

With God We Can Do All Things

He strengthens those who put their trust in Him

Most of us like bottom lines. 'What did the Festival make?' . . . is often touted as the measure of a success. Overall, our gross was up by at least \$12,000. This means more people attended and spent more than they have in previous years. This year's Festival meant more to those who worked it than money however, it was a testimony to the growth of a community who placed their trust in God.

The event went something like this:

Friday morning around 7:00 a.m., James and Greg are at WestWorld setting out signs, delivering the trailer with the booths and decorations that will be needed for the day. By 8:00 AM at the downtown Phoenix Liquor Board, a "Special Events Liquor License" is being issued for the weekend and a volunteer is there to receive it. By 9:00 AM, Paul shows up with his Van to Assumption and begins loading pastries and gyro. This year's Festival was a testimony to the growth of a community who placed their trust in God. The crown of the Festival was the witness of volunteers who sacrificed their weekend for the Church. By 9:30 AM, the Church receives a voice mail message that volunteers are waiting at WestWorld ready to work. When we arrived there must have been 20 volunteers ready to start setting up. Many new faces were among our long time supporters who always show up when help is needed. At this point, the chairpersons were saying - 'we have a success on our hands . . . look at all these people!'

As Friday progressed, by 5:00 PM people began to show up at the gate ready to consume our extraordinary food. Our dancers began the festivities with great grace as they captured the hearts of those in attendance. As the "Olympians" showed up from Los Angeles, they began a spirited performance that continued throughout the weekend. The entertainment created the atmosphere that the committee wanted! Placing our faith in God we charted a new course and found a new home for our Festival. Brett's Barn, the facility where the event took place proved to be a wise decision. It provided us with ample parking, excellent kitchen facilities, shelter from the cold at night and a Festive setting.

The crown of the Festival was the witness of volunteers who sacrificed their weekend for the Church. Some took time off from their businesses, others made arrangements so that they could work and several people worked the entire weekend. Real stewardship always involves a sacrifice and brings rewards.

Whenever needs arose, God provided and tasks were accomplished. Behind the scenes working to put it all together were the "Trio" James Prenevost (Set-up & Permits), Peter Karengannes (Advertising & Publicity) and Steve Roussas (Food & Volunteers). Together they worked endless hours with a new venue that offered many unexpected challenges.

Whenever needs arose, God provided and tasks were accomplished. Also working behind the scenes was Nick Stamas who prepared the delicious Roasted Lamb and Chicken Souvlaki for us. Also, Gia Grossenbacher and Maria Maniatis organized the the "bakers" and created Baklava that was so good- we sold out on Saturday. In addition, everyone who baked at home and donated the other pastries- Thank You!

+ Fr. Andrew Barakos