possible for the large and diverse plenary of the 10th Clergy-Laity Congress to be informed ‘equally’ as to the most expedient need to protect the Synodal institution of the Church.

In any event, with today’s increasingly common induction of mainly ‘celibate’ Clergy to the ‘Courts’ of various ‘Prelates’, and without ‘meritorious criteria’ at that, we have arrived at a situation where candidates with nothing more than unenlightenment are ‘rising’ to the rank of Bishop through sheer favouritism.

This is the main reason why the Bishops themselves, who comprise the most sacred institution of the SYNOD, have not adequately comprehended how frightful is their responsibility, when they show disregard for the latent ‘derogation’ or for the flagrant ‘oppression’ of the collective Body of Bishops.

Nonetheless, following all that was put forward by way of ‘recommendation’, albeit briefly, at our 10th Clergy-Laity Congress, conducted with a pre-eminently Orthodox phronema and spirit, none of the ‘ample’ Delegates could have remained indifferent to such a ‘burning’ and fundamental issue on which are directly dependent - not just theoretically - the peace and unity of the People of God who are being tried diversely, but also - in everyday practice - the effectiveness of the honourable struggles of each individual for truth and justice.

And because, in the ‘Keynote Address’, there was a brief intimation that the Synodal institution is being undermined in particular times and circumstances, ‘internally’ and ‘externally’, it was appropriate and needful for a more extensive analysis on the matter, both for the allaying of misinterpretations, and for the more essential edification of the faithful.

At any rate, the concise information imparted to a great extent through the ‘Keynote Address’ was subsequently supplemented and developed by the writer with a related specific article as to how the challenging yet highly significant 10th Clergy-Laity Congress was predicated as a historic watershed in the entire life of the Archdiocese of Australia.

From that ‘subsidiary’ article, published together with the ‘Keynote Address’ in the same edition of our newspaper (the ‘VEMA of the Church’, 5/23 February, 2008), every interested person is able to ascertain the main ‘parameters’ that dictated - as essential factors - the entire framework and agenda of the 10th Clergy-Laity Congress which was conducted in a truly ‘Synodal’ mode.

Returning today for a further deliberation on the enormous problems created from time to time by the circumstantial weakening or complete discrediting of the institution of the Synod, as appears across the entire breadth of the Christian ‘Churches’ or ‘Confessions’, we shall attempt to demonstrate briefly how the undermining of the institution of the Synod is perpetrated historically from ‘within’ and from ‘without’.

As a result of this historical analysis, it will become indeed more realistic as to the apportioning of responsibilities not only to those who bear “the first responsibilities”, whenever and wherever, but also to every Bishop who is answerable to the Holy Canons, the lifelong observance of which he undertook through proportionate oaths, during the frightful hour of his ordination.

(to be continued)

Translation by FSS
Contemplating year after year the splendid architecture of the Pentikostarion (liturgical period of fifty days, between Pascha and the Pentecost), one cannot escape the sense of witnessing something tremendously meaningful.

Indeed, this third – or is it, actually, the first? – section of the liturgical year displays the features of an eschatological scenery, being symbolically structured on an eight Sunday scheme which reflects the mystical number eight, of the age to come. Cosmologically speaking, eight is the number designating the eschatological state of universe, the kingdom of heaven or the unending day (cf. Paschal Canon, Ode 9), crowning the aeons of creation (encapsulated by the number of six and providence (indicated by the seventh day). Eschatologically shaped, the Pentikostarion plays therefore the role of a foretaste, an anticipatory experience, of the fulfillment of God’s creative project, revealing the essence of the Orthodox understanding of life and conveying a message for the spiritually mature faithful.

At the very core of Pentikostarion lays the period of forty days between Pascha and the feast of the Lord’s Ascension, as an annual reenactment of the intense experience of the disciples with the risen Lord: ‘being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God’ (Acts 1:3). The Scripture tells nothing explicitly as to the content of this mystical instruction, perhaps for the reasons indicated by the Lord in John 16:12; we could assume therefore that, within the symbolic framework of the forty days of paschal celebration, the Church, in its Spirit-guided journey toward the fullness of truth (cf. John 16:13), aims precisely at the reconstitution of this culminating teaching. In line with this assumption, the following reiteration of the biblical texts read in the six Sundays between Pascha and the Ascension will endeavour to give a glimpse of the content of what one might call the Paschal revolution inaugurated with the Gospel delivered by the risen Christ. I hope the term ‘revolution’ will not seem an exaggeration here, after all eschatologically the word means ‘return’. Or, from the very first moment till the end, during the paschal season we proclaim our passing from death to life and from the enmity to unity together with our Lord (cf. Paschal Canon, Ode 1); in other words, we chant about our return to the beauty to which God has called us from the establishment of the world.

The worshipping Church explores – and anticipatively tastes – the mystery of our renewal through the six Sundays of the paschal season. Each of the six Sundays represents a gate to the mystery of Christ’s final instruction, the key to decipher this code being the intersection point of the apostolic and gospel readings.

The First Sunday: Holy Pascha

**Summary of the readings:** (Acts 1:1-8) before his Ascension, the risen Lord teaches his disciples, initiating them into the mysteries of the kingdom of God; (John 1:1-17) the divine Logos, creator of the cosmos who is everywhere present, became flesh to make those who believe in him children of God.

**Wisdom:** reiteration of the apostolic conviviality with the risen Christ, the forty days of celebration represent an experience of the kingdom of God, the content of which is revealed as a double movement – of the Son of God becoming the Son of Man to make the faithful sons and daughters of God, reborn spiritually; (the second Sunday) the newness of life consists in the inner transformation, fully experienced by the saints and givers of life; (the fifth Sunday) the newness of life is marked by the overcoming of the otherness of cultures and ethnicity – a dimension illustrated powerfully by the message of the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit grants to all nations charismatic unity in the truth revealed by the exalted Christ. Indeed, the one willing to transcend the barrier of alterity has to undertake personal renewal and therefore to embrace Christ, the source of renewed life, and entering the ‘living water’ of the Holy Spirit of the Lord and becoming a ‘fountain of water springing up into everlasting life’. The purpose of the whole imagery evoked here finds its ultimate disclosure in Revelation 21-22, with the procession of the nations toward the New Jerusalem (symbol of the Church), the tree of life (symbol of Christ) and the river of life (symbol of the Holy Spirit).

The Second Sunday: Antipaschas

**Summary of the readings:** (Acts 5:12-20) arrested by the Sadducees, the apostles are freed by an angel who exhorts them to courageously proclaim the Gospel or ‘all the words of this [new] life’. (John 20:19-21) Thomas experiences the spiritual awakening, playing the role of a forerunner of those who, believing in Christ, ‘may have life in his name’. **Wisdom:** Thomas’ awakening, indicated by the acknowledgment of the risen Lord as God, represents a positive symmetry to the opening of the earthly eyes of Adam and Eve, who typify the loss of spiritual sight. Celebrating the new life inaugurated by Christ, the paschal revolution invites spiritual awakening, as a prerequisite of the self’s spiritual transformation, in turn, spiritual transformation is the only way to attain the fullness of life.

The Third Sunday

**Summary of the readings:** (Acts 6:1-7) compelled by the growing number of the faithful, the Church institutes the rank of deacons, clergymen dedicated to the social service of the community, (Mark 15:43 - 16:8) the pious myrrh-bearer women are sent by the angel to tell the apostles the good news of Christ’s resurrection.

**Wisdom:** the paschal revolution of the self makes possible the transformation of social relations, the overcoming of the gender issue, according to the Christological paradigm of the communication of characteristics (as suggested in Galatians 3:27-8): thus, through the deacons the men are called to partake in the ‘feminine’ charisma of serving, comprising the gifts of humility and compassion, whilst with the myrrh-bearers the women are called to the ‘masculine’ charisma of speaking in public, acquiring social dignity. We fully celebrate Pascha by learning to give and receive from each other, in Christ and his Church.

The Fourth Sunday

**Summary of the readings:** (Acts 9:32-42) aspects of the activity of St Peter – healing of Aenas and resurrection of Tabitha in the name of Christ; (John 5:1-15) Jesus healed the paralytic of Bethesda, asking him to sin no more. **Wisdom:** the paralytic, and the two beneficiaries of Peter’s miracles, play the role of metaphors of the entire fallen humanity, corrected, weak and, without the power of the creator Logos, hopeless in the face of death; in turn, unveling sin as the spiritual cause of our decaying nature, the Lord of life gives hope of personal renewal to all who accept to cooperate with him toward their own transformation. In other words, healing the mind from the wounds produced by sinfulness (a spiritual resurrection), the Lord prepares the final defeat of bodily death. The best, yet implicit, exegesis of the two resurrections, of the mind and of the body, is perhaps the word of Christ as related in John 5:24-25 (spiritual resurrection) & 5:28-29 (physical resurrection).

The Fifth Sunday

**Summary of the readings:** (Acts 11:19-30) banished from Judea, many Christians went to Antioch, preaching to and converting pagans; (John 4:5-42) Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that true believers are no longer localised: faith is atomic, and only those transcending the problems of perception concerning otherness can worship God reverently.

**Wisdom:** the paschal revolution of human relations entails the overcoming of the otherness of cultures and ethnicity – a dimension illustrated powerfully by the message of the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit grants to all nations charismatic unity in the truth revealed by the exalted Christ. Indeed, the one willing to transcend the barrier of alterity has to undertake personal renewal and therefore to embrace Christ, the source of renewed life, and entering the ‘living water’ of the Holy Spirit of the Lord and becoming a ‘fountain of water springing up into everlasting life’. The purpose of the whole imagery evoked here finds its ultimate disclosure in Revelation 21-22, with the procession of the nations toward the New Jerusalem (symbol of the Church), the tree of life (symbol of Christ) and the river of life (symbol of the Holy Spirit).

The Sixth Sunday

**Summary of the readings:** (Acts 16:16-34) aspects of the activity of St Paul – freeing the young slave possessed by a divination spirit and baptising the house of the Philippian jailer; (John 9:1-38) Jesus, the light of the world, gives sight to a blind man, who acknowledges the Son of God/Man (the various manuscript traditions give different solutions to the name of Christ in John 9:5-8).

**Wisdom:** being far from the Light of the world due to reiterating the irrational choice of Adam and Eve, humanity is spiritually blind; the Blindness of the possessed young man represent metaphors of our deplorable state of alienation from God and our very nature; yet, in Christ and in his name we are granted the chance to recover spiritual sight and maturity. Celebrating the paschal season we are taught concerning what we have forgotten about ourselves, what we mystically already are in Christ and what our call is to become sees of God (we have beheld his glory) , states the Gospel of the Pascha), as the completion of our destiny.

Recapitulating the revolutionary message of the paschal Hexaemeron (six days, here Sundays), we may note that: (the first Sunday) since Christ is God and Logos incarnate, those who acknowledge him are granted to become sons and daughters of God, reborn spiritually, (the second Sunday) those who acknowledge Christ through the opening of spiritual eyes, with Thomas, are the inheritors of the new – or the newness of – life, (the third Sunday) living Christ-like or walking the path of virtue, which transcends gender, the inheritors of the new life experience the richness of sharing all the charismata bestowed by God on humanity; (the fourth Sunday) the newness of life consists in the inner transformation, fully experienced by the saints who, overcoming the prejudices related to our world – cannot not only worship God reverently but also become life-bearers and givers of life; (the fifth Sunday) the newness of life brings inner healing from the paralysis of sin, like a second elevation from the dust of the earth (cf. Genesis 2:7) and recovery of our spiritual verticality; (the sixth Sunday) the newness of life is radical healing of spiritual blindness produced by sin, the regaining of our spiritual sight.
The paschal revolution is further intensified and amplified by the remaining Sundays of the Pentekostarion. After contemplating the difference between Christ and those in Christ, a difference becoming obvious with the Lord’s ascension, we witness in the seventh Sunday (symbol of this week) the glory of the Church, with the holy fathers, i.e. traditionally, the One who is our door to eternal life. The entire process of spiritual awakening and transformation is possible with, in and through Christ: recognizing and acknowledging him as the Son of his Father (cf. John 17:3), an idea already maintained by the first Sunday (cf. John 1:14). Further on, those renewed in Christ receive, on the eighth Sunday (symbol of the eschaton) – the Holy Spirit, the gift of living in God, through which one partakes both in the fullness of divine life and the charismata bestowed upon God’s people by the Father, through the incarnate, crucified and risen Son, in the Holy Spirit. Beyond the paschal Hexaemeron and the Pascha, the mystery of renewal is concretely manifested in the ninth Sunday, of All Saints — known and unknown, dead and alive (typified in the ritual of prothesis by the nine saintly ranks) — in truth the people of God who bear all the signs of the paschal revolution.

It is more than likely that, to trace with absolute certainty the unheard words of the risen Lord, the way they were delivered for forty days to his disciples, remains for the time being an utter impossibility. In the framework of the liturgical celebration, however, we can contemplate at least the fundamental solutions need to be found *

Mothers in full-time employment spend twice as long as fathers on domestic duties, statistics show.

And nearly two-thirds of parents with children under 15 say they are “always” or “often” pressed for time.

The figures are part of the Australian Bureau Statistics’ snapshot of family life, prepared for National Families Week.

The statistics, which cover parents with children under 15, reveal about 60 per cent of mothers are currently employed and of those 60 per cent are in part-time work. About 93 per cent of fathers are in work, but just one per cent are part time.

Mothers in part-time work spend, on average, 19 hours a week working, 19 hours caring for children and 23 hours on domestic activities.

Mothers in full-time work spend, on average, 18 hours per week on domestic activities - twice as much as their male partners.

And nearly two-thirds of all parents said they ‘always or often’ felt rushed or pressed for time.

Families Australia CEO Brian Babington says the statistics demonstrate the difficulties in balancing work and family life.

“It’s increasingly clear that Australian families are under pressure to balance work and family life,” Mr Babington told AAP.

“We welcome developments such as the inquiry into paid maternity leave as a way of addressing some of these imbalances, particularly for women who are still doing the lion’s share of housework.

“But these figures do demonstrate, yet again, that more per week on domestic activities - twice as much their male partners.

The physical consequences can also be illustrated, said Dr Philpott, from the state’s infectious diseases services.

Cigarettes cost the average Australian smoker about $300,000 in their lifetime, a new calculation shows.

A South Australian infectious disease physician, Dr Ross Philpott, has run new statistics on the physical and financial cost of smoking.

By 65, the average 20-a-day smoker will have puffed on 400,000 cigarettes, and by the time they die 500,000 will have been smoked.

This costs each smoker about $300,000, a “sobering” figure that all doctors should remind their patients of to help them quit, he said.

The physical consequences can also be illustrated, said Dr Philpott, from the state’s infectious diseases services.

“Half a million cigarettes generally causes chronic smoke bronchitis, with or without some degree of emphysema - while three-quarters of a million cigarettes makes cancer a distinct possibility.”

He said telling smokers these statistics was a “simple and effective” method doctors could use to coerce patients into cutting back or giving up all together.

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) has raised the official cash rate four times since August while retail banks topped-up the increases with several independent hikes.

The TD Securities-Melbourne Institute monthly inflation gauge jumped 0.5 per cent in April, lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent, the highest level in the series’ five year history.

Even more worrying was a 0.6 per cent increase in the gauge of underlying inflation, also lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent.

These are higher than last month’s official readings of inflation for the March quarter, and way above the RBA’s preferred two-to-three per cent target range.

At the same time, a survey shows job advertisements in major newspapers and on the internet rebounded 3.1 per cent in April, ending two straight months of decline.

The Greek Australian VEMA

TO BHMA

Cont. from previous page

by the nine

ance right.

AAP

Cigarettes put Aussies $300,000 out of pocket

House prices grew by a slim 1.1 pct in March quarter

The RBA has raised the official cash rate four times since August while retail banks topped-up the increases with several independent hikes.

The TD Securities-Melbourne Institute monthly inflation gauge jumped 0.5 per cent in April, lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent, the highest level in the series’ five year history.

Even more worrying was a 0.6 per cent increase in the gauge of underlying inflation, also lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent.

These are higher than last month’s official readings of inflation for the March quarter, and way above the RBA’s preferred two-to-three per cent target range.

At the same time, a survey shows job advertisements in major newspapers and on the internet rebounded 3.1 per cent in April, ending two straight months of decline.

Cigarettes cost the average Australian smoker about $300,000 in their lifetime, a new calculation shows.

A South Australian infectious disease physician, Dr Ross Philpott, has run new statistics on the physical and financial cost of smoking.

By 65, the average 20-a-day smoker will have puffed on 400,000 cigarettes, and by the time they die 500,000 will have been smoked.

This costs each smoker about $300,000, a “sobering” figure that all doctors should remind their patients of to help them quit, he said.

The physical consequences can also be illustrated, said Dr Philpott, from the state’s infectious diseases services.

“In my three decades of experience, I have noted that an accumulated intake of a quarter of a million cigarettes usually results in at least some cough, breathlessness and wheeze and decreased exercise tolerance,” he wrote in the latest Medical Journal of Australia.

“Half a million cigarettes generally causes chronic smoker’s bronchitis, with or without some degree of emphysema - while three-quarters of a million cigarettes makes cancer a distinct possibility.”

He said telling smokers these statistics was a “simple and effective” method doctors could use to coerce patients into cutting back or giving up all together.

The RBA has raised the official cash rate four times since August while retail banks topped-up the increases with several independent hikes.

The TD Securities-Melbourne Institute monthly inflation gauge jumped 0.5 per cent in April, lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent, the highest level in the series’ five year history.

Even more worrying was a 0.6 per cent increase in the gauge of underlying inflation, also lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent.

These are higher than last month’s official readings of inflation for the March quarter, and way above the RBA’s preferred two-to-three per cent target range.

At the same time, a survey shows job advertisements in major newspapers and on the internet rebounded 3.1 per cent in April, ending two straight months of decline.

Cigarettes cost the average Australian smoker about $300,000 in their lifetime, a new calculation shows.

A South Australian infectious disease physician, Dr Ross Philpott, has run new statistics on the physical and financial cost of smoking.

By 65, the average 20-a-day smoker will have puffed on 400,000 cigarettes, and by the time they die 500,000 will have been smoked.

This costs each smoker about $300,000, a “sobering” figure that all doctors should remind their patients of to help them quit, he said.

The physical consequences can also be illustrated, said Dr Philpott, from the state’s infectious diseases services.

“In my three decades of experience, I have noted that an accumulated intake of a quarter of a million cigarettes usually results in at least some cough, breathlessness and wheeze and decreased exercise tolerance,” he wrote in the latest Medical Journal of Australia.

“Half a million cigarettes generally causes chronic smoker’s bronchitis, with or without some degree of emphysema - while three-quarters of a million cigarettes makes cancer a distinct possibility.”

He said telling smokers these statistics was a “simple and effective” method doctors could use to coerce patients into cutting back or giving up all together.

The RBA has raised the official cash rate four times since August while retail banks topped-up the increases with several independent hikes.

The TD Securities-Melbourne Institute monthly inflation gauge jumped 0.5 per cent in April, lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent, the highest level in the series’ five year history.

Even more worrying was a 0.6 per cent increase in the gauge of underlying inflation, also lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent.

These are higher than last month’s official readings of inflation for the March quarter, and way above the RBA’s preferred two-to-three per cent target range.

At the same time, a survey shows job advertisements in major newspapers and on the internet rebounded 3.1 per cent in April, ending two straight months of decline.

Cigarettes cost the average Australian smoker about $300,000 in their lifetime, a new calculation shows.

A South Australian infectious disease physician, Dr Ross Philpott, has run new statistics on the physical and financial cost of smoking.

By 65, the average 20-a-day smoker will have puffed on 400,000 cigarettes, and by the time they die 500,000 will have been smoked.

This costs each smoker about $300,000, a “sobering” figure that all doctors should remind their patients of to help them quit, he said.

The physical consequences can also be illustrated, said Dr Philpott, from the state’s infectious diseases services.

“In my three decades of experience, I have noted that an accumulated intake of a quarter of a million cigarettes usually results in at least some cough, breathlessness and wheeze and decreased exercise tolerance,” he wrote in the latest Medical Journal of Australia.

“Half a million cigarettes generally causes chronic smoker’s bronchitis, with or without some degree of emphysema - while three-quarters of a million cigarettes makes cancer a distinct possibility.”

He said telling smokers these statistics was a “simple and effective” method doctors could use to coerce patients into cutting back or giving up all together.

The RBA has raised the official cash rate four times since August while retail banks topped-up the increases with several independent hikes.

The TD Securities-Melbourne Institute monthly inflation gauge jumped 0.5 per cent in April, lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent, the highest level in the series’ five year history.

Even more worrying was a 0.6 per cent increase in the gauge of underlying inflation, also lifting the annual rate to 4.3 per cent.

These are higher than last month’s official readings of inflation for the March quarter, and way above the RBA’s preferred two-to-three per cent target range.

At the same time, a survey shows job advertisements in major newspapers and on the internet rebounded 3.1 per cent in April, ending two straight months of decline.
By Gay Freeland

Let us who mysteriously represent the Cherubim, and who sing the thrice-holy hymn to the life-giving Trinity, now lay aside all earthly care, that we may receive the King of all, invisibly attended by the angelic orders.

(The Cherubic Hymn, from The Divine Liturgy, St Andrew’s Orthodox Press.)

So we sing at the Great Entrance at every celebration of the Divine Liturgy, except the Liturgy of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday and the Paschal Vigil Liturgy. Our worship is at one with the unceasing worship of the celestial choirs.

The Domus Ecclesiae

Before Constantine, churches existed only in a few isolated places. Nearly all Christians worshipped in an ordinary house, a domus ecclesiae (= house church). The very first Eucharist, the Last Supper, was itself celebrated in the upper room of a house that can still be visited today.

With the freedom of the Church, house churches were frequently demolished and replaced by a purpose-built church. The locations of the house churches, also known as tituli, still largely define the parishes of the City of Rome and, interestingly, the Liturgy uses the word house (oikos) in preference to church/temple.

In 1971, I was attached to a university in Southern England. The Orthodox chaplain, who was both a university lecturer and priest of the Moscow Patriarchate, lived out in the countryside and served Orthodox from the surrounding district.

Out in his rural retreat, this priest used to celebrate the Divine Liturgy by simply spreading an antimension (a cloth into which relics of saints are sown) over his study desk, where on weekdays he wrote articles and marked student assignments. A couple of icons would be propped up, and that was it.

Of course, vestments, incense and candles were used and rich Russian voices sang the Liturgy. After the Liturgy the tiny congregation would repair to the kitchen for brunch. These celebrations captured for me the feel of what those early Liturgies would have been like, right down to the “love feast”, the agape, which would have followed the Liturgy.

We even attended midnight Paschal Mattins and Liturgy in that domus ecclesiae deep in the Sussex countryside. That Easter Sunday it happened to be my daughter’s second birthday, so the Paschal breakfast which followed the Liturgy doubled as a Birthday party.

One thing that strongly impressed me from my very first contacts with Orthodoxy was the strong domestic ethos; but those desk-top Liturgies transported me into which relics of saints are sown) over his study desk, into the upper room of a house that can still be visited today.

The Cosmic Temple

It is not only Christians who have constructed temples. The Jews had the Temple in Jerusalem, the house of God, and before that the tent housing the Ark of the Covenant, the Tabernacle, which they transported from place to place. The Ancient Greeks and Romans also, of course, had temples, architecturally beautiful houses for the cult images of their deities.

But before ever human beings built temples, there were temples without walls where the people gathered to offer sacrifices and worship. Thus in the Old Testament we read of the pagan “high places” on mountains and hills. That the Jews themselves in earliest times had open-air temples is clear from the account of the dream in which Jacob saw angels ascending and descending. On waking, Jacob declared:

“Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it … How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” (Genesis 28:16-17 RSV.)

And with the stone that he had used as a pillow he set up an altar and consecrated it by pouring oil over it (the Church today still consecrates Holy Tables and churches by anointing them with chrism).

So Jacob’s “house of God” was not a building or even a tent but simply a conceptual temple revealed through a dream; a temple that was a function of that revelation, Jacob set up an altar.

Underlying such open-air temples is the conception of the cosmos itself as a temple. Under this conception God is not contained, imprisoned so-to-speak, within a building.

To understand these temples-without-walls, it is helpful to consider the Ancient temple of the augurs. Augurs were pagan priests who had the duty of seeking out and interpreting signs or portents in order to foretell future events or determine the most favourable course of action. The augur’s temple was a ritually created conceptual space within which portents could be observed.

The Ancients believed that there were exact correspondences between the macrocosm, the heavens, and the microcosm, the earth, particularly the human person. The heavens, it was believed, could be mapped onto the earth through ritual, thus achieving a unification of the two realms. Secrets known to the gods could by this means be revealed through signs.

The augur created his temple by mapping the heavens in the form of a diagram on the surface of the earth. First, he would trace out the most basic astronomical alignments, the E-W and N-S axes, with his staff. Then he would inscribe a boundary around the axes thus creating a space divided into four quarters. (This procedure is still basically how the foundations for a church should be marked out.) Each of these four quarters was called a templum.

He would then relate the boundaries of the templum, each of which would have had astrological associations, to the surrounding countryside, so that the terrain would be divided into the four bounded quarters represented in the diagram.

In the next stage he would examine his surroundings, quarter by quarter, noting features which could be of potential oracular significance. This done, he could unify the templum into a single templum and pronounce the legeon dixi, the formal statement of the question to be answered.

Finally, came the wait for signs (such as the flight pattern of birds) and then their interpretation in accordance with established principles.

Both the Jewish Temple and pagan temples were houses for the gods. Christianity, however, dispensed with the notion that sacrifices and ritual worship could only be offered at a temple. God can be worshipped anywhere, the Eucharist can be celebrated in any place. A church is simply a building designed for the celebration of the Liturgy and other services.

The Jewish Temple and its priesthood came under attack by Christians from the beginning. In the sermon which led to his martyrdom, St Stephen argued that, while Moses had been commanded by God to construct the Tabernacle, the building of the Temple was contrary to the will of God (Acts 7:47-50).

It was Solomon who built a house for [God]. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; the prophet says,

‘Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?’ (Isaiah 66:1-2.)
The Earthly Heaven

Christians might speak of a church as “God’s house”, but clearly the expression has quite a different meaning than it does when applied to a pagan temple or the Jewish Temple. A Christian church/temple is built and adorned to the glory of God but is not fashioned as a vessel in which God can be bottled and where alone sacrificial worship is to be offered.

There is an allusion in the quotation to Genesis 3:8, which tells how Adam and Eve “heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day”. The Fathers identify “the Lord” as the Logos, Christ. However, Germanus refers to the earthly Paradise, Eden, only as the type of the heavenly Paradise to which we aspire, and the heavenly Paradise equates with the supercelestial (equally “supersensible”) heavens.

For Germanus, the church is an earthly heaven because it is in the church that we celebrate the Liturgy, that our worship becomes at one with that of the angels before the throne of God in the supercelestial heavens/heavenly Paradise. And it becomes as one with that of the angels before the throne of the heavenly Paradise to which we aspire, and the heavenly Paradise equates with the supercelestial (equally “supersensible”) heavens.

The apparent duality of the two realms, heaven and earth, is resolved and we get a glimpse from our cleft in the rock of the underlying reality, the unity of all things in God.

With the development of church architecture and iconography it became possible to freeze in concrete form what is expressed through poetry, music and ceremonial in the Liturgy.

Cont. from previous page

For the bibliophiles...

St Andrew’s Theological College:
The First Two Decades.
(St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Press, 2007)

The first thing that strikes one about this book is the quality of its presentation: of the binding, the typeface, and the photographs. The second is its bilingual nature; with Greek on one page and English on the opposite, this book caters to everyone interested in the College. Following the introduction of Orthodoxy into Australia, and then the introduction of English into the Liturgy, the establishment of St Andrew’s Theological College must surely rate as the third most significant step in the establishment of a Church truly relevant to Australia as the Church of the body of Christ. And therefore (and therefore ‘exotic’ Church.) Along with lists of administrators and faculty members, and graduation photos, a little over half the pages is devoted to sermons given by the Dean of the College, his Eminence, Archbishop Stylianos. These short sermons have a greater immediacy than what one would expect from, say, a journal article and, as a result, make for exciting reading.

Greek Monastery Cookery

By Archimandrite Dosithios (Eptalofos, n.d.)

No meat recipes are given in this ‘best-seller’ as meat is not eaten in monasteries. The recipes each cater for 10 people, but it is not difficult to scale down the ingredients to family-sized proportions. The recipes cover vegetables and legumes (including 8 recipes for spinach), fish and other seafood (including 8 recipes for octopus), miscellaneous dishes (from recipes for pasta to rarities such as snails/escargots!), and sweets and pastries (facing and non-fasting). The ingredients are all familiar, and straightforward. A book worth adding to one’s collection.

Both books are available from the Book Centre of the Australian Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, 242 Cleveland St., Redfern Sydney, NSW 2016. The Book Centre may be contacted via email, phone (02) 94985066, and email at bookcentre@greekorthodox.org.au.

A.C.
St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College
graduated students in the twenty-fourth award conferring ceremony of the Sydney College of Divinity in the Great Hall, University of Sydney, on Saturday 26 April. A huge attendance of over six hundred people gathered within the Great Hall to celebrate the academic achievement of one hundred and fifty graduates from across the eleven member institutions of the Sydney College of Divinity.

The Occasional Address was delivered by Prof. Ron McCallum AO, Professor of Industrial Law at Sydney University. In a memorable way he spoke passionately about his two heroes: the man born blind from the Gospel of John (chp.9), and Nicholas Saunderson (1682-1739), English scientist and Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University – both blind from or soon after birth, like Prof. McCallum himself.

The first hero, “unnamed but not unknown” was a reminder to all that we are on this earth to be a manifestation of God’s work, irrespective of our health and physical condition. The second was an inspiration to all that a person can overcome physical disability and pursue high and “useful” aspirations.

St Andrew’s was represented in the official academic procession by Dr Guy Freeland, Lecturer in Hermeneutics and Liturgical Studies; and Mr Tasos Kalogerakis, Registrar. Also in attendance were Mr Dimitri Kepreotes, College Lecturer and Director of St Andrew’s Orthodox Press, as well as family members of the graduates.

The following students from St Andrew’s were conferred with degrees by the Acting President of the Sydney College of Divinity, Assoc. Prof. Rev. Gerard Kelly:

- Master of Theology (with Honours) Anthony Papantonious (NSW)
- Master of Arts Rev. Evmenios Vasilopoulos (Assistant Parish Priest at the Greek Orthodox Church of our Lord’s Transfiguration, Thomastown VIC – in absentia); John Athanasiou (WA); Andrew Kapos (NSW – in absentia); Demos Nicolaou (VIC – in absentia); Dimitri Papaikonomou (NSW – in absentia); and Anthony Picardi (NSW)
- Bachelor of Theology John Kirkis (NSW – in absentia)
- Diploma of Theology Peter Anastasaidis (NSW)

Since 1990, eighty-seven students of St Andrew’s have graduated with awards (primarily the Bachelor of Theology) from the Sydney College of Divinity. To date, thirty-three serve as priests or deacons within the Orthodox Church and a number are employed within positions of education, administration, chaplaincy and welfare.
SKYNEWS HOST JOHN MANGOS RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS 2008 AWARD

Since 1993 the Kastellorizian Association of Victoria has awarded a member of the Kastellorizian community with the Kastellorizian of the Year Award. The award acknowledges the contribution that the recipient has made to the local, Australian and/or international community in the areas such as academic, business, social, community or cultural development. It is with great pleasure that Kastellorizian Association of Victoria announces that this year’s recipient of the Kastellorizian of the Year Award is John Mangos. John will receive the award at the annual Sts Constantine and Helen’s Day celebrations that will be held on the 25th of May, 2008.


John is a popular news journalist, charismatic presenter and a familiar face on Australian television screens. His career on national TV extends over approximately thirty years. However his endeavours extend beyond the boundaries of his career. John was the first “Greek face” on “mainstream” Australian television and used this to his advantage to encourage Greek culture throughout Australia. He proudly acknowledges that he heritage and has promoted Greek culture and actively participated in the Australian and Greek communities. As a media journalist and personality, John has interacted with people from all walks of life and has been deeply affected by those less fortunate. As a result, John has donated his time to many charities and non-profit organisations.

As you read John’s CV you will find that John has many attributes that makes him an ideal role model and inspiration to the younger members of Greek and Australian communities.

John attended University High where he developed an interest in journalism. He completed his HSC in 1975 and the following year he undertook studies in Journalism at RMIT. Whilst completing his tertiary education, John worked as a cadet for then Melbourne afternoon newspaper, “The Herald”. In 1979 John commenced work at GTV9 as an “on air” reporter. As a result, John made TV history as the first “Greek” journalist reporting on “mainstream” Australian television. In his 14 year career at the Nine Network, John worked as a “newscaster” in the Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery. During this period, he travelled with the then Prime Ministers (Fraser, Hawke, Keating) reporting on the political situation at the time. John also worked as a NSW State Political Correspondent (1984-1986) before he became the network’s United States correspondent based in Los Angeles in 1987 and 1988.

The highlights of his overseas experience include an ongoing series on the Primary election campaign and nomination for Presidential candidate of Michael Dukakis, the Inauguration in 1989 of President George Bush, the Iran Contra hearings, the Americas Cup campaign in San Diego in 1987, Academy Awards in ‘87 and ’88, whales trapped in Alaska (1988) and a health special on 38 year old Siamese twins. Celebrity interviews included Elizabeth Taylor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jane Fonda, Bette Middler, Faye Dunaway, Danny DeVito, Sylvester Stallone, Timothy Dalton, Don Johnson and Sidney Poitier and Sting.

In 2001, John moved to Network Ten to present the Eyewitness news. A year later he was returned Nine to as the “international roving” reporter for the “Miday show”. John took up an offer from Seven Network to host his own morning chat show, “At Home with John Mangos”, which aired nationally for two years.

John diversified into “Radio Media” where he was a breakfast announcer on Sydney radio station 2KY (1991-1993). John continues to work in radio and at present, he regularly presents a top rating afternoon program on Sydney talkback radio station 2UE. In 1993 John launched his own media consultancy company “Megsti Media” and is available for media training, facilitating, as a Master of ceremonies and after dinner speaking.

ST EUPHENIA COLLEGE

High School’s Open Night

Open Night for Parents, Caregivers and Students.

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

You are cordially invited to attend ST Euphemia College’s High School’s Open Night in the School Hall. on 21st of May 2008, commencing at 6.30pm.

ST Euphemia College

202 Stacey Street

Bankstown, 2200, NSW

P.O. Box 747, Bankstown, 1885, NSW

Phone: 9796 8240

Fax: 9790 7354

Web: www.steuphemia.nsw.edu.au

Email: officehs@steuphemia.nsw.edu.au

Please indicate if you will be able to attend the Open Night by contacting the High School Secretary Ms Kotsidis.

School Profile

St Euphemia College (SE) is a co-educational school providing education to approximately 700 students K - 12.

The school was established in 1989 by the Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Bankstown and Districts.

The students who come from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds are encouraged to exceed in all their endeavours in a caring, disciplined and safe environment that is responsive to individual needs.

The school pursues the objectives, processes and outcomes of education as stated by the NSW Board of Studies. English is the medium of instruction and courses are offered in all Key Learning Areas of secondary education.

Mission Statement

That within a dynamic Orthodox, Christian framework, a student may strive to achieve academic excellence, a love for learning, social responsibility, spiritual growth and respect for a healthy mind and body.
China aware of terror threat to Olympic Games says Australian expert

Chinese authorities would be well aware of the potential threat to the Olympics posed by terror groups associated with al-Qaeda, an Australian terror expert says.

Mr Fergus, head of the security firm Intelligent Risks, says al-Qaeda regards the Olympic principles of bringing together different cultures, races and creeds as an anathema to their philosophy.

"Mind you, Sinkiang province is a long way from Beijing, and Urumqi is well away from there," he said.

"I don't believe there is any evidence of a threat from there."

China aware of terror threat

Mr Fergus told ABC radio. "I don't believe there is any evidence of a threat from there."

China aware of terror threat

Mr Fergus told ABC radio. "I don't believe there is any evidence of a threat from there."

"It is a terrorist entity largely based in China because its roots are in the Uighur Islamic Movement (ETIM)."

Mr Fergus told ABC radio.

"It is a terrorist entity largely based in China because its roots are in the Uighur Islamic Movement (ETIM)."

China aware of terror threat

Mr Fergus, head of the security firm Intelligent Risks, says al-Qaeda regards the Olympic principles of bringing together different cultures, races and creeds as an anathema to their philosophy.

Mr Fergus told ABC radio.

"Mind you, Sinkiang province is a long way from Beijing, and Urumqi is well away from there."
HEALTH NEWS
WITH DR. THEO PENKLIS *

Men are more reluctant than women to consult doctors and therefore men have poorer health outcomes than women. Many of the factors that affect men’s health are preventable and intervention from general practitioners can in fact improve health outcomes. Men need to be encouraged more to see their doctor. Many men do not have a general practitioner or see the need to have one. Many men do not see the need for a check up or do not understand the benefit of preventative health services.

Indicators of men’s health
Men die at a greater rate than women in all age groups. Men have higher levels of morbidity for all diseases. Men suffer from a greater level of mental illnesses including depression than women. Men are more likely to commit suicide than women. Men are more likely to be seriously injured or killed in the workplace than women.

Generally speaking, men are less likely to seek medical services than women. Men use preventative health services less than women. This may be due to the fact that preventative health services for women are better promoted.

Not only are there differences between genders, but within genders health outcomes are different. The single most pertinent factor affecting men’s health is income. Men on low incomes have the worst health outcomes in the population.

Men and the General Practitioner
Men do not use the general practitioner well. Many men do not have a general practitioner, and many men are reluctant to attend a general practitioner. There are a number of reasons for low levels of attendance at doctors surgeries. For example, self-employed tradesmen, one of the main groups at risk, are time conscious and unwilling to attend a doctor for minor symptoms. They tend to wait until they become functionally incapacitated, often compromising their treatment and recovery. Generally speaking, men wait at least a few days from the onset of symptoms before seeking medical advice. Unfortunately, general practitioners sometimes are not able to key into the patient’s problems. Men sometimes present with physical ailments, but the main issue is of a psycho-social nature and many men are unable to recognise this and leave initiation of the discussion to the general practitioner.

A good general practitioner will key into the patient’s concerns. Good general practitioners will seek opportunities for offering preventative care when patients present with other problems or concerns. They are proactive in targeting preventive care to high risk individuals and need to reach all patients, especially those least likely to seek assistance.

Male health check
All men aged 20-49 should have an annual check-up with their general practitioner. These checks should include: a check on blood pressure, blood cholesterol level at least every 5 years and more frequently if elevated or on treat- ment. A urine test for diabetes or protein. A skin check to exclude signs of skin damage or skin cancer. A review of the man’s immunisation status. Is a Tetanus booster required? Is a Flu vaccine required depending on the man’s health and work history?

MEN’S HEALTH

The doctor will discuss diet, nutrition, exercise and social connectedness or loneliness. The elderly male may have a ‘career’ role for an unwell spouse. Nutrition can be a real problem for the elderly widower. The doctor will also discuss the patient’s driving ability.

Getting men to the Doctor
Men need to be encouraged by their spouse or children to attend the family general practitioner. Men need to find a general practitioner with whom they feel comfortable and at ease. Some practices have an interest in men’s health. They may have men’s health posters and information in the surgery, or books or videos related to men’s health.

Men need to be encouraged to use their general practitioner before ailments become serious. They need to attend for at least an annual and regular health checks and will return when they perceive that their general practitioner is interested in their general well-being.

MEN’S HEALTH

If there is a family history of certain conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, bowel or prostate cancer or melanoma, then other tests may be necessary.

The doctor should also discuss family relationship issues, mental health issues, depression, stress, or occupational health and safety issues.

The consultations ill also include discussion with respect to diet, exercise, smoking, alcohol and drug use.

For older adults aged 50-70 years, the health check should include the above, plus a check for prostate disease, which involves a PSA blood test and a digital rectal examination. Again, a test for diabetes should be performed and this time should involve a blood test as well as a urine test. The doc- tor will also discuss screening for bowel cancer. The doctor will also discuss issues with respect to family relationships, social support, sexual health and retirement.

For elderly men over 70 years, the check up should involve a full health assessment, and will include symptoms associated with arthritis, osteoporosis, memory loss, possible an eye check for glaucoma and skin checks for signs of skin cancer. Older men may have a poor urinary stream. Men over 70 do not require regular digital rectal examinations unless they are concerned about urinary symptoms.

ANNOUNCEMENT

St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College is pleased to announce the continuation of its successful and highly informative intensive course units during January and July. These five-day intensives commenced in January 2004 as part of the establishment of fully accredited graduate level programs: Graduate Certificate of Arts, Graduate Diploma of Arts and the Master of Arts.

The schedule for July 2008 will be:

CHRISTIAN INITIATION AND THE DIVINE LITURGY (7-11 JULY 2008)

This unit traces the origins and development of rites of Christian initiation and of the Divine Liturgy, with particular reference to the fourth century Church, and analyses the theology of the mysteries. The unit provides a solid foundation for further study of liturgics.

Themes include:

• The roots of the Christian mysteries and liturgy within Judaism and parallels with pagan mystery religion
• The development and meaning of Christian rites of initiation and their relationships to the Paschal Mystery; fourth-century catechetical homilies
• The development of the Eucharistic Anaphora and the nature of the Eucharistic transformation
• The structure and component elements of the Liturgies of St Basil and of St John Chrysostom
• The origins and development of the Christian temple and the liturgical use of architectural spaces
• The celebration of the Liturgy and the mysteries today, and the challenge of liturgical reform

HYMNODY AND HYMNOGRAPHY (14-18 JULY 2008)

This unit provides a detailed study of various aspects of Orthodox Christian hymnology including its history, theology, musical structure and poetical forms.

Themes include:

• The historical development of hymnology: early Christian origins, Byzantine creativity, post-Byzantine consolidation
• The diachronic importance of the Psalter
• Patristic commentary on the ethos and theology of hymnology
• The role of the human being in the interplay of words and music
• Poetical forms: antiphons, kontakia, canons and other troparia
• The invention of the Byzantine musical system and the stages in its development
• Personalities: St Romanos the Melodist, St John of Damascus, and the Studites

The course units are conducted on campus at Redfern NSW and are open to men and women, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike. They may be credited towards a degree (credit application) or undertaken by university students as electives towards their own awards (e.g., Bachelor of Arts). Limited places may also be available to auditors. Applications for July 2008 should be lodged by Friday 30 May 2008.

For more information about theological education at St Andrew’s please contact the Registrar by telephone on (02) 9319 6145 / 9698 5066 or via email at registrar@sagotc.edu.au.
Principles of Biblical Interpretation in Orthodox Theology

By Anthony Papantoniou
Graduate of St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College

Christianity emerged with the experience of the person and event of Jesus.

The gospels are the primary interpretation of the experience of Jesus who is interpret-
ed by the early apostolic community in accordance with the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus is perceived as the fulfillment of the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets. Apostolic eyewitness as testimony to the historicity of the event and person of Jesus is integral to the formation of understanding who Jesus was, however it is the Old Testament Scriptures which predominately fashion this understanding. Jesus is inter-
preted “according to the scriptures”, and it is precisely this image of Jesus that becomes the normative interpretation, and is finally expressed in the Gospels, and the other books of the canonical New Testament. The Gospels are primarily theo-
logical writings that attempt to bear witness to Jesus and the Church’s faith.

Principles of Orthodox Biblical Interpretation

In Orthodox theology, an important distinc-
tion is maintained between the truth and reality of God and the conceptual and ling-
guistic expression of this truth. The divine mystery is revealed to humanity, who expe-
rience and participate in this truth, and finally articulate it conceptually and ling-

guistically. There is thus a distinction between the reality of God which has been revealed, and our attempt to express this reality in concepts and language. However, our conceptual expression of the divine mystery is an authentic interpretation and expression in so far as it reflects what has been revealed and experienced. Thus, in Orthodox theology, Scripture is understood as a witness and testimony to the reality of the divine mystery revealed in the person and event of Jesus Christ.

For this reason, in Orthodox theology, the “Word of God” is ultimately the eternal Logos, who became incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth. Scripture is therefore, the witness to the “Word of God” who is the Incarnate Christ. The expression “Word of God” refers to three distinct but ultimately related realities: “the Person of the divine Logos, the written witness to him in the form of the apostolic writings, and proclamation of him as an invitation to faith and life in him.”

If the “Word of God” is ultimately understood as neither the “biblical text nor its exposition” but rather as the Person of the eternal Logos, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Scripture needs to be understood from a Trinitarian perspective. Thus, a fundamental principle of Orthodox exegesis is its Trinitarian approach. The reason for this is that Scripture which is inspired by the Spirit reveals the person and work of the Son of God, whose mission in turn is to reveal to us the “face of God the Father and to open the way towards our eternal com-
munion with him.”

Another principle of interpretation in Orthodox exegesis is the foundational nature of Scripture as a theandric or divine-human reality. Scripture contains “elements that are historically, culturally and linguisti-
cally conditioned.” Thus, “Scripture is the fruit of synergy or cooperation between God and the human author.” and as such, Scripture must be received in every genera-
tion of the Church’s life, under the inspira-
tion of the Holy Spirit. A fourth defining characteristic of Orthodox interpretation is the fact that the interpretation of the Word of God is properly ecclesial. The Church is “the proper locus for the interpretation as well as for the proclamation and liturgical celebration of the Word of God.” Exegesis is in the function of the worshipping, witnessing community of faith, and although personal interpretations are welcome and encour-
aged. Orthodox exegetes accept the integral conformity to the phronema and ethos of the Church. It is the doctrinal teachings of the Church, as witness to the truth of God revealed in Christ, which guide the exegetes in expressing the soteriological dimension of the divine mystery. So far we have estab-
lished an understanding of the nature of Scripture and the Gospels and the principles of biblical interpretation in Orthodox theology. However, what are the hermeneutical methods (i.e. methods of interpretation) used by the Orthodox Church when approaching the Holy Scriptures?

Hermeneutical methods of biblical exegesis

Orthodox hermeneutics has interpreted Scripture through the use of the historical-
literary, allegorical and typological methods.

The historical-literary and typological meth-
ods were prominent within the Antiochene tradition. These methods sought a literary understanding of the biblical texts. In typol-
ology, persons and events described within the Old Testament Scriptures were seen as types which prefigured events in the life of Jesus as narrated in the Gospels. The meth-

ology, persons and events described within the Old Testament Scriptures were seen as types which prefigured events in the life of Jesus as narrated in the Gospels. The meth-


biblical exegesis. This explains “according to the scriptures” becomes the sole subject of Scripture – the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets. The meaning of Scripture is the most important aspect of orthodox hermeneutics, but it is important to understand that both exegetical traditions acknowledged the historical dimension of the gospels, because “the ultimate meaning of any event or reality must be grounded in the event itself, that is, grounded in history.” With all this in mind, we may now ask what is the importance of Orthodox hermeneutics?

The importance of Orthodox Biblical Interpretation

In Orthodox biblical interpretation, Scripture is understood as both a historical and theological document. It is historical because it is grounded in the events that have taken place in history. However, it is also theological, as these events have been expressed theologically. The primary pur-
pose of Scripture is theological, as it attempts to express the theological signifi-
cance of the particular event it relates. For this reason, the Church has interpreted Scripture spiritually, that is, the purpose of exegesis was to seek as far as possible the meaning of the mystery of Christ. Scripture is a theological work which seeks to express the meaning and significance of the person and event of Jesus, rather than to relate lit-

tural history. The Gospels are fundamentally concerned with the person of Jesus which is expressed theologically.

Many modern hermeneutical methods of biblical interpretation acknowledge both the historical and theological aspects of Scripture, while either affirming or unfortu-

ately discrediting the mystery of Christ based on the principles of modern reason-
ing, the illusion of historical objectivity and scientific certainty. Orthodox hermeneutics understands the Scriptures as proclaiming the mystery of Christ crucified and risen.

Waiting for a Greek-Aussie pension
An outline of the bilateral agreement which is expected before parliament for ratification

KATHY TZILIVAKIS

One year has passed since Greece and Australia signed the long-awaited social security deal, but tens of thousands of Greeks have yet to benefit from the new measures.

The bilateral social security agreement is still pending ratification by the Greek parliament. But officials at the labour and social protection ministry told The Athens News they expect parliament to ratify the agreement as early as next month.

Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis sealed the deal during his official visit to Sydney on 23 May 2007, completing nearly 30 years of high-level negotiation. He had said that more than 60,000 Greek-Australians are expected to benefit immediately.

The Athens News has obtained a copy of the agreement, which is aimed at making it easier for Greeks residing in Australia and for Australians residing in Greece to claim old-age pension benefits in the other country. It is an outline of the most important features of the agreement in question-and-answer form.

What does the agreement do?

Both countries will share responsibility and costs for the social security coverage of eligible old-age pensioners in their retirement years, according to their period of residence/insurance. The agreement will provide improved access to the old-age pension for people in Australia and Greece, allowing people who live in either country to claim their entitlement to pensions from both countries. It will also reduce costs for businesses operating in Australia and Greece (because they won’t be required to pay compulsory contributions into both countries’ systems when they send employees to work in the other country temporarily). The agreement only covers Greek and Australian old-age pensions.

How will the agreement help people?

The agreement will help people in Greece and Australia to satisfy the minimum qualifying residence period for an Australian pension and the minimum qualifying insurance period for a Greek pension.

Periods of residence in Australia and periods of insurance in Greece can be added together to qualify for Australian and Greek pensions.

When the agreement finally takes effect, claims for the Greek old-age pension may be lodged in Greece. Similarly, claims for Australian old-age pensions may be lodged in Greece (with the Social Insurance Institute, IKA-ETAM).

The agreement will also eliminate the need for double contributions when Australians are working in both Greece and Australia or when Greek employees are sent to work temporarily in Australia. The agreement does not cover healthcare and makes no changes to medical insurance coverage in either country.

What does it mean for someone who has worked in both countries?

Upon reaching the pension age, people who have lived and worked in both countries may be eligible for two pensions - one from each country.

For the Australian pension, a person does not need to prove periods of work in Australia. Eligibility is based on periods of residence in Australia. A period of insurance in Greece can be added to a period of residence in Australia for the purpose of qualifying for a pension from either, or both, countries.

How is the Australian pension worked out for permanent residents of Greece?

The agreement offers all Australian residents who return to live permanently in Greece after the agreement takes effect, the same formula for calculating their pension as applies to most of Australia’s other agreements and its portability laws. It will be based on their working life residence in Australia over a denominator of 25 years.

People already living permanently in Greece without Australian pensions when the agreement starts will, for the first time, be able to claim an Australian pension. It will be based on the proportion of their total working life (for this purpose considered to be 44 years) that was spent in Australia.

The question of whether a person is a resident of Australia at a particular time is decided on the basis of a person’s circumstances.

Why are there two different calculations for permanent residents of Greece?

Australia’s social security system is a non-contributory system, which does not require a person to have worked or paid taxes in Australia. It is based on the concepts of residence and need and is paid out of general revenue/taxes. The formula for calculating Australian pensions was discussed for many years and formally accepted by the Greek government in 2005.

How will my Greek pension affect my Australian pension?

Australian old-age pensions are subject to income and assets tests, whether you live in Australia or another country. You must tell the Australian authorities about all income you receive from sources in Australia or any other country and about assets you hold in any country.

If you have a partner, you must also tell Australian authorities about your partner’s income and assets. If your Greek pension and any other income you have is less than 15% of the pension (10% for single pensioners and 6,032 Australian dollars or 3,571 euros per annum combined for couples), your Australian pension will not be affected.

Amounts over this will reduce the Australian pension by 40 cents (or 20 cents for each member of a couple) for each dollar of income (including Greek old-age pension).

Australia has a 10-year qualifying period of residence for an old-age pension. A person who lives in Australia with less than 10 years of Australian residence may qualify for an Australian pension after the agreement starts by adding periods of insurance in Greece.

However, until these people have lived in Australia for 10 years, one dollar will be deducted from their Australian pension for each dollar of Greek pension received.

How many people are expected to benefit from the agreement?

Approximately 60,000 people living in Australia and Greece are expected to claim an old-age pension from either, or both, countries after the agreement commences. More people will benefit over time as there are around 125,000 Greek-born residents of Australia and other Australians are increasingly spending part of their working lives overseas.

Fast facts


Similar bilateral agreements will soon be ratified with Chile, Ireland, Morocco, the United Kingdom and Tunisia, while agreements with Russia and the Philippines are on the table.

In the meantime, an EU regulation coordinates systems in all member states. European Council regulation 1408/71 coordinates the national social insurance legislation of EU member states. Council regulation 574/72 lays down the frame work for the implementation of the above regulation.

The 1408/71 regulation was passed by the European Council in June 1971. It ensures that people moving within the EU do not lose their social security rights, including healthcare coverage and social security contributions. Under EU law, periods of social insurance cover in different countries are added together to allow you to acquire and keep rights to benefits and pensions and also to calculate the amounts of these benefits and/or pensions.

This means that periods of time you have spent living with social insurance cover in one country can be taken into account, if needed, to determine your entitlement to benefits in another country, provided the national rules permit this. The advantage of this system is that even if you have lived and/or worked in more than one country, you will not lose any periods of cover or contributions.

* For more information, visit the European Commission’s special website (http://ec.europa.eu/etam)

Greek migration to Australia

Greek migration to Australia dates back to 1827. The majority of Greeks, however, made the long journey after World War II. Some 240,000 Greek-born settlers were registered by Australian authorities between 1945 and 1982. Since the 1950s, the Greeks in Australia have been and continue to be the second largest immigrant population, after the Italian. Some 67,000 Greeks went to Australia to live and work during the period 1965-69, making up 9.3 percent of the immigrants there. Between 1975 and 1979, an additional 10,500 Greeks embarked on the long journey. Over the past 40 years, the size of the Greek community in Australia has steadily risen with the number of second- and third-generation Greeks adding another 30 percent.

ATHENS NEWS
Faskomilia (or Sage Bush) is one of outer Athens' loveliest places and one of its best-kept secrets. Around 1,000 stremmata of wild, unblemished hillside, it is a peninsula stretching between Vouliagmeni's lake and the neighbourhood of Varkiza.

You can walk along its 10 kilometres of meandering tracks, gazing across the Saronic Gulf to Aigina and the Peloponnese on one side and all the way down the coast to Sounio on the other. Hawks circle overhead, partridges cluck in the undergrowth and you can sit under eucalyptus trees, on banks of drowsy-scented camomile, looking down on the small fishing boats returning to port.

For many years, the fate of Faskomilia hung in the balance. It would have been all too easy for its rocky slopes to be plundered for building projects, transforming it into yet more urban seaside sprawl. However, its future is now guaranteed, and the last two years have seen an extensive reforestation programme. There are even hopes that it could become a much-needed park for Athens' southern suburbs.

Vouliagmeni's colourful and sometimes controversial mayor, Grigoris Kasidokostas, has fought many battles to save Faskomilia during his two decades in office.

"We've been planting trees there for the last 20 years, but we've faced endless problems," he admitted. "In 1992, the government [of Constantine Mitsotakis' New Democracy] tried to make bonds [kaiomologi] so that three hundred MPs could build houses on Faskomilia. We managed to stop that, but then there was pressure from the church and from various businesspeople. The church owned 300 stremmata and wanted to develop hotels, but we changed the local building regulations, so they were unable to go ahead."

It was not until 2003 that the legal backup to save Faskomilia finally went through and a presidential decree was made, ensuring the preservation of the whole area, including Vouliagmeni's thermal lake.

I have to declare a personal interest in Sage Bush. I live close by and, during the cooler parts of the year, I visit the area most days to walk or run. I mark the seasons by the flowers and animals I find there. I write all over our faces is: "Surely we are the luckiest people in Athens, having access to such an unspoilt and beautiful place."

Going greener

One autumn morning in 2006, I arrived at Faskomilia to see digging machines gouging holes out of the hillside and gangs of workmen with picks. My first fearful thought was that the developers finally got their hands on it. Happily, however, this theory was quickly scotched by the director of works and forester Ilias Litoss. Actually, he explained, they were planting trees.

Each day when I returned, more and more craters had been dug in the rocky land - an extremely tough job that in earlier planting programmes had been achieved with dynamite. Then soil, water tanks and pipes were brought in, and by spring the trees were planted. Around 47,000 of them. The terrible heatwaves of 2007 destroyed a proportion of the saplings, but these were replaced in the autumn.

"We only lost about five percent," commented Litoss. "Considering some of the area's older trees were badly affected by the summer, that's very good. We planted about 70 percent conifers, like pines and cypress, and about 30 percent of other trees and shrubs including Acacias, Oleanders and wild olives."

Though the estimate for the forestation of 500 stremmata was originally over one million euros (75 percent funded by the EU), Litoss' project has actually only cost about 400,000 euros.

Mayor Kasidokostas is delighted with the developments, but he is also critical. "We have put gates to prevent people driving around the tracks any more, but the agriculture ministry needs to look into fire protection. They've put lots of money into the planting, but it could all burn down if we don't have fire corridors and other schemes."

Litoss believes that it's more a question of keeping an eye on the place and having water available in the case of a conflagration. As yet, inconclusive conversations are underway with the water board - EYDAP.

What Kasidokostas would really like to see is the declaration of Faskomilia as a metropolitan park, like "there are in all civilised countries."

"It should be a place for all Athenians, not just a few locals who know about it. There should be proper parking, some benches and good management and protection. And that's not something we can afford at the municipality," he said.

Perhaps this is something that could be paid for by independent MP Stephanos Manos' scheme for creating parks throughout Athens, funded by developing some of the land at the old airport in Elliniko. For those of us in the know, it's tempting to want to keep Faskomilia a private pleasure - an untamed reserve with good walking tracks lying within minutes of urban streets would be an extraordinary luxury in any city. However, it is also glaringly obvious that such a stunning place should be available for anyone who appreciates Greece's uniquely beautiful landscape and has seen how it can be all too easily destroyed and forgotten by the busy capital.

ATHENS NEWS
The first date

By Imogen Coward

Dried Dates: The best sticky date pudding ever. (makes three puddings that each serve 8)

The following is an adaptation of Karen Martini’s recipe. The quantities are quite large so as to accommodate typical packaging sizes of ingredients (and not leave behind small amounts of cream etc at the end of making the recipe). The left-over pudding can be frozen and later defrosted and eaten as a light date cake.

Ingredients:
- for the pudding
  - 900ml water
  - 450g dried dates, pitted and roughly chopped
  - 1 tsp bi-carb soda
  - 180g unsalted butter, softened
  - 425g castor sugar
  - 6 large eggs
  - 2 tbsp vanilla extract
  - 450g SR flour, sifted
- for the sauce
  - 300ml single cream (pouring cream)
  - 240g unsalted butter chopped
  - 180g brown sugar

Method:
Place dates and water in a small sauce pan and cook over medium heat for only a couple of minutes until dates are very soft. Take off heat and stir in bi-carb soda and leave to one side (yes, it’s supposed to bubble and fizzle!). Cream butter and sugar in a bowl (as best you can – the mixture will be quite thick rather than fluffy). Fold in date mixture (it doesn’t matter if it’s still quite warm), vanilla and flour. Spoon mixture in even amounts (i.e. even depths) into three large Pyrex baking dishes (rectangular 20cm x 27cm x 7cm deep OR round 22cm diameter x 7.5cm deep). Place dishes in a 180C oven and bake for 30-35 minutes or until springy. While puddings are cooking, combine all the ingredients for the caramel sauce. Stir until combined and glossy (around 10 mins).

Serve pudding in slices with ice cream or cream and a generous drizzle of caramel sauce.

Correction:
Oven temperatures for the following recipes were omitted in last month’s Vema. The full recipes are re-printed below for your convenience.

Soft-textured white bread (makes one 750g loaf)

Preparation time: around ½ hr PLUS proving time (up to 5 hours)

Ingredients:
- 500g bakers flour
- 1 ½ tbsp dried yeast
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 30g softened butter
- 2 cups tepid water
- milk to glaze

Method:
Mix the flour, yeast, sugar and salt together in a large bowl. Make a well in the middle and mix in enough water (approx 300mls) to bring the ingredients together into a thick dough. Knead in softened butter. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured board and knead until the dough becomes elastic, with a smooth surface. Return dough to a clean bowl. Cover with a damp tea-towel and leave dough in a warm place to rise until it has doubled in size. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured board and knead again. Roll into a rectangular shape then roll the rectangle tightly into a sausage shape and place it seam down on a greased baking tray. Be sure to tuck the ends of the ‘sausage’ under to give a smooth outer appearance. Slice the top of the loaf diagonally with a sharp knife. Cover loaf and allow to double in size again. Brush loaf with a little milk and bake in a 210 Celsius oven for 30-35 mins or until golden brown and hollow sounding when tapped on the base. Remove from the tray and cool on a wire rack.

Crusty white bread (makes one 750g loaf)

Preparation time: around ½ hr PLUS proving time (up to 5 hours)

Ingredients:
- 500g bakers flour
- 1 ½ tsp dried yeast
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 cups tepid water

Method:
Follow the method for the soft-textured white bread, leaving out the butter (as a result, you will probably need slightly more water). Instead of the milk glaze, rub a small quantity of flour over the surface of the loaf before placing it in the oven.
‘Inflexible’ UN shuns Greece

The scientist in charge of the country’s greenhouse gas emission measurements tells the Athens News that Greece was unjustly suspended from the Kyoto Protocol’s carbon trading scheme

OK or KO?

“It is not a matter of whether the UN has faith in Greece’s measuring system. It is a matter of bureaucracy,” Ziomas said. “The problem arose last year because we had the UN expert committee visit the country in April 2007. After that, no other expert group has visited Greece, despite our requests. They said they were too busy. The present system is working and has produced very good results. And there is no question of the quality of the technical report that Greece has submitted.”

He added: “I have experienced the whole situation, almost from the beginning. It was silly forced [the Compliance Committee] to say what it said at the last meeting - that, practically, everything is OK but that legally everything is not until the new group [of UN inspectors] makes an in-country evaluation.

In its final decision on Greece’s suspension, the Compliance Committee wrote: ‘After full consideration... the enforcement branch concludes that the information submitted is insufficient to alter the preliminary finding. The branch notes that the timely provision of the annual inventory submission for Greece by itself does not demonstrate compliance with the guidelines for national systems.’

ATHENS NEWS

Cost of living hits European high in Greece, particularly for food items

By Spyros Karalis - Kathimerini

What goes into a shopping basket in Greece costs up to 66 percent more than in Germany or the Netherlands. Greek families are now being forced to cut down on food for the first time since 1974. Food sales are steadily falling.

The richest 20 percent of the Greek population consumes 5.90 times more than the poorest 20 percent. Continuing price rises of basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.

The National Statistics Service’s retail sales index figures indicate a new poverty level. Since December, there has been a steady reduction in food sales (5 percent in December and 6.6 percent in January). Continuing price rises for basic goods are causing heightened concern. The high cost of living is now threatening the daily lives of people who are forced to cut costs in all areas, even food, in order to make ends meet.
Father knows best...

By Peter Souleles

About 10 years ago I became involved in a business venture with a friend. At that time I remember asking my father if he wanted to participate, as we expected our venture to be profitable. His answer was: “Your mother and I are at a stage of our lives when more does not have the meaning it once had. If we all borrow and do the same thing, who will come to our rescue if something goes wrong? You of course are free to borrow as much as you like but remember to put at least one year’s living interest expenses to the side. If something goes wrong you will have the time to respond without panicking and without the bank telling you what to do.”

Last year my father passed away but his words live on and have taken on even more meaning in the current economic climate.

On April 22, the Sydney Morning Herald reported a study prepared by Fujitsu Consulting which indicated that by June this year 750,000 households in Australia would be in some form of mortgage stress, with about 300,000 of these in severe stress.

In the United States a recent report estimates that one in 33 current homeowners will be in foreclosure in the next two years. That translates to over 2 million households.

The stress is now flowing on to renters as well, with vacancies falling markedly and rentals increasing well ahead of the general population. The Reserve Bank and the banks will replay the current scenario we have witnessed whereby interest rate increases by the Reserve Bank will be met with further increases by the banks.

Don’t be beguiled by the seeming upward trend in the value of the Australian dollar. Galloping oil and food prices as well as higher mortgage interest rates and the strengthening dollar has shielded Australia from a larger dose of inflation. In the December quarter however Australia’s net foreign exchange reserves plummeted by more than 50% in an effort by the Reserve Bank to defend the dollar.

What does this all mean? Well, a falling dollar could make it harder and more expensive for banks to borrow and to renew borrowings from overseas. Imports become more expensive. Smaller banks may be swallowed up as they struggle to compete. That’s right, higher inflation and higher interest rates. This translates into misery on all fronts for the general population. The Reserve Bank and the banks will replay the current scenario we have witnessed whereby interest rate increases by the Reserve Bank will be met with further increases by the banks.

The low interest rate environment of recent years coupled with a love for the property market, spending binges and low savings rates, required a massive injection of borrowed funds from overseas by banks to meet the demand for new loans. At the same time, the strengthening dollar has shielded Australia from a larger dose of inflation. In the December quarter however Australia’s net foreign exchange reserves plummeted by more than 50% in an effort by the Reserve Bank to defend the dollar.

As already mentioned, the feeling of prosperity generated by booming home values has either been badly tarnished by current developments or fritted away by the over consumption of Australian assets by overseas interests such as China.

Let us hope that this financial wizardry does not destroy too much of the real economy and too many real people.

St Basil’s Aged Care Services - Western Australia

St Basil’s Aged Care Services and Alzheimer’s Australia WA provide a free and confidential information, support and counselling service for people who are living with dementia, their families, friends and carers.

WHO CAN USE THE SERVICE?
- People who have concerns about dementia or memory loss (in regards to themselves, a family member or a friend);
- Health professionals;
- Students, volunteers and neighbours.

WHAT DOES THE SERVICE PROVIDE?
We provide information on:
- Dementia and memory loss;
- Understanding changing behaviour;
- Residential care issues;
- Family concern;
- Stress and coping strategies;
- Legal concerns for people with dementia; and
- Services available in the community.

HOW IS THE SERVICE PROVIDED?
The service is provided through:
- Trained Greek health care advisors;
- Telephone (local and STD) on Mondays, 9am to 5pm (excluding public holidays); and
- Pre-arranged office and home visits.

TOLL FREE: 1800 445 922

Who can use the service:
- Anyone who is suffering from a form of dementia or is in need of information about dementia or memory loss;
- Friends and family of someone with dementia;
- Health professionals;
- Students, volunteers and neighbours.

Use of the service:
- The service is provided free of charge.
- Services are available in Greek.

St Basil’s Aged Care Services - Western Australia

Note: The information provided is for general guidance only and should not be used as a substitute for professional advice.
Dialects put up battle against test of time

Dances, ‘mantinades’ and their dialect are all part of the Cretans’ identity, without which they would feel that they had lost a large part of their lives, according to university researchers.

By Viota Myrtsioti - Kathimerini

The community of Hamidie lies on the border between Syria and Lebanon. At the end of the 1990s, Professor Roula Tsokalidou of Thessaloniki University went there to study the grecophone peoples of the Middle East. On arrival, and before she could finish her question, in broken Arabic, as to where to start looking, a cafe owner turned to a youth and called out in perfect Greek, “Where is your father, young man?”

It is easier to hear pure Cretan in this part of the Middle East than on the island of Crete itself. The Cretan dialect, along with Pontic and Cypriot, are the three purely Greek out of the total five (including Cappadocian and Vlach) and which include dozens of other local linguistic idioms, that have withstood the test of time throughout the Hellenic world.

Although dialects, whether geographical or ethnic, are dwindling, they have managed to survive in environments where they are in constant contact with other languages and cultures, according to three university surveys on the Greek language and its dialects, published last week by Thessaloniki University.

The survival of Cretan in Hamidie derives from the people’s need to preserve their particular identity, according to the survey.

“If they didn’t, they would feel they had lost a large part of their lives,” claims researcher Tsokalidou, assistant professor at the university’s Department of Preschool Education.

In Syria and Lebanon, fifth- and sixth-generation Cretans whose ancestors had converted to Islam and were exiled from the island, still speak Greek and preserve traditional Cretan “mantinades” (short songs) although they have never visited the island itself, and do not have a Greek education.

When their ancestors came here, they didn’t know any other language but Cretan,” Talb, a 50-year-old Cretan from Lebanon told Tsokalidou.

The Pontic dialect spoken by ethnic Greeks of the Black Sea coast has survived for the past 80 years in Greece and today is spoken by about 500,000 residents of 300 villages, most of them in northern Greece. It is the dialect that has been studied the most and has survived as the refugees who flooded into Greece from Turkey in the 1922 population exchange defended themselves against hostility from locals and strove to maintain their own identity.

Today it is spoken by a sizable segment of the Greek population, along with modern Greek, according to the rector of Thessaloniki University’s teaching college Sophronis Hatziavridis in his survey “The Pontic Dialect in Greece Today.”

Although modern Greek is now spoken within Pontic communities, the language of communication at weddings, baptisms and in storytelling is still Pontic, the lingua franca among young and old in some 50 villages inhabited solely by Pontic Greeks. A further bulwark against extinction was the influx of ethnic Greek refugees from the former Soviet states.

The language spoken today by some 800,000 Greek Cypriots is not the old dialect but a “Pan-Cypriot common variety” developed over the past 50 years and which has gradually eliminated about 18 linguistic idioms on the island. It is a new dialect which includes many elements of modern Greek and which began to take shape around the end of the colonial period in the 1960s but developed more rapidly after 1974 with the movement of populations, particularly from the northern sector of the island.

“Common Cypriot” is quite distinct with regard to accent and syntax but mainly in its morphology,” said Stavroula Tsiplakou, who teaches in the Science Education Department at the University of Cyprus, in her study on linguistic changes on Cyprus.

Old Cypriot, although still spoken by the elderly in Cyprus, by bilingual Turkish Cypriots (230,000 of them) and Cypriot emigrants to Britain and elsewhere, is gradually disappearing.

Only in Greece

STEVE MILLS - Athens News

“Why Greek birds?” is a question I’ve been asked several times over the past few weeks. The answer is easy. I have a passion for birds and for Greek birds in particular. This inevitably brings the next question, “Why Greek birds?” The answer is still easy.

Greece has a richness and diversity of birdlife that is hard to beat in the whole of Europe. Where else in Europe can you see hundreds of White and Dalmatian Pelicans, several thousand Pygmy Cormorants, Flamingos, eight species of eagle and four species of vulture? The answer is, “nowhere!”

A staggering 36 species of birds of prey have been recorded at Dadia Forest in the northeast of the country, and several thousand species expanded its breeding range during the last century? That’s right, “nowhere!”

In the 1980s the Black Vulture population of eastern Europe was sliding to extinction with fewer than 30 individuals left, all in northern Greece. Subject to persecution, and suffering from a lack of food because the gradual reduction in the nomadic summer-grazing of sheep and goats in the hills meant fewer dead animals to eat, these birds were on the way out.

Since then a feeding programme, in the form of ‘vulture restaurants’ where carcasses of animals are placed on hillsides, has come to their rescue by supplementing their diet. As a result, the population has slowly recovered and now numbers around 100 birds, which even show signs of expanding into neighbouring countries.

In addition to all this there are several birds for which Greece is at the extreme western edge of their breeding range and so occur virtually nowhere else in Europe, including the wonderfully-named Isabelline Wheatear, Cinerous Bunting and Spur-winged Plover.

So, as I said, the answer to “Why Greek birds?” is easy to answer. From Schinias National Park, close to Athens, to Lake Kerkini, to Dadia Forest, to the Evros Delta, there are some great places to watch birds in Greece.