

## Saint Fanourios

AUGUST 27TH IS THE DAY WE CELEBRATE HIS NAME

The flexibility of the Orthodox Church in its selection of saints is made evident in the canonization of a saint about whom next to nothing is known.

What little there is remains shrouded in mystery, all of which makes this particular saint the most unique, certainly, in the annals of Christendom. His name is known, at least, but even if it were not, the same reverence could be accorded him because, like the unknown soldier at whose grave a wreath is placed annually, he lies in honored glory "known but to God."

This saint's name, however, is known. It happens to be Fanourios, which, though it may not be a household word, is much better remembered by the faithful of Orthodoxy and the Eastern sector of Christianity than a good many more obscure saints whose biographies have been written in detail and who fill mere pages in Church literature than the mysterious Fanourios.

Fanourios has been revered as a saint (his feast day has been celebrated for more than 500 years) considerably longer than the lesser saints, and his name invoked in prayer quite possibly as often as some of the major saints. This is all the more remarkable when it is considered that it is not known when or where he was born, what he did in his lifetime, in what manner he served the Lord, or what he did for



his fellowman. But there is mute testimony that he died the death of a martyr after having been horribly tortured, and in addition to mystery there is a aura of divine manifestation in the man whom nobody knows.

A fortuitous discovery by nomadic pagans, not Christians, brought to light this unheralded saint when a roving band of Arabs, who had pillaged the island of Rhodes uncovered amid the ruins of an ancient church a group of icons, among other artifacts. All of the icons were in a state of decay or near ruin with the exception of one, which appeared as new and as fresh as though it had been painted the day before. This icon was discarded by the Arabs, who failed to attach any importance to it. At a safe distance a group of

monks hiding in the rubble observed this phenomenon and waited patiently until the Arabs had left the scene, whereupon they rushed to reclaim this fantastic image in its remarkable state of preservation.

They beheld a clearly outlined face of a saint with the name inscribed in what appeared to be fresh lettering that spelled out "Fanourios" and on closer examination fell on their knees at what they saw. Drawn about the saint were twelve distinct frames in each of which Fanourios was shown enduring a cruel form of torture in a realism that suggested the artist must have been witness to the atrocity. They rushed back to see if any of the other icons were in as perfect a state, but although they were all of the same basic design, size, and shape, all of them were quite ancient and quite indistinct. After careful scrutiny it was finally concluded that this icon of fanourios had, indeed, been one of a group that had been exhumed after untold centuries and that its freshness was a divine manifestation of the complete saintliness of this man about whom they were now determined to learn more.

But years of research, scanning the archives of centuries and questioning the leading authorities of the day, yielded nothing, and no more was known about Fanourios than the day on which his icon was snatched from the ruins of that ancient Greek church. The torture scenes of the icon provided no clues, and examination of which showed Fanourios being stoned, on the rack, being slashed, behind bars, standing before a judge, tied to a frame, being burned with candles, tied to a post, thrown to wild animals, crushed by a boulder, holding hot coals, and a demon hovering against a background of flames. All of these horrors conveyed that Fanourios was an apparently indestructible instrument of God and that in itself was sufficient evidenced of his sainthood.

Archbishop Milos of Rhodes concluded that the unblemished icon itself was testimony enough to prove that Fanourios was a man of divine grace, and he petitioned the Patriarch to convene a synod which would officially proclaim Fanourios a saint, after which there was erected in the saint's memory a cathedral which enshrined the holy icon/ Fanourios, lost for centuries in the ruins of a church, became the patron saint of things lost. To this day his name is invoked when prayers are asked for the recovery of things lost items. He is commemorated on August 27th, The day his icon was found.



### Successful dinner/dance held by the Antissian Association of NSW

On Sunday 23rd August, the Antissian Association of NSW held a successful dinner/dance to celebrate the festivities of Liota. Liota is a village 5mins from Antissa and on the way to Gavatha, which celebrates the 9 days after 'Panayias' with a 'paniyiri' in its platia.

After experiencing this celebration first hand last year, I couldn't think of a better way to capture this paniyiri than by organising an event for our association to recognise this and celebrate all together. This celebration packed the Cyprus Club (downstairs venue) and brought together close to 200 people of which 25 were young kids. Everyone who attended enjoyed great food, excellent prizes, plenty of dancing and got to hear Emanuel Petrelis, our special Antissian guest all the way from Perth, talk about being a proud Mytilenian living in Australia. Mr Petrelis is a property developer and his passion for our island saw him recently name the streets in his latest development after villages in Lesvos, one in particular being the 'Antissa Gardens'. He presented our association with some excellent reading about Greek pioneers in Western Australia and was a pleasure to have with us on the night.

I would personally like to thank our sponsors, especially Theo and Cassandra Pettaras from [www.digitalpress.com.au](http://www.digitalpress.com.au) for printing our tickets yet again, Peter from Eurobay in Brighton Le Sands for his continued support, the Cyprus Club for their dinner vouchers and excellent service, Replicas R Us for their kind gifts for raffling, Georgia Kapetanellis from Angel Face Beauty in Pitt St for her kind gifts for raffling and everyone in attendance for their kind donations.

Thanks again to all who attended, it was another successful night. Looking forward to seeing you all at our next event.

Regards,  
John Loukadellis

### Fanouropita

The pie is made once a year, on the eve of Saint Fanourios name day, every 26th of August. The pie is brought to the church of Saint Fanourios, where the priest blesses it with a nice ceremony. After the Mass, the pies are cut and everybody is welcome to taste them.

#### Ingredients

- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 1/2 cups corn oil
- 1/3 cup brandy or orange liqueur
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 cups orange juice
- Grated peel of 1 orange
- 1/2 cup each dried currants, raisins and chopped walnuts
- Sesame seeds for topping



Put all the ingredients, except for the flour and baking soda, into a large bowl. Mix to a creamy consistency. Add flour and baking soda and stir until just mixed. Pour mixture into a greased 9 x 13-inch pan that has been sprinkled with sesame seeds and then cover surface with more sesame seeds. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45-60 minutes.