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ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS' CHRISTMAS ENCYCLICAL

Christmas 1999

"Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel which means 'God with us.'" (Matthew 1:23)

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Day and Afternoon Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

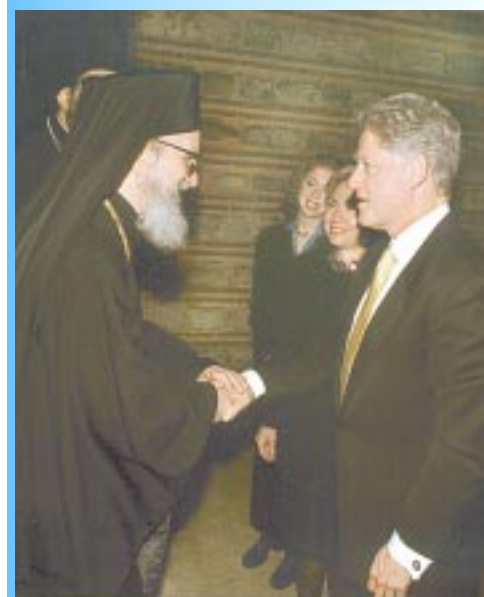
On the bright and joyous Feast of the Nativity according to the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, we worship and praise and glorify the God who hears and answers prayer. "In the fullness of time," the Scriptures say (Gal. 4:4), the Creator of the world responded in love to the prayers of all people: the people of ancient Israel longed for a deliverer; the Magi of the East sought a king; the poor of the earth cried out for a benefactor; the ill and infirm prayed for a healer; the entire human race longed for a Saviour-God. And on this night of the Nativity some two thousand years ago, God answered their prayers and their intense longing by giving them His Son, a Son whose name according to the prophecy of Isaiah would be Emmanuel, which means "God with us."

To natural eyes this babe in the arms of the Virgin

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PRESIDENT CLINTON VISITS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE



N. Manginas

ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS welcomes the Clinton family to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

► by Nicholas Manginas

CONSTANTINOPLE.— President Bill Clinton paid his first visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the Phanar during his recent trip to Turkey.

"Earlier this week in Istanbul, Hillary, Chelsea and I had the honor of visiting the Ecumenical Patriarch. My heart is still moved by that experience," he said later in an address to Greek political and business leaders in Athens.

President Clinton also expressed his excitement over the symbolic gift Patriarch Bartholomew offered him and said: "by this beautiful gift presented to me, a magnificent piece of parchment written in Byzantine Greek lettering, contains one of my favorite Bible passages, the fifth verse of the 11th chapter of Hebrews: 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.'"

The President's hour-long visit took place Nov. 17. A little after 6 p.m. he, first lady Hillary Clinton, their daughter, Chelsea, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, their counselors and the U.S. ambassador to Ankara entered the center of Orthodoxy at the Phanar.

Archbishop Demetrios of America and Metropolitan Demetrios of Sevesteia welcomed the President and his entourage at the gate, while the bells of St. George rang joyously.

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Bishop George of New Jersey Dies from Stroke

► by Jim Golding

BETHESDA, Md. — Bishop George of New Jersey, elected to the episcopacy in May 1998 and elevated to the diocese throne in April of this year, died of a massive stroke at age 66 while visiting his home parish on Sunday, Nov. 21.

The Bishop (Fr. George Papaioannou) served St. George Church for 27 years as pastor. He was stricken as he finished speaking at a stewardship dinner in the Presbytera Maria Grand Hall, named for his beloved wife who died of cancer in 1996.



The Rev. Athanasios Demos, the current head priest of the parish, told the Observer that the bishop had turned from the podium, took four steps toward him and complained of dizziness and weakness.

"We got him on the floor and removed his tight clothing," he said. A nurse in the hall took his pulse and someone called for an ambulance, but Bishop George "put his left hand to his head and said 'don't bother them, then his hand fell.'" Fr. Demos said. "He was surrounded by the people who loved him in the church he loved."

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Archons to Present Athenagoras Award to Archbishop Tutu

NEW YORK — Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu has accepted Archbishop Demetrios' invitation to receive the Athenagoras Human Rights Award for the year 2000.

The award will be presented March 4 at the annual banquet of the Order of St. Andrew in New York.

Previous recipients have included President Jimmy Carter, Mother Teresa and Elie Wiesel.

The 1984 recipient of the Noble Peace Prize, Archbishop Tutu was born in 1931 in Klerksdorp, Transvaal. His father was a teacher, and he himself was educated at Johannesburg Bantu High School.

Following high school, he trained as a teacher at Pretoria Bantu Normal College and in 1954 he graduated from the Univer-

sity of South Africa. After three years as a high school teacher he began studying theology and was ordained as a priest in 1960.

The years 1962-66 were devoted to further theological study in England leading up to a Master of Theology.

From 1967 to 1972 he taught theology in South Africa before returning to England for three years as the assistant director of a theological institute in London.

In 1975 he was appointed dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg, the first black to hold that position.

From 1976 to 1978 he was bishop of Lesotho and, in 1978, became the first black general secretary of the South African Council of Churches.

St. Photios National Shrine Receives Major Gift

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — St. Photios National Shrine has received a \$10,000 gift from Harry, James and Joanna Cavalaris of North Carolina. Harry and James are Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The St. Photios National Shrine is a self supporting Archdiocese institution that honors the memory of the first colony of Greeks and succeeding generations of immigrants to the New World. It also serves to preserve, enhance, and promote Hellenic ethnic and cultural traditions and Orthodox Christian teachings.

The Endowment Fund of the Shrine has been established to help secure the future work and progress of the National Shrine. When asked about his generous gift, Archon Harry Cavalaris said, "I only hope that his gift helps inspire others throughout this Nation to support our one and only National Shrine."

Archon Harry Cavalaris is Atlanta Diocese Council president, a vice president of the National Shrine board and St. Photios Feast Day Luncheon chairman. The luncheon is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 6. (Related story below)

Shrine Luncheon to Honor Bishop John

The Feb. 6 St. Photios Day Luncheon will mark the 30th anniversary of the National Shrine and the occasion to honor Bishop John of Amorion on his 40th anniversary as a priest, 30th year as a bishop, and 20th as St. Photios National Shrine president, as well as his retirement from the Shrine.

Archbishop Demetrios; Bishop Alexios of Atlanta, the current St. Photios board chairman; and Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos, former longtime director and current Shrine coordinator, have been invited to attend.

Among those in attendance will be the Very Rev. Nicholas T. Graff, newly appointed chief executive director of the Shrine, and other Church and civil dignitaries.

Many liturgical and cultural festivities

will highlight the feast day of the Shrine, including the annual board of trustees meeting on Feb. 5.

At the luncheon, Bishop John will be honored for his many years of service with a proclamation and an honorarium.

Cost of the luncheon will be \$35. Those also wanting to participate in the gift may do so at one of the following levels:

1. Patron \$100, one luncheon ticket
2. Benefactor \$500, two luncheon tickets
3. Grand Benefactor \$1,000, two luncheon tickets.

Reservations and contributions may be sent to: The St. Photios National Shrine Foundation; Bishop John of Amorion Luncheon; PO Box 1960; St. Augustine, FL 32085. Information is available from the Shrine office (904) 829-8205.

Interfaith Marriage Chat Rooms Now Online

The Interchurch/Interfaith Marriage Ministries project, in conjunction with the Internet Ministries Department, announces the creation of online chat rooms aimed at generating discussion and providing information on Interchurch/Interfaith issues.

These chat rooms will also provide an online forum to discuss interfaith questions and concerns with Fr. Charles Joanides, Ph.D., of the Archdiocese Interchurch/Interfaith Committee.

Fr. Joanides has directed work on interfaith marriages for the Archdiocese over the past two years.

The chat rooms, a new addition to the Interfaith Marriage web site, are available online at <http://www.interfaith.goarch.org>.

The Archdiocese launched the web site in November 1998 to respond to the Church's pastoral concerns and needs towards interfaith marriages and their families.

CBS Christmas Special To Include Greek Orthodox Segment



ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS reviews his narration during the videotaping at the cathedral with Nick Furris, GOTELECOM senior producer/director. (Below) Mary Golding and Elias Kefalidis will present a reading on St. Basil the Great and his association with Christmas during the Greek Orthodox segment of the CBS Christmas Special.



NEW YORK — The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese has been selected to participate in the CBS TV Christmas Eve special *An American Christmas* to be broadcast Dec. 24 at 11:35 p.m. (EST).

The one-hour special will also air on the Odyssey Network Dec. 25 at 2 a.m., and Dec. 26 at 3 p.m..

An American Christmas is an engaging drama filled with heart-warming music and striking visual images of the Christmas season. The program illustrates the variety of ways— cultural, ethnic, regional, and liturgical—that Christmas is celebrated in North America at the end of the 20th century.

The segment produced by Greek Orthodox Telecommunications (GO-Telcom) was videotaped at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity and St. Paul Chapel at Archdiocese headquarters in New York, and at Holy Cross Chapel at Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Mass.

Archbishop Demetrios opens the segment which, through Byzantine iconography, Orthodox hymnology and readings, invites the viewer to celebrate Christmas through the lens of Orthodox Christianity.

Participating with His Eminence are the Byzantine Choir of Holy Cross School of Theology and two 15-year-old high school students: Mary Golding, a member of St. Demetrios Church in Merrick, N.Y., and Elias Kefalidis, of Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral in Manhattan.

Throughout the hour, the viewer is swept away from the principal action to light among engaging real-life vignettes and magnificent music from different cultures and traditions that illustrate how beauty and diversity in our spiritual expression enriches everyone.

An American Christmas is produced by the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, in cooperation with the National Council of Churches and the National Interfaith Cable Coalition.



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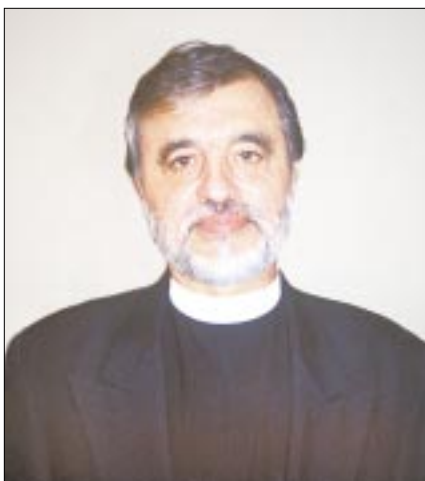
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Fr. Alexander Karloutsos Named Leadership 100 Exec. Director

NEW YORK - Archbishop Demetrios announced Dec. 3 that, in answering a recent official letter addressed to him, as well as a previous official letter of June 10 to his predecessor, Archbishop Spyridon, by the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund Inc. Board of Trustees Executive Committee, he granted permission to the Rev. Alexander Karloutsos to assume the position of executive director of the Fund.

Father Karloutsos, while serving in the new post, will continue in his position as priest of Dormition of the Theotokos Church in Southampton, N.Y.

The Archbishop expressed his warm wishes to the new executive director, to executive committee and all Leadership 100 members, for a fruit-



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ful continuation of an important work aimed at nurturing programs under the Archdiocese National Ministries.

Archbishop Names Committee to Select HC/HC President

NEW YORK — Archbishop Demetrios has appointed a search committee to select a new president for Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.

The position has been vacant since the resignation of the Very Rev. Archimandrite Damaskinos Ganas in August.

Committee members include:

Chairman, **George D. Behrakis**, current vice chairman of the HC/HC Board of Trustees, and president and CEO of Muro Pharmaceutical Inc., Tewksbury, Mass. He is a member of the Archdiocesan Council, Leadership 100 and an Archon of Order of St. Andrew.

Helen Hadjiyannakis Bender, associate professor at Fordham University School of Law, New York; trustee of Archbishop Iakovos Library, former trustee of Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral and Archdiocesan Council treasurer.

Elias P. Gyftopoulos, Ford Professor of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Emeritus at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr. Aristotle Michopoulos, acting dean and associate professor of modern Greek studies, Hellenic College; served as

assistant professor of classics and modern Greek at the University of Florida and as associate director of its Center for Greek Studies.

Dr. Constantine Papadakis, president of Drexel University, Philadelphia; trustee HC/HC, University City Science Center, Fidelity Federal Bank, Greater Philadelphia First and the Philadelphia Stock Exchange.

The Rev. Dr. Theodore Stylianos, professor of New Testament HC/HC; served as Visiting Professor in New Testament at several universities; holds Th.D. from Harvard Divinity School, STM from Boston University, and BA from Holy Cross; serves as pastor of St. George Church, Keene, N.H.; published many books and articles; lectures at conferences and parish retreats.

Theoharis C. Theoharides, professor of pharmacology and medicine, Tufts University, Boston.

The Rev. Alexander Veronis, pastor of Annunciation Church, Lancaster, Pa.; HC/HC trustee, president emeritus of Orthodox Christian Mission Center, co-chairman of three National Spiritual Life and Renewal conferences.

34th CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS Set in Philadelphia Next July

Preparations are under way for the 34th Clergy-Laity Congress and National Philoptochos Convention scheduled for July 1-7 in Philadelphia.

The National Conference of the Young Adult League will take place June 30 to July 2.

Theme will be "Ageless Traditions in a New Millennium" based on the Bible verses from 2 Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle," and from Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Location will be the Marriott hotel and the adjacent Convention Center in downtown Philadelphia.

A partial, tentative schedule includes meetings of the Archdiocesan Council and Archons on Saturday, July 1; Divine Liturgy on July 2; Opening ceremonies on July 3, a July 4th Doxology, and the final plenary session on July 6.

Archbishop Demetrios plans to meet with the clergy and presbyteres on Friday, July 7.

More details and registration information will be included in upcoming issues of the Observer.

Fr. Savas Zembillas Named Chancellor

NEW YORK — Archbishop Demetrios has announced the appointment of the Very Rev. Archimandrite Savas Zembillas as Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, effective Dec. 1.

Fr. Zembillas has been pastor of St. Demetrios Church in Merrick, N.Y. since September 1997.

Fr. Michael Kontogiorgis, who has been serving as acting chancellor, will return to his former position as assistant chancellor.

A native of Gary, Ind., Fr. Zembillas, 42, graduated with a Masters of Divinity degree with high honors from Holy Cross School of Theology, Brookline, Mass., in 1985 and subsequently pursued doctoral studies at Oxford University under the supervision of Bishop (Kallistos) Ware of Diokleia.

He also holds a B.A. in philosophy and English literature from Colby College, Waterville, Maine.

Prior to enrolling at Holy Cross, Father Savas spent a year living in monasteries in Greece (Mt. Athos and Patmos) and England. He was ordained to the diaconate (1992) and priesthood (1995) in Chicago by Metropolitan Iakovos of the Diocese of Chicago.

In November 1996 he was tonsured a monk and elevated to the rank of Archimandrite by Metropolitan Maximos of the Diocese of Pittsburgh at the Monastery of St. Gregory Palamas in Hayesville, Ohio.

During his studies in England, he served as deacon to Bishop Kallistos and in other capacities. He served the Oxford community as a facilitator for Greek Orthodox patients undergoing brain surgery



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at Oxford's Radcliffe Infirmary, was warden of the House of St. Gregory and St. Macrina, and assistant to the director of the St. Theosevia Centre for the Study of Christian Spirituality.

During his research in Athens he served as a deacon in several parishes and monasteries.

Following his ordination to the priesthood, Fr. Savas served for several months as a resident scholar at Holy Cross before being assigned as pastor of Annunciation Church in Kalamazoo, Mich.

After arriving in New York, he served on the St. Basil Academy Board and was a member of the Enthronement Committee for Archbishop Demetrios.

St. Basil's and 'Smile of a Child' Become Sister Organizations



D. Panagos

BISHOP Philotheos of Meloa presides over an agiasmo service at St. Basil's, to mark the beginning of a new relationship between the Academy and its sister organization in Greece "Smile of a child"

GARRISON, N.Y. — An agiasmo service at St. Basil Academy on Nov. 9 marked the beginning of a new relationship of the Academy with the "Smile of a Child" organization in Greece.

Bishop Philotheos of Meloa presided at the ceremony, assisted by Academy Executive Director Fr. Constantine Sitaras. The bishop also greeted each of the children of St. Basil's.

Attending the ceremony from Athens, Greece, were Costa Yiannopoulos, Smile of a Child general secretary and John Lambropoulos, treasurer.

According to Father Costas Sitaras,

executive director, St. Basil's, as a philanthropic center of the Archdiocese for orphaned and needy children, has agreed to become a "sister organization" with The Smile of A Child, an independent philanthropic organization that addresses the growing needs of the homeless and often orphaned children of Athens.

Fr. Sitaras told the Observer that, as sister organizations the two institutions will develop an exchange program so children can visit Greece and the United States, and share clinical services and guidance.

For more information, call St. Basil Academy: (914) 424-3500.

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

Ecumenical Patriarch's Visit to Albania a Resounding Success

by Nicholas Manginas

TIRANA, Albania — Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's visit to Albania was meaningful and, indeed, historical.

Through this visit, the Patriarch blessed the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, which is undergoing a period of regeneration, and congratulated Archbishop Anastasios for his multi-faceted work.

Both the Patriarch and Archbishop concluded "there is no greater realism than believing in miracles," referring to the regenerative work the Church has accomplished under very difficult circumstances over the past eight years.

The Patriarch visited Tirana, Skodra, Berati, Argyrokastro and Korytsa, cities with a historical echo and an Orthodox flock.

Tireless, continuously in motion by car and helicopter in this seven-day marathon visit, the Patriarch went to visit churches, monasteries and foundations.

He made pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Kosmas Aitolos at Kolikontashi.

"You have won the hearts of people, not just the Orthodox but of the entire Albanian People," was a phrase often heard from political leaders to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew during his first visit to the "Land of the Eagles."

This was a visit of historical significance, not just because of the recent developments but also because the country's harsh and inhuman atheist regime had prohibited any religious expressions. However, after the fall of communism, the situation changed slowly, but steadily.

In 1991 the Ecumenical Patriarchate appointed Bishop Anastasios of Androusa as patriarchal exarch for the Albanian Church's reorganization.



ECUMENICAL Patriarch Bartholomew along with Archbishop Anastasios greet well-wishers, as they make their way through the crowds overflowing the streets of Korytsa.



ARCHBISHOP ANASTASIOS of Albania offers a gift to His All Holiness. Looking on by the side of the Patriarch are Metropolitans Antonios of Dardanelia and Demetrios of Sevasteia, who were accompanying the Patriarch during his trip in Albania.

One year later, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected Anastasios as archbishop of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania.

Thus, after eight years of hard work by Archbishop Anastasios, the Patriarch's visit confirmed Orthodoxy's renaissance in this country.

In his speech upon arriving in Tirana, the primate of Orthodoxy stressed that, "We are certain the autocephalous Church of Albania will continue to respond to the aspirations and hopes of the Albanian people regardless of religious conviction, under the inspired guidance of her primate, Archbishop Anastasios, and the sleepless support and contribution of his worthy colleagues, the venerable hierarchs, the pious priests and her Christ-loving entire... Church."

During his stay, Patriarch Bartholomew was welcomed with the honors of a head of state and held constructive discussions with the President Redjep Meidani, parliament President Skender Ginoushi and the new prime minister, Ilir Meta.

The Patriarch also met with ministers, heads of political parties, Parliament mem-

bers and ex-President Sali Berisha.

During his talks with officials the Ecumenical Patriarch thanked the Albanian state for help it has offered to the autocephalous Church of Albania, approving of her activi-



An enormous banner welcoming Patriarch Bartholomew was hang on a public building in Tirana.

ties to benefit public welfare.

At the same time, he expressed his wish that the government return churches, monasteries and other church property confiscated by the previous regime.

He stressed: "We do not seek preferential treatment of the Orthodox; we only seek dispensation of justice."

The Primate of Orthodoxy also met

with the "Union for Human Rights" Party President Vassilis Melos and with the president of "Omonoia," Evangelos Doulis, representing the Hellenic community.

Patriarch Bartholomew was welcomed with particular enthusiasm and emotion by local authorities and local people.

Crowds swarmed the streets in Leza, Skodra, Kavayia, Durres, Elbasan, Berati, Argyrokastro and Korytsa.

Young students in ethnic costumes followed the Patriarch, the Archbishop of Albania and hierarchs who escorted them.

People regardless of age, holding flowers, laurels and fresh basil, tried to touch the Patriarch and receive his blessing.

Moved by the people's response, His All Holiness stooped and blessed the crowds, and displayed great affection for babies.

To the Orthodox of Albania these were truly unique moments. Anybody could see this in their faces, in the tears that filled their eyes.

During his visit to Skodra, Patriarch Bartholomew laid the foundations of the Cathedral devoted to the Birth of Christ.

In his speech he stressed among other things: "What we live today is the resurrection. It is the resurrection of the entire Albanian people from the hardships which it suffered for half a century.

"It is the resurrection of our Orthodox Church which had been wiped from the map of Albania. It is also the resurrection of friendship and fraternity among all Albanians of any religion and faith."

Patriarch Bartholomew, congratulated the local authorities, the Roman Catholic archbishop and mufti of the town (Muslim religious leader) for their good disposition towards peaceful coexistence and encouraged them to continue living in harmony and love.

He repeated this many times during his visit in Albania, and warmly praised Archbishop Anastasios.

A few days later, he said at Argyrokastro: "Archbishop Anastasios is a gift to humanity. He has transformed Albania into a huge work station. He restores old churches, he creates. We thank him."

Archbishop Anastasios could not hide his joy for the particularly positive effect of the Patriarch's visit to Albania.

In his speech, referring to the Primate of Orthodoxy, he said: "His presence in the leadership of our Church is a gift, a particular presence for the entire world."

The visit received extensive coverage in the Albanian press, and state and private electronic mass media.

State TV aired the Divine Liturgy live from the Cathedral of the Evangelism of Theotokos in Tirana.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Anastasios concelebrated the Divine Liturgy, along with Metropolitans Antonios of Dardanelia, Demetrios of Sevasteia, Ignatios of Berati and Ioannis of Korytsa.

Particularly moving was the enthusiasm of the Albanian youth at the festival.

The Ecumenical Patriarch also held discussions with the Greek and Turkish ambassadors who each hosted official banquets in his honor.

Undoubtedly, the Ecumenical Patriarch's visit to Albania can be characterized as particularly significant and that it will constitute a supportive factor for the Albanian Orthodox Church's constructive work.

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Religion, Science, and the Environment: *A Symposium on the Danube*

Nevertheless, anyone visiting the foundation, or meeting with Fr. Georg, is presented with a flower, a symbol of peace and love to all the children who without exception respect the bearer of the flower.

Allow 4-6 days for delivery in the US.

Bishop George Dies from Stroke

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The bishop was rushed to a local hospital and put on life-support, but was pronounced dead shortly before 2 a.m. on the 22nd.

Ironically, Bishop George, the first hierarch of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese to come from the married clergy, had ended his speech by saying he would be a steward of St. George Church “until the day I die,” and also spoke of his desire to eventually be buried next to his presbyter, Fr. Demos recalled.

The funeral took place Saturday, Nov. 27, with Archbishop Demetrios officiating. In attendance were more than 1,200 faithful, 100 priests and seven hierarchs: Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston, Bishop Alexios of Atlanta, Bishop Nicholas of Detroit, Bishop Philotheos of Meloa and Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos, who was elected to the episcopacy on the same day as Bishop George.

Among the dignitaries present were Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland and former congressman and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Ed Derwinski, friends of the bishop.

Metropolitan Maximos, whose friendship with Bishop George went back to the years when they studied at the Patriarchal Theological School of Halki, stood an all-night vigil in the church where Bishop George lay in state following the Friday wake.

Many tributes

During the funeral service, the Metropolitan read a message from Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, also a Halki classmate and friend, who recalled their days at the school and praised Bishop George’s long service to the Church. In his message, the Patriarch described his friend as “a tower of strength” and “the man for the job” in a diocese that is “one of the most vibrant.”

His All Holiness added that “His death can be endured if we realize that Bishop George was ready to meet his Maker and is with his presbytera in heaven.”

Condolences also came from Archbishop Iakovos who was unable to attend. It was under his tenure when Fr. George came to the Archdiocese of North and South America to serve the parishes in Hamilton, Ontario; Manchester, N.H.; and Bethesda for nearly 40 years.

In addition to the eulogy by Archbishop Demetrios, other tributes were offered by Diocese Chancellor Fr. Alexander Leondis, and Leon Andris, a family friend and former parish president, whose wife, Robin, was the nurse who attended to the bishop when he was stricken.

Mr. Andris recalled Fr. George’s dynamism and passion in his years at Bethesda.

“He was a fire that burned so brightly, yet so briefly,” he said. “His passion kept him alive and his greatest passion was his family.”

He said that, after Presbyteria Maria’s death, “he was never the same,” but expressed his feeling that it was God’s will “that the loss of his presbyteria sent him a new direction.”

Fr. Leondis noted that Bishop George “served his Church and his flock with understanding and compassion,” although he could be “confrontational when necessary, but in a loving way.”

Commenting on the bishop’s love of knowledge and his prolific writing, the chancellor said that “through his scholarship, he will continue to be an inspiration for generations to come.” Fr. Leondis said that in his brief time in the episcopacy “he was able to invigorate the diocese.”

He also pointed out that Bishop

George promoted “many philanthropic causes that no other clergyman has matched.”

Archbishop Demetrios said that Bishop George “gave us the full meaning of the power love” as being something stronger than the power of death, and that he showed his love for education, family, the Church, people and God.

“Ultimately his tremendous outpouring of love was because of his tremendous love for God,” His Eminence said.

The bishop’s love for the Church “was a love he would not compromise. He shed tears for the Church because of its problems and difficulties and was ready to suffer for this love,” said the Archbishop, adding, “His whole heart was a soft spot for the diocese.”

His Eminence also remarked that Bishop George’s love for people “went beyond a specific community. He loved people in general” and . . . “even when he had to reprimand someone, it was with love.”

He recalled that the bishop “was delighted to speak of his children and grandchildren,” all of whom sat in the front pew at the service.

Fr. Demos told the Observer that, in his brief tenure as diocese bishop, he visited all but two of the 52 parishes under his jurisdiction and had hoped to visit the remaining communities by the end of the year.

Bishop George most recently served the entire Archdiocese in two capacities.

Guidance at critical time

As Vicar in the critical four-week period following Archbishop Spyridon’s resignation, he provided the strong leadership necessary to help the Church maintain unity and supervised preparations for Archbishop Demetrios’ enthronement in mid-September.

Most recently, he served as chairman for the upcoming Clergy-Laity Congress that will take place in Philadelphia next July and helped foster a new approach to the event.

The burial service took place at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Aspen Hill, Md., north of Washington where he was laid to rest beside his presbyteria. The funeral procession included almost 100 cars and extended nearly half a mile.

The Makaria meal that followed in the Grand Hall included tributes to the bishop from a son-in-law, Charles Szczesny (pronounced Chesny), and parishioners Elaine and Nicholas Lailas who recalled several poignant memories of Bishop George.

Mr. Lailas also related George Papaioannou’s early life, growing up in poverty in the village of Prodomos, outside of Thebes.

He was born on St. George’s feast Day, April 23, 1933, the third of four children (two brothers and a sister).

His early education was in the village school held in the local church. It was World War II and the Germans had burned the village and his schooling ended at age 12.

But his thirst for knowledge pushed him to seek more education. He borrowed a pair of shoes and convinced two fishermen to take him to Corinth to continue his studies. After a year, he returned to Thebes to finish high school. At night he worked at a hotel.

Still desiring to continue learning after high school but lacking the money, George wrote to Queen Frederica of Greece and asked for financial assistance to attend the Patriarchal Theological School at Halki. The government responded and he was able to pursue his

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Hymnology: The Catechetical Matrix

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish each other in all wisdom by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.” (Colossians 3:16)

by Fr. Frank Maragos

Orthodoxy is, indeed, the Church of “Correct Praise” — a Church of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

Whether we are celebrating a grand liturgical event, venerating the icons of the saints, examining synodal creeds or studying Church history, the chapters of mankind’s story of redemption are often inter-woven in the liturgical tapestry of spiritual melody.

Reflecting the Pauline admonition quoted above (Col. 3:16), Orthodoxy underscores the desire to allow the wisdom of God’s Word to richly dwell in the minds and souls of Her faithful children through psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

As such, if the pedagogical enterprise seeks to remain loyal to this liturgical integration of theology, scripture, prayer and ethical integrity the contemporary catechist would do well to place hymnology near, if not at the center, of their personal credo of educational praxis.

Overlooked area

One of the most overlooked areas of religious education is the hymnology books of the Orthodox Church. For many, the complement of Orthodox hymns is, at best, limited to liturgical celebrations such as Easter, Pentecost, Christmas and Epiphany; a few sacred hymns dedicated to popular saints; and the Resurrectional apolytikia of Sunday Liturgy.

Even the names of the major liturgical books such as the Triodion, Pentecostarion and Parakleteke, that correspond to the primary cycles of the liturgical year are unfamiliar.

While there is a need to encourage the faithful to attend the full complement of worship services such as the Orthros, Vespers, Royal Hours, Paraklesis and Compline, we should strive to likewise use the hymnology from these services in our educational methodology.

Theological 'university'

The theological University of Orthodoxy is found in Her hymns. This is where the authentic curriculum of our Faith is discovered! The psalms, hymns and sacred songs of Orthodoxy are the classrooms to a rich theological melody of Old and New Testament truths which seek to assist the faithful in their spiritual development.

It must here be underscored, however, that these poetic excursions are not merely aesthetic but they also explore cognitive and psychomotor scriptural objectives. Consequently, it would prove beneficial for parish priests, theologians, church leaders and experienced instructors to concentrate on un-packing the liturgical, patristic, doctrinal and ethical aspects of Orthodoxy’s scriptural foundation by utilizing the matrix of hymnology as our pedagogical starting point.

Four components

When one begins to study the hymnology of the Church four major components are quickly discerned. Hymnology is a poetic matrix of scripture, theology, ethics and exhortation.

As such, the use of hymns at the core of our catechetical curriculum will assist both youth and adult students to nurture the four-fold Orthodox pattern of life, namely: (a) doctrinal integrity, (b) philanthropic veracity, (c) liturgical fidelity, and (d) spiritual authenticity (Acts 2:42).

Offer with care

It is not enough to merely encourage the young to chant the hymns, especially if they do not know what they are singing. Hymns are prayers and should be offered up to God in the company of the angels and saints with great care and understanding.

Here, the warning of St. Athanasios the Great is quite appropriate. “Do not psalmodize with your tongue only,” he cautions, “but also with your mind, and benefit greatly not only yourself, but also those who listen to you.” St. John Chrysostom likewise directs those who chant not to do so “simply with the mouth, but in a state of spiritual wakefulness.” Chrysostom insists that “all other forms of singing to God are merely singing in the air!”

Understanding hymns

Perhaps the best admonition concerning the need to understand what we are singing comes from St. Theoleptos. “If you know what you are chanting,” he exhorts, “you acquire consciousness of what you know; from this comes understanding, and from understanding springs the putting in practice of what you have become conscious of.” In other words, hymns have the capacity of producing wisdom and ethical integrity through critical self-reflection with the Word of God.

St. Gregory of Sinai asserts that “the singing of hymns has been given to us that we may rise from the sensory to the intelligible and true.”

ISOS program

An example of how hymnology can be integrated into the pedagogical quiver of the contemporary Orthodox catechist is the Tuesday evening program provided by the Internet School of Orthodox Studies. For the last three semesters, ISOS, a ministry of the Archdiocese Department of Religious Education, has been offering catechetical programs on the Internet.

The classes are offered to adults in the greater Boston area and are simultaneously broadcast over the Internet in real-time format. As a result, adults, families and parish religious education classes have the opportunity to log on to the ISOS Distance Learning Internet site every Tuesday evening (7-8:30 p.m.) and be a member of a virtual classroom. Listeners across the globe are given the opportunity to e-mail questions or comments as the class is being taught. The lessons are also archived for those who might want to listen to the classes as their schedules permit.

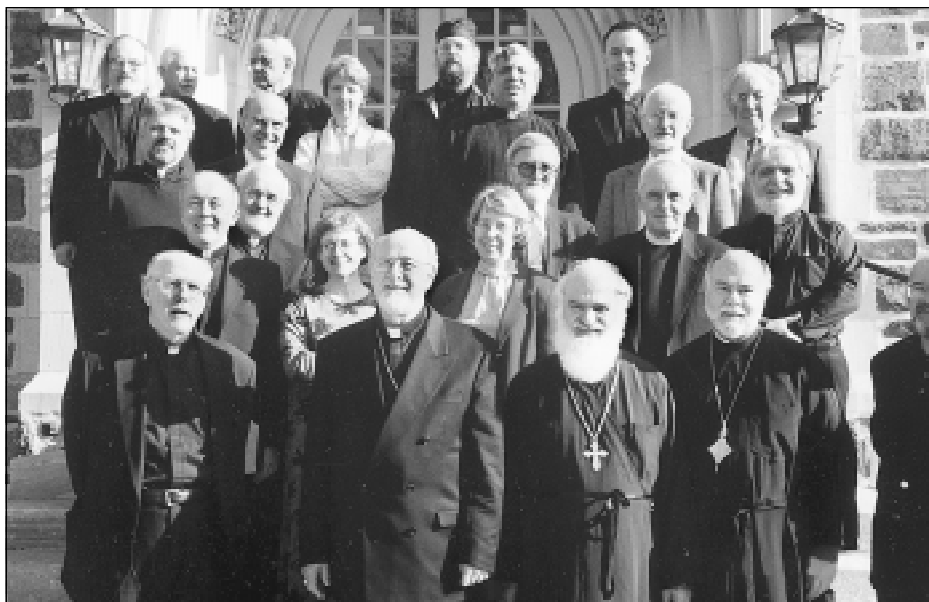
Fall semester topic

The topic of the 1999 fall semester ISOS Distance Learning class is the Hymnology of the Parakleteke (the book of the Eight Tones). Several clergymen from the Boston Diocese were selected by the Department of Religious Education to serve as the faculty. Each week, a different cycle of hymns that correspond to the upcoming Tone of the week is examined from a scriptural, theological, patristic, liturgical and ethical point of view.

In so doing, the DRE hopes to provide an important catechetical resource for pastors and parish religious educators who may in turn integrate a component of the weekly lesson into their pedagogical praxis.

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Ecumenical



MEMBERS OF Orthodox-Catholic Consultation at their meeting in Washington. Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh and Archbishop Rebert Weakland of Milwaukee (front, center) co-chair the semi-annual meetings

Witness and Filioque Discussed at Theological Consultation

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The value of ecumenical witness and the filioque were the main themes of the 57th meeting of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation that was held at St. Paul's College here Oct. 28-30.

The meeting was co-chaired by Metropolitan Maximos, Greek Orthodox Bishop of Pittsburgh, and Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland of Milwaukee.

The members of the Consultation considered a draft text on the value and accomplishments of the dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

They hope to complete the document next spring in time for the 35th anniversary celebration of this dialogue which has been meeting continuously since 1965.

The Consultation also continued its review of the Vatican's 1995 document, "The Greek and Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit."

Four papers

At this session four papers were heard: "Another Faith?: Reflections on 'The Greek and Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit' (Rome, Sept. 13, 1999), by Professor John Erickson of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary; "In Response to a Vatican Document: Greek Patristic Texts Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit," by Metropolitan Maximos; "Revisiting the 'Filioque' Debate: Contemporary Catholic Approaches to the History and the Doctrine," by Brian Daley, SJ, of Notre Dame University; and "Patristic Sources of the Greek and Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit," by Professor Robin Darling Young of the Catholic University of America.

After discussing these papers, Consultation members began an in-depth study of this question in relation to the interpo-

lation of the filioque into the Latin version of the Creed.

At the next session papers will be presented on the scriptural background of the question, as well as perspectives from the Syriac tradition.

The original version of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed that was affirmed by the Council of Constantinople in 381 stated that the Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father."

The word 'filioque' ("and from the Son") was later added to the Latin version of this Creed, causing the phrase to read that the Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father and the Son."

The addition appeared in some areas of western Europe as early as the 5th century but was accepted in Rome only in the 11th century.

The Orthodox East regarded this development as illegitimate, and many consider it to be a significant dogmatic difference that prevents the re-establishment of full communion between the two churches.

SCOBA-sponsored

The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation is sponsored by the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) and the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC).

In addition to the two co-chairs, members of the Consultation are: (from the Roman Catholic Church): Rev. Brian E. Daley, SJ; Rev. Msgr. Frederick McManus, Rev. George C. Berthold, Professor Thomas E. Bird, Rev. Peter Galadza, Rev. John P. Galvin, Sister Donna Geernaert, SC; Rev. Sidney H. Griffith, ST; Rev. John F. Long, SJ; Rev. David M. Petras, Prof. Robin Darling Young, the Rev. Ronald G. Roberson, CSP (staff); from the Orthodox Church: the Rev. Thomas E. FitzGerald, Archbishop Peter of New York and New Jersey, the Rev. Nicholas Apostola, Professor Susan Ashbrook Harvey, the Rev. Alkiviadis Calivas, the Rev. James Dutko, Professor John H. Erickson, the Rev. Alexander Golitzin, the Rev. Emmanuel Gratsias, Dr. Robert Haddad, Professor Lewis Patsavos, the Rev. Paul W. S. Schneirla, the Rev. Robert Stephanopoulos, and Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos (staff).

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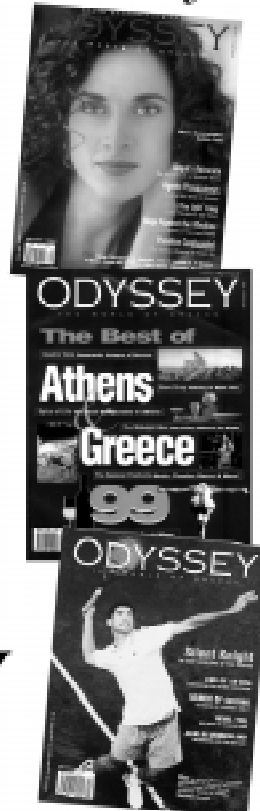
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OPINIONS

EDITORIAL

A Tragic Loss

Unexpected. Shocking. Tragic. That's how Archbishop Demetrios partially summed up his feelings at the loss of his close associate of the past several months, Bishop George of New Jersey.

Though he was diminutive in physical stature, the bishop has been described as a spiritual giant, and was many things to many people: Loving, passionate, controversial, confrontational, scholarly, a peacemaker, a great motivator.

He was also not without his own "Pharisees" as he strived to follow Christ's directive to "love one another."

Archbishop Demetrios, at the invitation of the Greek government, made an official visit to Athens and took part in the formal dinner held in honor of President Clinton's trip to Greece.

But the man who for so many years dispensed his love and compassion through his "Tell Me Father" column in the Orthodox Observer has left an indelible mark upon the Greek Orthodox Church and the Archdiocese of America.

He was also known as a "builder of churches," having motivated the parishes he served to outgrow their existing facilities and building new churches. Two of these parishes, in Manchester, N.H., and Bethesda, Md., honored his patron saint of St. George.

Fr. George did not shrink from controversy. After he arrived in Manchester in 1962, he broke precedence and in the proces, broke down a barrier between the priest and the laity when he attended a general assembly meeting, something no previous pastor had been allowed to do.

In Bethesda, he took a parish of 75 families and nurtured it into a large community of more than 800 families that has built an impressive church complex in this Washington suburb. At the same time, he instilled the spirit of Christian giving and loving diakonia to his parishioners.

His parish has helped more than 1,500 very poor children and adults, many from Greek families, who have

needed surgery or other medical care and lacked the funds.

Fr. George undertook a national campaign to enable a monk from Mount Athos get a liver transplant. A few years earlier, he moved his parishioners to raise \$200,000 for a young boy who also needed a new liver.

He inspired his Sunday School children to raise \$4,500 for St. Basil Academy. And St. George Church is only one of two communities in the United States to contribute \$100,000 to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

But Bishop George's life and ministry was more than successful fund-raising.

He continuously pushed his flock, to which he was lovingly devoted, to achieve greater goals than even they thought they were capable of attaining.

Much like Zacchaeus who climbed a tree for a better view of Christ, Bishop George scaled greater heights in pursuit of his love of knowledge and understanding about the Faith. This resulted in his writing two important books about the Church and Hellenism's struggle and triumph in the New World that serve as a permanent record and an inspiration for future generations.

His writings in the Observer, and in other publications, aimed at portraying the faith in a loving, Christ-like vein.

Serving as vicar in August and September, the Bishop offered encouragement and a sense of optimism for the future to the entire Church and facilitated the smooth transition to a new archbishop.

At the time of his death, he had immersed himself in organizing the 34th Clergy-Laity Congress in Philadelphia which he had hoped would represent a radical break from the past.

As one of Bishop George's former parishioners, Elaine Lailas, aptly stated after the funeral in Bethesda, "This little holy man took giant steps and all of our feet wouldn't fit into his shoes."

His memory will be eternal.

LETTERS . . .

► Bringing us together ◀

Editor,

To say that the Archbishop's arrival at Kennedy (airport) in NY was low key and humble in the face of a threatened hurricane, speaks volumes about this man's character. It shows that he is at ease with the Lord and has no fear that his life could end at anytime if he got caught in that storm. If he is truly as humble as he appears, we as Orthodox Christians as well those in need of a Christ-like example, will be blessed to have him as our new leader.

If we as Christians can look to our church leader and use his behavior as an example of what we should be, then our lives can only improve as we try to follow his example. He said he is coming here to America to serve a distinguished Church and yet we as members of that church are certainly blessed and humbled to have such a person as our new leader.

If this togetherness continues and we can work with the Archbishop and he can work with us, then the work that's been accomplished in the past will be minor compared to what can be done when everyone works together for good of the Orthodox church and it's job of bringing souls to Christ. As he stated, "The possibilities are great and the future is filled with hope and promise."

He seems to have already produced a welcome calm among our Orthodox churches and that's a start that any new leader would be pleased about. There is so much anger and turmoil in our world today, that a truly humble leader is a Godsend.

I pray that God will guide his every step as he brings our churches back together as "one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church."

Fran Glaros
Clearwater, Fla.

ter but in other dogma as well - but it's not really their fault, they are doing all they know to do.

As Orthodox Christians, rather than accusing them of being "unBible-believing" or "stubborn"(even though some of them may be, God alone knows their hearts) we ought to be praying for them that the Lord would enrich the faith they already have and bring them closer. They just don't understand and I believe that wherever God finds a tender and receptive heart He can and will enlighten it.

Vickie Tsapatoris
East Stroudsburg, Pa.

► Why the first lady? ◀

Editor,

I was very disappointed to learn that first lady Hillary Clinton was the

featured speaker at the luncheon following the enthronement of Archbishop Demetrios. Since her very public and unswerving support for abortion rights puts her in direct opposition to the historic teaching of the Greek Orthodox Church, I do not understand why she would be invited to speak at any Orthodox function, no less one of this magnitude.

If it had been her husband, Bill, one could possibly make a case that he is, after all, President of the United States, and is attending in his official capacity.

Mrs. Clinton, however, is not an elected public official, and her presence only emphasizes the fact that we Greeks are still an ethnic community with an inferiority complex, inclined to subordinate our religious convictions to celebrity worship and pandering to the rich, famous, and powerful.

Peter D. Georges
Mentor-on-the-Lake, Ohio

✧ ✧ ✧

Editor,

I am very disgusted with the Church for allowing H. Clinton a favored place in the enthronement of the archbishop.

Dorothy Paspis
Clarksburg, W.Va.

The Archdiocese officially invited President Clinton to attend the enthronement of Archbishop Demetrios. Because of a scheduling conflict, the President was unable to attend and Mrs. Clinton, as first lady, attended in his place. She came to bring the official best wishes of the nation's leader, and did not engage in partisan politics. She reminisced about her visit to the Patriarchate and offered an encouraging, positive message to Orthodox Christians. Whatever one may feel personally about a political leader or public figure, from a professional standpoint, the Observer can not ignore a first lady's participation in this important event. Mrs. Clinton is first lady of all Americans. From a Christian and spiritual perspective, it is not our place to judge someone else. Christ said, "Let him who is without guilt cast the first stone," and instructed us on several occasions not to pass judgment on others but to concern ourselves with repenting from our own sins. — editor

LETTERS

► More on Theotokos ◀

Editor,

Re: The letter from Sarah Clark about the Theotokos. (Nov. 10 issue)

As a convert to Orthodoxy from first a Presbyterian then a "born-again, full gospel" background, I agree with her that one's relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important requirement for all of us. And I understand her concerns with regard to what she perceives as "attacks" on Protestant Christians.

I would, if I may, like to share my own experience as a convert: When I first became Orthodox it was to keep peace and from a sense of duty to my in-laws but I kept my Protestant ways for many years.

However, there came a day when, by the grace of God, I began to see how fully Christ is glorified in Orthodoxy and

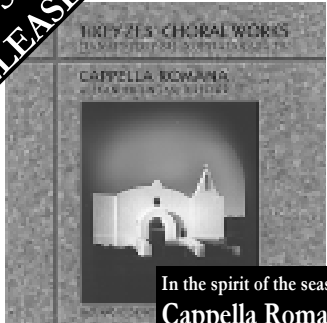
I desired it intensely. Yet I was still uneasy about praying to Mary. Every time we came to a prayer to her in the Liturgy, I would pray, "Lord, I don't want to do anything that dishonors You or Your mother, please show me what is right."

Then, one night during a Lenten Akathist Hymn, I followed closely the prayers and poetry about the Theotokos, her purity and beauty and I really fell in love. I saw how truly unique she is and how it pleases God when she is honored. As Ruth had taken her mother-in-law as her own, now I was taking my Lord's mother as my own, too.

As for Protestants, it's obvious to me now, that although they may love Jesus, they unfortunately are missing out on the fullness of the Faith, not only in this mat-

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ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS' CHRISTMAS ENCYCLICAL

► page 1

Mother was simply another human being born into a troubled and suffering world. But to the eyes of faith, this child reveals the very person of the Lord Himself, God-With-Us. His presence constitutes the satisfaction of every human desire, the fulfillment of every human longing.

For this child Emmanuel manifests to us that God our Creator is with us in utmost truth—not simply in an abstract or nebulous sense, but in a manner that is real, immediate, and absolute. "He who was from the beginning, whom we have heard, whom we have seen with our eyes, whom we have looked upon and touched with our hands," says the Apostle John (1 John 1:1), was nothing less than the Word of God Incarnate. The Son of God came to be with us in the form of our own human flesh, so that we might be assured beyond all doubt or contradiction that the God of love is with us intimately, tangibly, and personally. He is with us and He will be with us as He promised, "Behold, I am with you always even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). We experience His immediate presence, we experience His name Emmanuel, in the ineffable condescension shown in every celebration of the Divine Liturgy, where we live the perfect fulfillment of the promise of His promise, by being united to Him through our participation in the Holy Eucharist.

In the superb name Emmanuel—"God with us"—given to the newborn Christ, God manifests also the tremendous fervor of His love for us. His is not a passive and dormant love that waits to be recognized and accepted. His is a love that reaches out, that moves beyond all conceivable boundaries and limitations, that energetically and insistently draws near to us. God did not demand that the fallen race of men should lift themselves up to heaven to enter into a relationship of peace and reconciliation with Him. Instead, He bridged the essential gap between the Creator and the created, He abolished the circumscriptions of nature, He broke down the dividing wall of partition between God and man. He Himself made the first and decisive move by entering physically into our realm of existence so that we might enter by grace into the eternal Kingdom of His love and enjoy His fellowship with us forever.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

"God with us," this is our hope for the coming year and century and millennium until the day of the Lord's return. Though the fate of our race may seem to change daily, though the face of the world may change a thousand times, though humanity may advance into an era of unimaginable and even fearful technological power, the people of God are not dismayed. We hear and obey still the command that the angels gave to the shepherds: "Be not afraid!" We receive still the good news of great joy that Emmanuel is born in the flesh. We trust still in Him who hears and answers our prayers, Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Forever with us, forever among us, forever within us by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ embraces and blesses us, sanctifies and satisfies us with His loving presence. On this Christmas 1999, may our celebration of the Feast of the Nativity fill our hearts with faith, our minds with hope, and our souls with love for our Triune God and for one another; and for all of you may the New Year be happy, healthy, and rich in the blessings of our ever-present God.

With paternal love in Christ,

For His Love Demetrios

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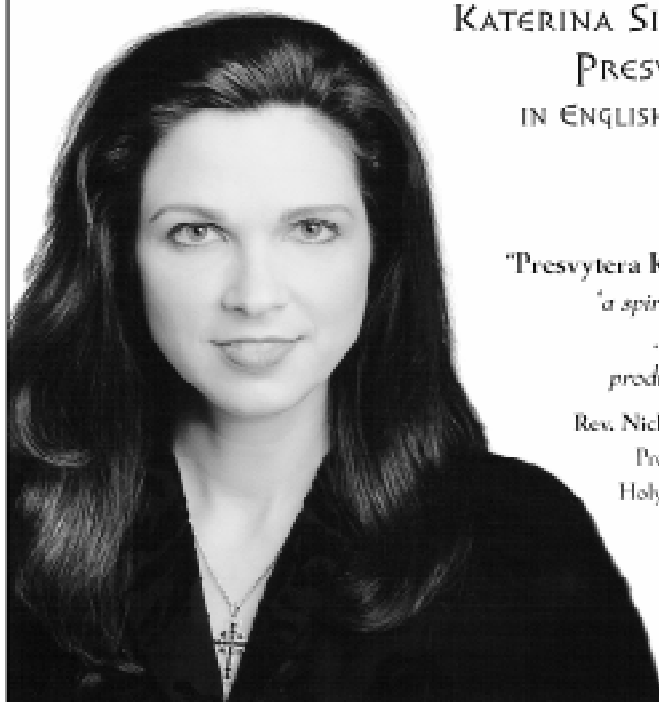
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The Voice of Philoptochos

Chicago Diocese Holds Annual Luncheon

by Rose Dalianis

ROSEMONT, Ill. — Chicago Diocese Philoptochos held their annual luncheon that included many Philoptochos members, priests and friends of Philoptochos from five of the six states in the Diocese.

"Reflections of Faith, Hope and Love" was a tribute to the dedicated Philoptochos sisters.

The theme was reflected throughout the event and each guest received a gift of an icon of St. Sophia with her daughters, Faith, Hope and Love.

The afternoon began with greetings by Diocese President Mary Ann Bissias who welcomed the guests.

This writer spoke of the past 68 years since the founding of Philoptochos, and of the pioneer sisters whose love and dedication have elevated Philoptochos to a leading women's philanthropic organization.

Fr. E. Kyprianos Bouboutsis delivered the invocation, and later read a message from Metropolitan Iakovos.

Co-chair, Irene Arsoniadis introduced the program, a video of photographs submitted by all the Diocese chapters and go-



LUNCHEON ATTENDEES — (from left, seated) Presbyteria Renee Rallis, Fr. John Rallis, Fr. Kyprianos Bouboutsis, Fr. Timothy Bakakos, Irene Arsoniadis. (standing) Fr. George Philippas, Presbyteria Philippas, Rose Dalianis, Lori Voutiritsas, Susan Regos and Mary Ann Bissias.

ing back to the early days of Philoptochos.

Everyone in attendance was deeply touched by the wonderful presentation and by the memories the video invoked.

Diocesan Board included representatives from chapters throughout the diocese. They support a number of philanthropic programs that include Feed the Hungry, Hellenic Heart Program, Bishop's Task Force on AIDS, IOCC, Diocese Cam-

pus Ministry and the Philanthropy Fund.

Together with Metropolitan Iakovos, they host the Diocesan Christmas Open House, the city-wide Vasilopita celebration, the St. Antonios Vespers and the Lenten retreat.

Luncheon proceeds benefit the Bishop Iakovos Scholarship Assistance Program, Diocese Philoptochos philanthropies and the Diocesan Home.

Chapters Raise \$26,000 for Earthquake Relief

Philoptochos chapters from throughout the United States have contributed more \$26,000 in aid for victims of the devastating earthquake that rocked Turkey in August.

The donation recently was sent to His All Holiness. Many chapters are still sending in their contributions. Below is a copy of the letter sent to Patriarch Bartholomew:

Your All Holiness,

With our hearts full of love and devotion, we, the National Philoptochos Society, enclose a check in the amount of \$26,075 for the Patriarchal Turkish Earthquake Relief Fund.

These funds were raised through the generosity of our individual Philoptochos Chapters.

Your All-Holiness, we hope this will be helpful in the blessed work that you do to aid the suffering and homeless. We want you to know that we will always be available to support any Patriarchal philanthropic endeavor.

With deep respect,

Evanthea Condakes,

National Philoptochos President

Washington Chapters Support Philanthropies

WASHINGTON — Sts. Constantine and Helen Philoptochos members have raised more than \$1,000 to support two major local charities that assist young and the elderly persons in the metropolitan area.

A presentation of \$1,065 recently benefited the Metropolitan Washington Orthodox Senior Housing, and, at a meeting in Potomac, Md., another \$1,065 check was presented to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-Atlantic, which helps fulfill the wishes of seriously ill children from ages 2 ½ to 18.

Birmingham Helps Handicapped Children

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Chapter members have renewed their commitment to seriously ill and handicapped children by raising money for Camp ASCCA.

The facility offers physically handicapped boys and girls aged 10-20 a week of physical activity and good fellowship.

The Philoptochos sponsor five campers each year at \$275 per camper. In addition, they support the camp through their annual Frozen Food Festival that helps raise money for much-needed wheelchairs.

Other charities that Birmingham Philoptochos support include: The Walk to Cure Multiple Sclerosis, The Relay Walk for the Cure for Cancer, The Downtown Firehouse Shelter for Men, The Jessie Home for abused women and children, The Christmas Tree Farm for Physically Challenged Individuals

National Office Goes Online

The National Philoptochos Office has its own website, in addition to the Philoptochos section of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese web page (www.goarch.org). The National Office may be contacted via e-mail: philosny@aol.com.

Commitment to Cancer Fund

*Beloved Sisters in Christ,
We in the Philoptochos Society feel a great sense of pride because we are perceived as women who have committed themselves with a spirit of self-sacrifice in the ministry of love, charity, caring and nurturing.*

One of our commitments that touches our hearts, more than words can describe is our commitment to the National Philoptochos Cancer Fund.

Cancer knows no boundaries. It strikes people of all ages. This devastating illness affects all of us whether in our immediate families, friends or acquaintances.

In response to a great need, Philoptochos established our National Cancer

Fund to help those in need of assistance.

More than any other time we are fervently appealing to you, our beloved sisters, to be generous in your commitment to this fund. Now, more than ever, we have more of our people in need of assistance, and our cancer fund is dangerously low.

We desperately need your support in order that we may continue to alleviate the pain and suffering of our brothers and sisters. Please be generous and may our Lord bless you richly for your part in this blessed endeavor.

*Your loving sister in Christ,
Eve Condakes, National President*

Ann Arbor Chapter Elects Officers, Helps Cancer Fund

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Theodora (Teddie) Kales has been elected president of the St. Nicholas Church Philoptochos Society. She succeeds Presbyteria Eva Paul.

Other officers elected include: Margarita Yates, vice president; Sylvia Kleanthous, corresponding secretary; Tina Damanian, recording secretary; Jennifer Batselas, treasurer; Jarnis Gutierrez, assistant treasurer.

Ladies who celebrated their 80th birthday were honored for their many years of service at a commemorative dinner.

In recognition of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the St. Nicholas Philoptochos Society sponsored its "Sixth Annual Y'assou Golf Tournament" in Ypsilanti.

In conjunction with the tournament, the first "Y'assou Doubles Tennis Open" was held the same day.

Both tournaments were service activities of the Philoptochos Community Care

Ministry which coordinates philanthropic and humanitarian projects in the community.

More than \$4,000 was raised from this year's events to support the educational and research programs of the McAuley Breast Cancer Center. Tournament co-chairs were Jim Prokos and Abe Karam.

Silent Auction to Aid Cancer Fund

NEW YORK — Kouros Art Gallery on 23 East 73rd St. will hold a silent auction exhibition Dec. 12 and 13 to benefit the National Philoptochos' Cancer Fund.

Times will be 1-5 p.m. Dec. 12, and noon-8 p.m. Dec. 13.

The gallery will exhibit paintings and sculptures of Greek and other artists.

Detroit Diocese Holds Conference

by Eleni Zaferes

DAYTON, Ohio — Detroit Diocese Philoptochos recently honored National Philoptochos President Eve Condakes at their conference here.

After receiving a standing ovation, Mrs. Condakes spoke of the importance of Philoptochos ministries and praised the delegates for their dedication to the Church.

Newly-enthroned Bishop Nicholas addressed the delegates as well, expressing his gratitude to the Philoptochos for their good works and his anticipation of a strong working relationship with all Diocese Philoptochos members.

During the business sessions, the delegates voted to give \$500 to the Star Shine Foundation of Children's Hospital in Cincinnati, \$500 to Hospice of Middletown, Ohio, and \$500 to Children's Hospital in Detroit.

Prior to second day's session, the delegates and Mrs. Condakes joined the Clergy-Laity Conference delegates for a morning prayer service

Greek Feast, Santa Barbara-Style

by Andiana Kolendrianos

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — St. Barbara Philoptochos has published a collection of more than 200 family recipes in its new cookbook, "The Greek Feast."

These are treasured family recipes that have been handed down for generations. To this classic Greek cooking, we've added a California flair.

A number of the recipes are featured annually at the Santa Barbara Greek Festival, now in its 26th year and one of the most successful ethnic festivals on the West Coast.

"Some of the recipes have been adapted to the Santa Barbara lifestyle - a little avocado here, some sun-dried tomatoes there," said editor Cheri Rae McKinney of Olympus Press, the publisher.

PEOPLE

► Distinguished Principal

Dr. George J. Giovanis, principal of Pine Forge Elementary School in Boyertown, Pa., recently was selected as Pennsylvania's National Distinguished Principal for 1999. He has served as principal at Pine Forge since 1995. Dr. Giovanis and his wife, Joan, are members of Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Reading.

► UHAC honors TV star

Actress Melina Kanakaredes, star of the hit series "Providence" was honored Nov. 13 in Chicago by United Hellenic American Congress for her accomplishments and dedication in promoting and preserving Hellenic heritage and culture. She has appeared on several dramatic series and in feature films.

► Professor honored

San Francisco State University Professor Emeritus Thanasis Maskaleris was honored for his lifelong achievements as a poet, critic of contemporary Greek literature and as director of the Center for Modern Greek Studies from its founding in 1981 until his retirement in 1996. He also taught courses in modern Greek, comparative literature and creative writing.

► Reception held

Parishioners of St. Nicholas Church, Flushing, N.Y., recently honored state Assemblyman Mark Weprin for his sponsorship of "Modern Odysseys: Greek American Artists of the 20th Century" at the Queens Museum of Art, Oct. 13. The exhibit featured the works of 34 established and emerging Greek American artists.

► Choir director feted

Members of Holy Trinity Church in Bridgeport, Conn., recently honored their choir director, George Manos, for his 30 years' service to the parish. He is leaving the community for New York. Mr. Manos currently serves as Archdiocesan District Choir Federation president.



► Miss Teen W.Va.

Ginneene Barone, a member of All Saints Church in Weirton, W.Va., was crowned the 2000 Miss West Virginia Teen on Oct. 31 at the state pageant in Huntington. She will go on to compete in the Miss Teen USA Pageant in Shreveport, La., in August. Daughter of Patricia and Ralph Barone, Ginneene is a member of her parish's JOY chapter, is an honor roll student and is listed in "Who's Who Among American High School Students."

A Parish That Prejudice Nearly Destroyed

One of the saddest chapters, most tragic in Greek American history occurred here in 1909 when prejudice-fueled violence destroyed a thriving community in a scene reminiscent of the Turkish riots of 1956 in Constantinople.

According to a parish history, the first Greeks arrived in Omaha in 1904 "as strikebreakers in South Omaha's thriving meat-packing industry."

During that era of American history, when the labor union movement that formed in the late 1800s began to

although race riots were not new, police took it upon themselves to exact revenge in 1910 when they lynched a young Greek, Nicholas Jimikas, who today lies in an unmarked grave in Forest Lawn Cemetery in north Omaha.

Greek claims for property losses came to more than \$288,000 (over 3 million in today's dollars). In 1916, the United States government paid about \$41,000 to the claimants.

Fr. Margaritis said that the result of the riot was the decimation of the Greek community. The many thousands who had

"It's a very smooth-running parish. I am very honored to serve here."

To illustrate his point of the closeness of the community, Fr. Margaritis cited the example of the Goyans who gather every Sunday after church at a local Greek restaurant (Omaha has five or six) "to socialize on their own" with no outside prodding.

Most parishioners are second- and third-generation Greek Orthodox and there are a few Greek immigrants. Many are in business or the professions in this Midwestern city of 500,000.

PARISH profile

Name:

St. John the Baptist

Greek Orthodox Church

Location:

Omaha, Neb.

Founded: 1907

Diocese: Denver

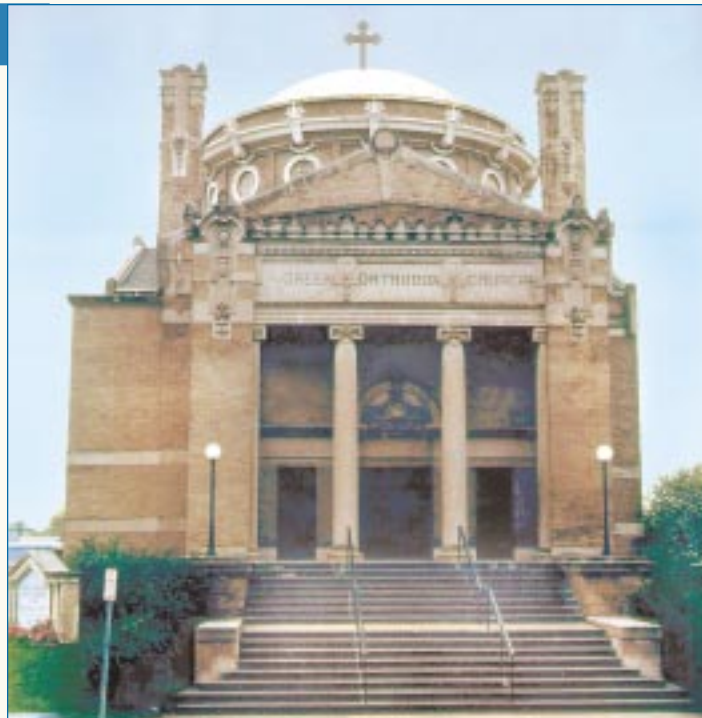
Size: about 180 families

Clergy: Fr. Chris Margaritis

(*Holy Cross '82*)

Noteworthy:

a parish known for its warmth and friendliness



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

gather steam, any workers attempting to unionize met with stiff resistance, even violence, from business owners who sought to squelch their efforts.

Businesses would bring in other workers to take the place of strikers, who quickly became objects of scorn and hate to the unionizers.

Thus began the cycle of anger and resentment that was to explode in violence, although economic competition, cultural and ethnic differences, greed, a lack of education and poor behavior added to the prejudices.

By 1907, 2,000 to 3,000 Greeks had settled in Omaha. Many established their own businesses, including shoe-shine parlors, coffee houses, travel agencies, grocery stores, and others.

They founded a church in a new building that served the community until 1951. The Rev. Constantine Harvalis is listed as the first priest of the parish.

The future looked bright until a fateful incident on Feb. 19, 1909, when a transient Greek worker and gambler shot and killed a highly respected police officer in a gun duel.

The parish history noted that "two days later, local political and business leaders so inflamed the population that a mob took the law into its own hands and with clubs, arson, pistols, and fists drove the Greeks from South Omaha, destroying their homes and businesses. The killing of police officer Edward Lowry was the immediate cause of the riot."

The south Omaha incident was unusual in American history because,

settled in Omaha fled. A small remnant is all that remained of the community.

The dark episode in the community's history is only a distant historical event of which no current members have first-hand memory.

"They don't talk about it much," said Fr. Margaritis, who noted that the prejudice of that earlier period no longer exist.

"Everyone in the community is loved in Omaha."

The parish was incorporated in October 1927 and, a year later, was consecrated.

There is a gap in the parish record from that period until Dec. 16, 1951, when the next major event takes place, the purchase of a former synagogue, Temple Israel, in downtown Omaha, that continues to serve as the community's house of worship.

The building's architecture is Byzantine Greek with a dome about 60 feet high. Ironically, its cornerstone was laid in 1907, the year of St. John the Baptist parish's founding. An extensive iconography project helped transform the structure into an authentic Greek Orthodox church.

Bishop Ezekiel of Chicago consecrated the church in 1958. Since then, more remodeling projects and iconography have enhanced the building.

The priest, who has been in the parish a little more than a year, said that he was struck by the spirit of fellowship and cooperation that he has found at St. John the Baptist.

"I have never seen a community that is so unified, faithful and kind," he said.

The parish membership includes several families across the Missouri River in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Fr. Margaritis has emphasized religious education in his ministry. In addition to regular Sunday School classes every week following Divine Liturgy, he holds a "Wonderful Orthodox Wednesday" (WOW) for the 50 to 60 children in the program. WOW includes a talk from the priest, a Sunday School teacher, games and socializing.

He also makes a 10-minute presentation to the congregation immediately after Divine Liturgy every Sunday.

Wednesday evenings also serve as the meeting time for the Greek school, which has 15 to 20 students. An adult Greek school class has 45 students.

Fr. Margaritis also said that many visitors to the parish have commented on the inspiring choir and two chanters that have enhanced Divine Liturgy. He added that a group of five boys (three of them altar boys, including one of his teen-age sons) have become interested in Byzantine hymnology and formed a choir.

A strong stewardship program provides most parish income and a Greek festival was re-established this year after a 10-year absence caused by dwindling revenues.

Looking ahead, Fr. Margaritis said the community hopes to help revitalize the downtown neighborhood where it is located, and that he has discussed the possibility of a radio program with a parishioner who owns a group of 16 stations based in Omaha.

— compiled by Jim Golding

Χριστός γεννάται, δοξάσατε!



ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΤΗΣ

ΕΤΟΣ 64

ΔΕΚΕΜΒΡΙΟΣ 1999

ΑΡΙΘΜΟΣ 1168

ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΩΝ

Χριστούγεννα 1999

«Ίδού ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἑμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶ μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός». (Ματθ. 1:23)

Προς τους Σεβασμιοτάτους και Θεοφιλεστάτους Αρχιερείς, τους Ευλαβεστάτους Ιερείς και Διακόνους, τους Μοναχούς και Μοναχές, τους Προέδρους και Μέλη των Κοινοτικών Συμβουλίων, τις Φιλοπτώχους Αδελφότητες, τα Ημερήσια και Απογευματινά Σχολεία, την Νεολαία, τις Ελληνορθόδοξες Οργανώσεις και ολόκληρο το Χριστεπώνυμον πλήρωμα της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής.

Αδελφοί και Αδελφές εν Χριστώ,

Στην λαμπρή και χαρμόσυνη Εορτή της κατά σάρκα Γεννήσεως του Κυρίου μας Ιησού Χριστού, λατρεύουμε, υμνούμε και δοξολογούμε τον Θεό που εισακούει τις προσευχές μας. «Ότε ήλθε το πλήρωμα του χρόνου» λέει η Αγία Γραφή (Γαλ. 4:4), ο Δημιουργός του κόσμου απάντησε με αγάπη στις προσευχές όλων των ανθρώπων: οι άνθρωποι του αρχαίου Ισραήλ ποθούσαν ένα λυτρωτή· οι Μάγοι απ' την Ανατολή έψαχναν για έναν βασιλιά· οι φτωχοί της γης αναζητούσαν έναν ευεργέτη· οι άρρωστοι και εξασθενημένοι ικέτευαν για έναν γιατρό· ολόκληρη η Ανθρωπότητα αναζητούσε τον Σωτήρα-Θεό. Και εκείνη τη νύχτα της Γεννήσεως, περίπου 2000 χρόνια πριν, ο Θεός απάντησε στις προσευχές τους και στην έντονη επιθυμία τους, χαρίζοντάς τους τον Υιό του, ένα Υιό του οποίου το όνομα σύμφωνα με την προφητεία του Ησαΐα θα ήταν



► σελ. 14

Η προεδρική οικογένεια των Η.Π.Α. επισκέπτεται με κατάνυξη το Φανάρι

του Νικόλαου Μαγγίνα

«Η Χίλαρι, η Τσέλι κι εγώ είχαμε την τιμή να επισκεφθούμε τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη στην Πόλη, νωρίτερα αυτήν την εβδομάδα. Η συγκίνηση αυτής της εμπειρίας με πλημμυρίζει ακόμη...».

Μ' αυτά τα λόγια ο Πρόεδρος των Η.Π.Α. Μπιλ Κλίντον αναφέρθηκε στην επίσκεψη που πραγματοποίησε στο Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο στο Φανάρι κατά τη διάρκεια ομιλίας του στην Αθήνα προς τους εκπροσώπους της πολιτικής και επιχειρηματικής ζωής της χώρας.

Ο Πρόεδρος Κλίντον εξέφρασε επίσης τη συγκίνηση του για το συμβολικό δώρο που του πρόσφερε ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος λέγοντας: «το ωραίο δώρο που η Παναγιότητα του, ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος μου πρόσφερε, μια υπέροχη περγαμνή στην οποία είναι γραμμένο με Βυζαντινά ελληνικά ένα από τα πλέον αγαπημένα μου χωρία της Αγίας Γραφής, ο πρώτος στίχος από την προς Εβραίους Επιστολή, «Έστι δέ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων».

Η ιστορικής σημασίας επίσκεψη του προέδρου Μπιλ Κλίντον στην έδρα του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου πραγματοποιήθηκε στις 17 Νοεμβρίου. Λίγο μετά το απόγευμα ο Μπιλ Κλίντον, η πρώτη κυρία Χίλαρι και η κόρη τους Τσέλι καθώς



Νικ. Μαγγίνας

στον Πατριαρχικό Ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου στο Φανάρι περιηγήθηκε και προσκύνισε η προεδρική οικογένεια Κλίντον, από τον Παναγιότατο, τον Σεβ. Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριο και άλλους Συνοδικούς Μητροπολίτες.

και η Υπουργός Εξωτερικών Μαντλίν Όλμπραϊτ, ο Πρέσβης των ΗΠΑ στην Αγκυρα και η προεδρική ακολουθία διάβηκαν την πύλη του Κέντρου της Ορθοδοξίας στο Φανάρι. Τον Πρόεδρο και

τα μέλη της ακολουθίας του υποδέχθηκαν στην είσοδο του Πατριαρχείου ο Σεβ. Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος και ο Σεβ. Μητροπολίτης Σεβαστείας κ.

► σελ. 15

Η Αρχιεπισκοπή συμμετέχει στο χριστουγεννιάτικο πρόγραμμα του CBS, παραμονή Χριστουγέννων

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ — Στο γιορταστικό πρόγραμμα με τίτλο «Αμερικά-νικα Χριστούγεννα» που ετοίμασε και θα μεταδώσει το μεγάλο τηλεοπτικό δίκτυο CBS, την παραμονή των Χριστουγέννων προσκλήθηκε να συμμετάσχει η Ελληνική Ορθόδοξη Αρχιεπισκοπή Αμερικής.

Το πρόγραμμα θα είναι μια συναρπαστική παραγωγή πλαισιωμένη από ζεστή μουσική και όμορφα Χριστουγεννιάτικα στιγμιότυπα και θα παρουσιάζει τον τρόπο γιορτασμού των Χριστουγέννων σε διάφορες εθνοκοινοτικές και θρησκευτικές κοινότητες της Βόρειας Αμερικής, στο τέλος του 20ου αιώνα.

Τα γυρίσματα του μέρους που αφορά την Ι. Αρχιεπισκοπή έχει αναλάβει το τμήμα Ελληνικών Ορθοδόξων Τηλεπικοινωνιών της Ι. Αρχιεπισκοπής (GOTelcom) και έγιναν στον Ι. Αρχιεπισκοπικό Καθεδρικό Ναό της Αγίας Τριάδας στο Μανχάταν, στο παρεκκλήσιο του Αγίου Παύλου της Αρχιεπισκοπής και στο παρεκκλήσιο του Τιμίου Σταυρού του Ελληνικού Κολεγίου/ Θεολογικής Σχολής του Τιμίου Σταυρού στο Μπρουκλίν της Μασαχουσέτης.

Ο Σεβασμιότατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος παρουσιάζει την εισαγωγή του ειδικού αυτού μέρους το οποίο, μέσω της Βυζαντινής εικονογραφίας, της Βυζαντινής Μουσικής της ορθόδοξης υμνολογίας αλλά και ανάλογων αναγνωσμάτων, προσκαλεί τον τηλεθεατή να γιορτάσει τα Χριστούγεννα μέσα από την λαμπρή οπτική γωνία της Ορθοδοξίας.

Τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο πλαισιώνουν στην παρουσίαση, η Βυζαντινή Χορωδία της Θεολογικής Σχολής του Τιμίου Σταυρού και δύο νεαροί μαθητές, η Μαίρη Χρυσούλη και ο Ηλίας Κεφαλιδής.

Το διαρκείας μιας ώρας πρόγραμμα θα μεταδοθεί στις 11:35μ.μ. (ώρα Ανατολικής Ακτής) στις 24 Δεκεμβρίου από το τηλεοπτικό δίκτυο CBS και από το καλωδιακό κανάλι Odyssey στις 25 και 26 Δεκεμβρίου 2 μ.μ. και 3 μ.μ. αντίστοιχα.

ΤΟ ΝΟΗΜΑ ΤΩΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΩΝ

Ενα από τα γνωρίσματα του ανθρώπου έναντίον άλλων ζωικών και φυτικών οργανισμών είναι η προσδοκία– προσδοκία για κάτι καλύτερο, για ό,τι γεμίζει περισσότερο το είναι μας, για ό,τι πληροί σώμα, πνεύμα, νου, κάτι που εξασφαλίζει σωτηρία, αθανασία, αιωνιότητα. Ποιος αγαπά το θάνατο και την ανυπαρξία;

Η κραυγή για σωτηρία ήταν ένα από τα μεγάλα χαρακτηριστικά του αρχαίου κόσμου, τότε που αισθανότανε ότι ένας κόσμος παράκμαζε και ένας άλλος εγκυμονείτο να γεννηθεί. Οι σωτήρες-θεοί είχαν κατακλύσει τον αρχαίο κόσμο από την Ανατολή ως τη Δύση. Προφήτες του αρχαίου Ισραήλ, υποφήτες των Ινδιών, φιλόσοφοι των Ελλήνων, ποιητές των Ρωμαίων, όπως ο Σωκράτης και ο Βιργίλιος, εξέφραζαν τις ανησυχίες και αναζητήσεις του αρχαίου κόσμου. Είναι λιγότεροι οι σημερινοί θεοί-σωτήρες (πολιτικοί, θρησκευτικοί, οικονομολόγοι, γιατροί, κ.ά.), που περιέρχονται ανά την οικουμένη υποσχόμενοι την πανάκεια στα ανθρώπινα προβλήματα;

«Οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἄρχων ἐξ Ἰουδα... ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτὸς προσδοκία ἔθνων» εἶπε το θεόπνευστο στόμα του πατριάρχη Ἰακώβ στα παιδιά του (Γεν. 49:10). Και από την αντίπερα του Αιγαίου κάποιος άλλος εἶπε: «Καθεύδοντες διατελείτε ἂν εἰ μὴ τίνα ἄλλον ὑμῖν ὁ Θεὸς ἐπιπέμψετε κηδόμενος ὑμῶν». Με τα λόγια αυτά καυτηρίασε ο Σωκράτης τους συμπατριώτες του Αθηναίους.

Οι προσδοκίες του αρχαίου κόσμου, οι προφητείες των Εβραίων, Ελλήνων και Ρωμαίων εκπληρώθηκαν «ὅτε ἦλθεν τὸ πλῆρωμα τοῦ χρόνου», τότε που «ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ... ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν», όπως γράφει ο εβραϊκής καταγωγής, ελληνικής μόρφωσης και γλώσσας και ρωμαϊκής πολιτογράφησης Απόστολος Παῦλος (Γαλ. 4:4).

«Υἰοθεσία» εννοεί επιστροφή στον Πατέρα, αποκατάσταση σχέσεων Θεού και ανθρώπου. Όταν ο Παῦλος τονίζει ότι η υιοθεσία μάς κάνει να κρᾶζουμε « Ἀββᾶ ὁ

πατήρ», μας υπενθυμίζει ότι οι δύο αυτές λέξεις, η εβραϊκή « Ἀββᾶ» και η ελληνική «πατήρ», αντηχούν την κραυγή Εβραίων και Ελλήνων για την προσδοκία τους να καταλαγούν και να επιστρέψουν στο Δημιουργό πατέρα Θεόν.

Εδώ λοιπόν ευρίσκεται το νόημα των Χριστουγέννων, νόημα υψίστης θεολογικής και πνευματικής σημασίας. Είναι ευχάριστη η γιορτή των Χριστουγέννων, γεμάτη ποίηση, παιδική έκσταση, μουσική και τέχνη, οικογενειακές και φιλικές συγκεντρώσεις, αλλά τότε όλα αυτά παίρνουν νόημα, όταν γίνονται μέσα στο πνεύμα και το όραμα των Χριστουγέννων «ὅτι ἐτέχθη ἡμῖν Σωτήρ, ὃς ἐστὶ Χριστὸς Κύριος» (Λουκ. 2:10-11). Η κραυγή του ανθρώπου «τί ποιήσω ἵνα ζωῇν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω» ευρίσκει την απάντηση στο μήνυμα των Χριστουγέννων.

Παρά τις τεχνολογικές, επιστημονικές, ιατρικές και οικονομικές επιτεύξεις του σημερινού ανθρώπου, η ελπίδα της αθανασίας, η προσδοκία για την αιωνιότητα, παραμένουν οι πιο ευγενικές και οι ισχυρότερες επιθυμίες του σκεπτόμενου ανθρώπου. Και τούτο γιατί ο άνθρωπος έχει θεϊαν την καταγωγή και ενστικτωδώς αναζητά την επιστροφή του στο Δημιουργό του, απ' ὅπου ἔλκει την καταγωγή του.

Κάτω από αυτές τις προϋποθέσεις, οι σίχτοι του ιεροῦ Ἰωάννη του Δαμασκηνού συνοφίζουν το νόημα των Χριστουγέννων και μάς καλούν στον εορτασμό τους:

Ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, σήμερον ἠνώθησαν, τεχθέντος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.
Σήμερον Θεὸς ἐπὶ γῆς παραγένονε, καὶ ἄνθρωπος εἰς οὐρανούς ἀναβέβηκε.
Σήμερον ὁράται σαρκὶ ὁ φύσει ἀόρατος διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον,
διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμεῖς δοξολογοῦντες βοήσωμεν αὐτῷ... Σωτήρ ἡμῶν δόξα σοι.

Ὁ Αἰδ. Πρωτοπρεσβύτερος Δημήτριος Ἰω. Κωνσταντέλλος
εἶναι καθηγητὴς ἱστορίας στο κολέγιο Στόκτον της Νέας Ιερσέης.

ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΩΝ

► σελ. 13

Εμμανουήλ, που σημαίνει «ο Θεός μεθ' ημών», ο Θεός είναι μαζί μας.

Για τα φυσικά μας μάτια, αυτό το βρέφος στην αγκαλιά της Παρθένου Μαρίας ήταν απλώς ένα ακόμη ανθρώπινο πλάσμα που είχε γεννηθεί μέσα στον παραγμένο και πονεμένο κόσμο. Αλλά, για τα μάτια της πίστewς, αυτό το παιδί αποκάλυπτει το πρόσωπο του ίδιου του Κυρίου, του Θεού μεθ' ημών. Η παρουσία Του αποτελεί την ικανοποίηση κάθε ανθρώπινης επιθυμίας, την εκπλήρωση κάθε ανθρώπινης αναζητήσεως.

Αυτό το παιδί, ο Εμμανουήλ, φανερώνει πειστικά ότι ο Θεός και Δημιουργός μας είναι αληθινά μαζί μας. Και είναι μαζί μας όχι με ένα αόριστο και νεφελώδη τρόπο αλλά με έναν τρόπο που είναι αληθινός, άμεσος και απόλυτος. «Ὁ ἦν απ' ἀρχῆς, ὁ ἀκηκόαμεν, ὁ ἐωράκαμεν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν, ὁ θεασάμεθα καὶ αἱ χεῖρες ἡμῶν ἐψηλάφησαν», λέει ο Απόστολος Ἰωάννης (Α' Ἰωάν 1:1), δεν ήταν τίποτα λιγότερο απ' τον Σαρκωθέντα Λόγο του Θεού. Ο Υἱός του Θεού ήρθε για να είναι μαζί μας, «μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος» (Φιλ. 2) έτσι ώστε να είμαστε βέβαιοι πέραν πάσης αμφιβολίας ή αμφισβητήσεως ότι ο Θεός της αγάπης είναι μαζί μας με τρόπο ουσιαστικό, χειροπιαστό, και προσωπικό. Είναι μαζί μας και θα είναι μαζί μας όπως υποσχέθηκε, «Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμὶ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος» (Ματθ. 28:20). Βιώνουμε την άμεση παρουσία Του, βιώνουμε το όνομά Του Εμμανουήλ, στην απέραντη συγκατάβασή Του, που πραγματοποιεῖται σε κάθε τέλεση της Θείας Λειτουργίας, όπου και ζούμε την τέλεια εκπλήρωση της υποσχέσεώς Του, με το να ενούμεθα μ' Εκείνον μέσω της συμμετοχής μας στη Θεία Ευχαριστία.

Στο υπέροχο όνομα Εμμανουήλ - ο «Θεός μεθ' ημών» που δόθηκε στον νεογέννητο Χριστό, ο Θεός φανερώνει επίσης την τεράστια ένταση της αγάπης Του για μας. Η αγάπη Του δεν είναι παθητική και αδρανής που περιμένει να αναγνωρισθεί και να γίνει αποδεκτή. Η αγάπη Του είναι μια αγάπη που έχει την πρωτοβουλία της κινήσεως, που εκτείνεται πέρα από κάθε δυνατό όριο ή περιορισμό, που έρχεται κοντά μας δυναμικά και επίμονα. Ο Θεός δεν ζήτησε απ' τους αμαρτωλούς ανθρώπους να ανιψωθούν στον ουρανό και να δημιουργήσουν μια σχέση ειρήνης και συμφιλίωσης μαζί Του. Αντίθετα, γεφύρωσε το ουσιαστικό χάσμα μεταξύ του Δημιουργού και των πλάσμάτων Του, κατάργησε τις επιταγές της φύσεως, γκρέμισε τον διαχωριστικό τοίχο μεταξύ Θεού και ανθρώπου. Αυτός ο ίδιος έκανε το πρώτο και αποφασιστικό βήμα εισερχόμενος στο χώρο της υπάρξεώς μας, με φυσικό τρόπο, για να μπορούμε εμείς να εισέλθουμε, με τη χάρη, στο αιώνιο Βασίλειο της αγάπης Του, και να απολαύσουμε την κοινωνία μαζί Του για πάντα.

Αδελφοί και Αδελφές εν Χριστώ,

Ο «Θεός μεθ' ημών», αυτή είναι η ελπίδα μας για τον ανατέλλοντα χρόνο, για τον επόμενο αιώνα, για την επόμενη χιλιετηρίδα και μέχρι τη συντέλεια των αιώνων. Μολονότι η κατάσταση του ανθρώπινου γένους φαίνεται ότι αλλάζει καθημερινά, μολονότι το πρόσωπο του κόσμου ενδέχεται να μεταβάλλεται χίλιες φορές, μολονότι η ανθρωπότητα μπορεί να προχωρεί σε μια εποχή αφάνταστης και μάλλον επίφοβης τεχνολογικής δυνάμεως, οι άνθρωποι του Θεού δεν τρομάζουν. Εξακολουθούμε να ακούμε την εντολή που έδωσαν οι άγγελοι στους βοσκούς τη νύχτα της Γεννήσεως: «Μη φοβείσθε!» Εξακολουθούμε να δεχόμαστε το ευαγγελικό μήνυμα της μέγιστης χαράς ότι ο Εμμανουήλ γεννιέται κατά σάρκα. Εξακολουθούμε να έχουμε πλήρη εμπιστοσύνη σ' Εκείνον που εισακούει τις προσευχές μας, τον Ιησού Χριστό που είναι ο ίδιος χθες, σήμερα, και πάντοτε.

Για πάντα μαζί μας, για πάντα ανάμεσά μας, για πάντα μέσα μας διά του Αγίου Πνεύματος, ο Ιησούς-Εμμανουήλ μας αγκαλιάζει και μας ευλογεί, μας καθαγιάζει και μας ικανοποιεί με την αγαπημένη Του παρουσία. Αυτά τα Χριστούγεννα του 1999 εύχομαι ο εορτασμός της Γεννήσεως να γεμίσει τις καρδιές μας με πίστη, το νου μας με ελπίδα, και τις ψυχές μας με αγάπη για τον Τριαδικό Θεό μας και για όλους τους συνανθρώπους μας. Και εύχομαι σε όλους σας ο καινούριος χρόνος να είναι ευτυχισμένος, γεμάτος υγεία, και πλούσιος σε ευλογίες του πάντοτε παρόντος Θεού.

Με πατρική εν Χριστώ αγάπη,

Ἰω. Κωνσταντέλλος

Απεδήμησε εις Κύριον ο Επίσκοπος Νέας Ιερσέης Γεώργιος

Σε ηλικία 66 ετών, απεδήμησε εις Κύριον ο επίσκοπος Νέας Ιερσέης Γεώργιος μετά από οξύ εγκεφαλικό επεισόδιο. Την Κυριακή 21 Νοεμβρίου, ο Επίσκοπος επισκέπτονταν την αγαπημένη του κοινότητα, του Αγίου Γεωργίου στην Μπιθέσδα του Μέριλαντ, όπου υπηρέτησε ως ιερατικώς προϊστάμενος για 27 χρόνια.

Κατά τη διάρκεια επίσημου δείπνου κι αμέσως μετά το τέλος της ομιλίας του ο επίσκοπος αισθάνθηκε αδιαθεσία και μεταφέρθηκε εσπευσμένα στο νοσοκομείο όπου και εξέπνευσε χωρίς τα ξημερώματα της 22ας Νοεμβρίου.

Ο μακαριστός επίσκοπος Γεώργιος (Παπαϊωάννου) γεννήθηκε στον χωριό Πρόδρομος Θηβών, το 1957. Σπούδασε και αποφοίτησε από την Πατριαρχική Θεολογική Σχολή της Χαλκίδς. Υπηρέτησε ως ιερέας στον Ι. Ναό της Παρθένου Μαρίας στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, στον Ι. Ναό του Αγίου Δημητρίου στο Χάμιλτον του Οντάριο, Καναδά και ακολούθως στον Καθεδρικό Ναό του Μάντσεστρ στο Νιού Χαμσάιρ. Ο Επίσκοπος Γεώργιος έκανε μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Βοστώνης με ειδίκευση στην Ιστορία της Εκκλησίας της Αμερικής και έλαβε το Διδακτορικό της Θεολογίας το 1976. Η διδακτορική διατριβή του είχε ως τίτλο «Ο Πατριάρχης Αθηναγόρας και η Ελληνική Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία της Αμερικής».

Ο Επίσκοπος Γεώργιος ήταν ο πρώτος επίσκοπος στην Αρχιεπισκοπή Αμερικής που προήλθε από τις τάξεις των γέγαμων κληρικών, αφού η προσφιλής του σύζυγος, πρεσβυτέρα Μαρία απεβίωσε το 1992. Εξελέγη βοηθός επίσκοπος τον Μάιο του 1998 και Επίσκοπος Νέας Ιερσέης τον περασμένο Απρίλιο. Ήταν λόγιος και πολυγραφώτατος με ιδιαίτερη έφεση σε θέματα ιστορικά. Το βιβλίο του «Η Οδύσσεια του Ελληνισμού στην Αμερική» βραβεύτηκε από την Ακαδημία Αθηνών. Θεωρείται ιστορικός της Εκκλησίας της Αμερικής και έχει επίσης δημοσιεύσει τα βιβλία From Mars Hill to Manhattan: The History of the Arcdiocese of North and South America, και The Diamond Jubilee of the Greek Archdiocese of America, 1922-1997.

Υπήρξε για σειρά ετών συνεργάτης του «Ορθόδοξου Παρατηρητή» καθιερώνοντας τακτική συμβουλευτική στήλη με την επωνυμία «Tell me Father».

Μετά την εκλογή του ως Επισκόπου Νέας Ιερσέης αφιέρωσε όλες τις δυνάμεις του στο έργο της αναδιοργάνωσης της επισκοπής. Με την εκλογή του Αρχιεπισκόπου Δημητρίου του ανετέθησαν καθήκοντα Αρχιερατικού Επιτρόπου και για διάστημα ενός περίπου μήνα συνέβαλε τα μέγιστα στην ομαλή διεκπεραίωση των υποθέσεων της Ι. Αρχιεπισκοπής και την ενθρόνιση του νέου Αρχιεπισκόπου.

Η νεκρώσιμη ακολουθία εψάλη στον Ι. Ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου στην Μπιθέσδα, παρουσία μεγάλου πλήθους πιστών, 100 περίπου ιερέων και επτά Ιεραρχών. Σύμφωνα με την επιθυμία του μακαριστού Επισκόπου Γεωργίου, που εξέφρασε στην τελευταία του ομιλία, ετάφη πλάι στην πολυαγαπημένη πρεσβυτέρα του Μαρία, στο κοιμητήριο «Πύλες του Παραδείσου» βόρεια της Ουάσιγκτον.

Ο μακαριστός απολείπει τρεις εγγαμες κόρες, έξι εγγόνια και δύο αδέρφια.

Ο ξαφνικός θάνατος του Επισκόπου Νέας Ιερσέης Γεωργίου συντάραξε και λύπησε βαθεία την Αρχιεπισκοπή Αμερικής, την Ιεραρχία, τον κλήρο και το λαό. Η αποδημία του άφησε ένα δυσαναπλήρωτο κενό στην Επισκοπή Νέας Ιερσέης και γενικότερα στην Εκκλησία μας.

Ο Σεβ. Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος, συντετριμμένος, μίλησε για την αγάπη που ο Επίσκοπος Γεώργιος έδινε άπλετα σε όλους τους συνανθρώπους του. «Μας έδωσε την πλήρη έννοια της δύναμης της αγάπης, μια δύναμη που είναι ανώτερη κι από το θάνατο», εἶπε. Μιλώντας ιδιαίτερα για την αγάπη του επισκόπου Γεωργίου για την Εκκλησία ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος τόνισε «ήταν αγάπη που δεν συμβιβάζονταν. Έχυσε δάκρυα για την Εκκλησία και για τα προβλήματά της και ήταν διατεθειμένος να υποστεί τις συνέπειες αυτής του της αγάπης... Η αγάπη του ξεπερνούσε τα όρια της κοινότητάς μας. Αγαπούσε χριστιανικά, αληθινά όλους τους ανθρώπους, κι όταν ακόμα έπρεπε να διαφωνήσει με κάποιον ή να επιπλήξει κάποιον το έκανε με αγάπη...»

Ας είναι Αιώνια η μνήμη του.

Ο πρόεδρος Κλίντον στο Φανάρι



Νικ. Μαγγινάς

Με έκπληξη και συγκίνηση ο πρόεδρος Κλίντον θαυμάζει το δώρο του Οικ. Πατριάρχη μια περγαμνή που φιλοτεχνήθηκε στο Άγιο Όρος κατά παραγγελία του Παναγιωτάτου.

► σελ. 13

Δημήτριος, ενώ οι καμπάνες του Αγίου Γεωργίου κτυπούσαν χαρμόσυνα.

Τον πρόεδρο Κλίντον υποδέχθηκε στην Αίθουσα του Θρόνου ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης κ. Βαρθολομαίος, τον οποίο πλαισιώναν οι Μητροπολίτες του Πατριαρχείου, τους οποίους ο Πατριάρχης σύστησε στον πρόεδρο Κλίντον. Παρόν στην υποδοχή και ο μέγας ευεργέτης του Πατριαρχείου κ. Παναγιώτης Αγγελόπουλος, ο οποίος «ανέστησε εκ της τέφρας» τον Πατριαρχικό Οίκο του Φαναρίου.

Αμέσως μετά, ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης κ. Βαρθολομαίος είχε ιδιαίτερη συνάντηση με τον Πρόεδρο στο Πατριαρχικό Γραφείο, παρουσία των Συνοδικών Ιεραρχών του Οικουμενικού Θρόνου των Μητροπολιτών Γέροντος Χρυσοστόμου και Γέροντος Χαλκηδόνος Ιωακείμ, και του Αρχιεπισκόπου Αμερικής κ. Δημητρίου. Επίσης παρόντες στη συνάντηση ήταν και τα μέλη της Αμερικανικής αντιπροσωπείας. Η συνάντηση που διήρκεσε μισή ώρα έγινε μέσα σε κλίμα εγκάρδιότητας και συγκίνησης.

Κατά τη συζήτηση που είχαν οι δύο ηγέτες, ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος ανέπτυξε στον πρόεδρο Κλίντον τις πρωτοβουλίες του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου σε θέματα ειρήνης, φιλίας και προσέγγισης μεταξύ των λαών. Επίσης αναφέρθηκε και στην προσπάθεια που καταβάλλεται για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος κάνοντας ιδιαίτερη μνεία στο πρόσφατο οικολογικό συμπόσιο που πραγματοποιήθηκε εν πλω στο Δούναβη.

Ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης ζήτησε τη συμβολή του προέδρου Κλίντον σε θέματα που αφορούν τις θρησκευτικές ελευθερίες σε όλο τον κόσμο. Ο Πρόεδρος των ΗΠΑ συμφώνησε ότι πρέπει να υπάρξει, σε όλες τις γωνιές του πλανήτη, ελευθερία θρησκευτικής εκφράσεως και λατρείας.

Στη διάρκεια της συζήτησης δόθηκε ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στο θέμα της επαναλειτουργίας της Θεολογικής Σχολής της Χάλκης. Να σημειωθεί ότι τόσο ο Πρόεδρος όσο και η σύζυγος του Χίλαρι Κλίντον έχουν εκδηλώσει έντονο προσωπικό ενδιαφέρον για την επίλυση του

ζητήματος αυτού ώστε να επαναλειτουργήσει η Σχολή της Χάλκης.

Την ώρα των δώρων ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος είπε χαμογελώντας «πρώτα οι κυρίες», ακόμη και «οι Πρόεδροι μπορούν να περιμένουν» και πρόσφερε στην Πρώτη Κυρία δύο βαρύτιμα ασημένια κηροπήγια. Αμέσως μετά πρόσφερε στην υπουργό εξωτερικών Μαντλίν Όλμπραϊτ μια εικόνα της Αγίας Μαρίας της Μαγδαληνής λέγοντάς της: «είναι η Αγία το όνομα της οποίας φέρετε». Ο Πατριάρχης δεν παρέλειψε να προσφέρει στην Τσέλι ως αναμνηστικό δώρο ένα ζευγάρι μανικετόκουμπα και καρφίτσα σε σχήμα πεταλούδας, σε χρυσό και ασημί.

Στη συνέχεια προσφέρθηκε από τον Πατριάρχη στον Πρόεδρο το δώρο που τον ενθουσίασε και τον συγκίνησε. Μια περγαμνή που φιλοτεχνήθηκε κατόπιν επιθυμίας του Πατριάρχου από τον Αγιορείτη μοναχό π. Λουκά, τον καλλιτέχνη Αγιογράφο της Μονής Ξενοφώντος.

Αυτό το ξεχωριστό δώρο –έργο τέχνης– παρουσιάζει τέσσερις εικόνες: τη Δημιουργία του κόσμου, τη Γέννηση του Χριστού, τη Σταύρωση και την Ανάσταση, ενώ το κείμενο του χωρίου της προς Εβραίους επιστολής σχηματίζει το σύμβολο του σταυρού.

Μετά το πέρας της συνάντησης που είχαν στο Πατριαρχικό Γραφείο, ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης ξενάγησε τον Πρόεδρο Κλίντον στον Πατριαρχικό Ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου. Εκεί ο Μπίλ Κλίντον και η Χίλαρι είχαν την ευκαιρία να ανάψουν κερί και να προσευχηθούν. Ο Πρόεδρος και η Πρώτη Κυρία στάθηκαν μπροστά στη στήλη της Φραγγελώσεως, το μήμα δηλαδή της κολόνας όπου μαστιγώθηκε ο Χριστός. Την ακούμπησαν με το χέρι τους και προσευχήθηκαν. Η στήλη της Φραγγελώσεως που βρίσκεται στον Πατριαρχικό ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου είναι ένα από τα τρία τμήματά της. Τα άλλα δύο βρίσκονται στα Ιεροσόλυμα και το Βατικανό, αντίστοιχα.

Συνολικά ο Πρόεδρος των ΗΠΑ παρέμεινε στο Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο περίπου μία ώρα. Ο Γουίλιαμ Τζέφερσον Κλίντον είναι ο πρώτος εν ενεργεία Πρόεδρος των ΗΠΑ που επισκέφθηκε το Κέντρο της Ορθοδοξίας στο Φανάρι. Το γεγονός αυτό επιβεβαιώνει για μια ακόμη φορά τη σπουδαιότητα του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου όχι μόνο για τους Ορθόδοξους και της Χριστιανοσύνης γενικότερα, αλλά και για παγκόσμιο «γίγνεσθαι». Αποτελεί επιπλέον μια αναγνώριση της επί 17 αιώνων προσφοράς του Οικουμενικού Θρόνου στον πολιτισμό της Ευρώπης αλλά και ευρύτερα στον παναν-

Ο Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Σάββας Ζεμπιλλάς νέος Πρωτοσύγκελος της Ι. Αρχιεπισκοπής

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ – Ο Σεβ. Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος ανακοίνωσε το διορισμό του Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτη Σάββα Ζεμπιλλά ως Πρωτοσυγκελου της Ι. Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής, με ισχύ από την 1η Δεκεμβρίου, 1999.

Ο π. Σάββας γεννήθηκε στο Gary της Indiana και είναι 42 ετών. Μετά τις εγκύκλιες γυμνασιακές του σπουδές φοίτησε στο κολέγιο Colby του Maine από το οποίο έλαβε το πτυχίο του. Αργότερα φοίτησε στη Θεολογική Σχολή του Τιμίου Σταυρού, από την οποία έλαβε με άριστα το πτυχίο Masters της Θεολογίας. Συνέχισε διδακτορικές σπουδές στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Οξφόρδης υπό την εποπτεία του Θεοφ. Επισκόπου Διοκλείας κ. Κάλλιστου (Ware).

Πριν την εγγραφή του στη Θεολογική Σχολή, ο π. Σάββας μόνασε επί περίπου ένα χρόνο σε Ιερές Μονές του Αγίου Όρους, της Πάτμου και της Μεγάλης Βρετανίας. Χειροτονήθηκε διάκονος το 1992 και ιερέας το 1995 στο Σικάγο από τον Σεβ. Μητροπολίτη Κρήνης και Πρόεδρο της Επισκοπής Σικάγου κ. Ιάκωβο. Τον Νοέμβριο του 1996 έλαβε την κορά του μοναχού και ανυψώθη στη θέση του Αρχιμανδρίτη από τον Σεβ. Μητροπολίτη Αίνου και Πρόεδρο της Επισκοπής Πιτσβούργου κ. Μάξιμο στην Ιερά Μονή του Αγίου Γρηγορίου Παλαμά στο Hayesville του Οχάιο.

Εξάλλου κατά τη διάρκεια των

σπουδών του στη Μεγάλη Βρετανία, υπηρέτησε ως διάκονος του Επισκόπου Καλλίστου, και συγχρόνως προσέφερε τις υπηρεσίες του στην Κοινότητα της Οξφόρδης, εξυπηρετώντας χειρουργηθέντες ασθενείς εγκεφαλικών παθήσεων του τοπικού νοσοκομείου, ενώ παράλληλα ασκούσε χρέη διευθυντού του Ορθόδοξου Σπουδαστηρίου Οξφόρδης The House of St. Gregory and St. Macrina και χρέη βοηθού του Κέντρου Χριστιανικής Πνευματικότητας «Αγία Θεοσέβεια». Υπηρέτησε επίσης ως διάκονος σε διάφορες ενορίες και Ι. Μονές των Αθηνών κατά τη διάρκεια των εκεί θεολογικών ερευνών του.

Μετά από την χειροτονία του σε πρεσβύτερο, ο π. Σάββας υπηρέτησε για ένα διάστημα ως επιστημονικός ερευνητής στη Θεολογική Σχολή του Τιμίου Σταυρού, ενώ πριν από την τοποθέτησή του στον Ι. Ναό του Ευαγγελισμού της Θεοτόκου στο Καλαμαζού του Μίσιγκαν υπηρέτησε στο Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο της Ακαδημίας του Αγίου Βασιλείου και πιο πρόσφατα ως μέλος της επιτροπής ενθρόνισης του Σεβ. Αρχιεπισκόπου κ. Δημητρίου.

Τον Σεπτέμβριο του 1997 ο π. Ζεμπιλλάς διορίστηκε στην κοινότητα του Αγίου Δημητρίου στο Merrick της Νέας Υόρκης.

Ο π. Μιχαήλ Κοντογιώργης, ο οποίος ασκούσε καθήκοντα πρωτοσυγκελου, επανέρχεται στην προηγούμενη θέση του ως βοηθός πρωτοσυγκελος.



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Η επίσκεψη του Οικ. Πατριάρχη ενισχύει και στηρίζει το έργο ανασυγκρότησης της Αυτοκέφαλης Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας της Αλβανίας

του Νικόλαου Μαγγίνα

Ιστορική και ιδιαίτερης σημασίας χαρακτηρίστηκε η επίσκεψη-προσκύνημα του Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχη κ. Βαρθολομαίου στην Αλβανία, που είχε σκοπό να ευλογήσει την ανασυγκροτούμενη Ορθόδοξη Αυτοκέφαλη Εκκλησία της Αλβανίας και να συγχαρεί τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αλβανίας κ. Αναστάσιο και να συνδράμει για το πολυδιάστατο ιεραποστολικό του έργο.

Δεν υπάρχει μεγαλύτερος ρεαλισμός από το να πιστεύουμε στα θαύματα -σ' αυτή τη διαπίστωση συμφώνησαν και ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης και ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αλβανίας αναφερόμενος στο αναγεννητικό έργο της Εκκλησίας που επιτελείται στην Αλβανία κάτω από δύσκολες συνθήκες και που άρχισε πριν από οκτώ χρόνια. Σταθμοί: Τίρανα, Σκόδρα, Βεράτι, Αργυρόκαστρο, Κορυτσά, πόλεις με ιστορικό αντίλαλο και με ορθόδοξο ποίμνιο.

Ακούραστος, σε μια διαρκή μετακίνηση, οδικώς και με ελικόπτερο, για να αντεπεξέλθει στο μαραθώνιο του προγράμματος των επτά ημερών, ο Πατριάρχης βρέθηκε κοντά στον απλό αλβανικό λαό, ορθόδοξους και μη, επισκέφθηκε ναούς, μοναστήρια, ιδρύματα, σχολεία και δεν παρέλειψε να προσκυνήσει τον Τάφο του Αγίου Κοσμά του Αιτωλού στο Κολικόντασι, όπου τον έφεραν το σκήνωμά του, τα νερά του ποταμού ύστερα από το μαρτυρικό του τέλος.

«Κερδίσατε τις καρδιές των ανθρώπων. Όχι μόνο των Ορθόδοξων αλλά όλου του Αλβανικού Λαού». Αυτή η φράση ακούστηκε πολλές φορές από τα χείλη των εκπροσώπων της πολιτειακής και πολιτικής ηγεσίας της Αλβανίας, προς τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη Βαρθολομαίο τον Α', που πραγματοποιούσε την πρώτη επίσημη επίσκεψή του, στη χώρα των αετών.

Μια επίσκεψη ιστορικής σημασίας, όχι μόνο λόγω των πρόσφατων εξελίξεων αλλά και γιατί στην χώρα αυτή μέχρι τις αρχές της δεκαετίας που διανύουμε το σκληρό και απάνθρωπο αθεϊστικό καθεστώς απαγόρευε κάθε μορφή και εκδήλωση πίστης στο Θεό. Όμως μετά την κατάρρευση του υπαρκτού σοσιαλισμού το σκληρό άρχισε να αλλάζει με αργούς αλλά σταθερούς ρυθμούς.

Το 1991 με απόφαση του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου ορίστηκε ως Πατριαρχικός Έξαρχος ο Επίσκοπος Ανδρούσης Αναστάσιος Γιαννουλάτος με σκοπό την ανασυγκρότηση της Ορθοδόξου Αλβανικής Εκκλησίας. Ένα χρόνο αργότερα η Αγία και Ιερά Σύνοδος του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου εξέλεξε τον Αναστάσιο σε Αρχιεπίσκοπο της Αυτοκεφάλου Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας της Αλβανίας. Έτσι λοιπόν μετά από οκτώ χρόνια σκληρής δουλειάς του Αρχιεπισκόπου Αναστάσιου, η επίσκεψη του Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχη ήρθε να επισφραγίσει την αναγέννηση της Ορθοδοξίας στη γειτονική χώρα.

Μάλιστα ο Προκαθήμενος της Ορθοδοξίας στον χαιρετισμό που απηύθυνε κατά την άφιξη του στα Τίρανα τόνισε ότι «Είμεθα βέβαιοι, ότι η Αυτοκέφαλος Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησίας της Αλβανίας, υπό την εμπνευσμένη καθοδήγησιν του Μακαριωτάτου Προκαθημένου της κυρίου Αναστασίου και την ανύστακτον συμπαραστάσιν και συνδρομήν των άξιων συνεργατών του, των Ιεροτάτων Ιεραρχών, των ευλαβεστάτων ιερέων και του φιλοχρίστου πληρώματος αυτής, ανταποκρίνεται και θα συνεχίσει να ανταποκρίνεται εις τας προσδοκίας και τας ελπίδας, τας οποίας στηρίζει επ' αυτής ο Αλβανικός λαός, ανεξαρτήτως θρησκευμάτων».



Ο ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΣ Πατριάρχης κ. Βαρθολομαίος συνοδευόμενος από τον Μακαριότατο Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αλβανίας κ. Αναστάσιο, τον Σεβ. Μητροπολίτη Σεβαστείας κ. Δημήτριο και άλλους τοπικούς θρησκευτικούς ηγέτες, ευλογεί τα πλήθη που είχαν κατακλύσει τον δρόμο της Κορυτσάς.



ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΗΜΑ στον τάφο του Αγίου Κοσμά του Αιτωλού στο Κολικόντασι, πραγματοποιήσε ο Οικ. Πατριάρχης. Πλάϊι του ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αλβανίας Αναστάσιος, ο Μητροπολίτης Δαρδανελλίων Αντώνιος και ο Μητροπολίτης Σεβαστείας Δημήτριος.

Στην διάρκεια της επταήμερης παραμονής του στην Αλβανία όπου έγινε δεκτός με τιμές Αρχηγού Κράτους, ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος ο Α' είχε θερμές και εποικοδομητικές συναντήσεις με τον Πρόεδρο της Δημοκρατίας Ρετζέπ Μείν-τάνι, τον Πρόεδρο της Βουλής Σκέντερ Γκινούσι και τον νέο Πρωθυπουργό της χώρας Ιλir Μέτα. Επίσης ο Πατριάρχης είχε επαφές με υπουργούς, αρχηγούς κομμάτων, βουλευτές, επιφανείς παράγοντες της χώρας αλλά και με τον τ. πρόεδρο Σαλί Μπερίσα. Στις συνομιλίες του με τους Αλβανούς αξιωματούχους, ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης ευχαρίστησε την Αλβανική πολιτεία για την βοήθεια που πρόσφερε στην ανασυγκρότηση της Αυτοκεφάλου Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας της Αλβανίας, εγκρίνοντας την κοινωφελή δραστηριότητα της. Την ίδια ώρα όμως εξέφρασε την επιθυμία του όπως η Αλβανική κυβέρνηση επιστρέψει εκκλησίες, μοναστήρια και άλλους εκκλησιαστικούς χώρους που είχε κατασχεσει το προηγούμενο καθεστώς τονίζοντας ότι «Δεν ζητάμε προνομιακή μεταχείριση των Ορθόδοξων αλλά μόνο απόδοση της δικαιοσύνης». Ο Πατριάρχης συναντήθηκε επίσης με τον πρόεδρο του κόμματος «Ένωση Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων» Βασίλη Μέλο καθώς και με τον πρόεδρο της «Ομόνοιας», Ευάγγελο Ντούλη, που εκπροσωπεί την ελληνική κοινότητα.

Κατά την περιοδεία του στη γειτονική χώρα ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος έγινε δεκτός με ιδιαίτερη συγκίνηση και ενθουσιασμό από τις τοπικές αρχές και τους

κατοίκους των περιοχών που επισκέφτηκε. Στις πόλεις Λέζα, Σκόδρα, Καβα-γιά, Δυρράχιο, Ελμπασάν και Βεράτιο όπου εδρεύει ο Μητροπολίτης Ιγνάτιος αλλά και στο Αργυρόκαστρο και την Κορυτσά, όπου είναι η έδρα του Μητροπολίτη Ιωάννη, πλήθη κόσμου κατέκλυσαν τους δρόμους δημοσιουργώντας το αδιαχώρητο. Μικροί μαθητές με παραδοσιακές ενδυμασίες ακολουθούσαν τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη, τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αλβανίας και τους Ιεράρχες που τους συνόδευαν.

Άνθρωποι κάθε ηλικίας, κρατώντας λουλούδια, δάφνες και φρεσκοκομμένο βασιλικό προσπαθούσαν να αγγίξουν τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη και να πάρουν την ευλογία του. Ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος συγκινημένος και ο ίδιος από τις εκδηλώσεις του λαού, σταματούσε και ευλογούσε τα πλήθη ενώ με ιδιαίτερη στοργή έπαιρνε μωρά στην αγκαλιά του. Για τους ορθόδοξους της Αλβανίας αυτές οι στιγμές ήταν μοναδικές. Το έβλεπε ο καθένας στα πρόσωπά τους, στα δάκρυα που κυλούσαν από τα μάτια τους.

Κατά την επίσκεψή του στη Σκόδρα ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος έθεσε τα θεμέλια Καθεδρικού Ναού αφιερωμένου στη Γέννηση του Χριστού. Σε ομιλία του τόνισε μεταξύ άλλων τα εξής: «Αυτό που ζούμε σήμερα είναι η Ανάστασις. Είναι το Πάσχα. Είναι η Ανάστασις ολόκληρου του Αλβανικού λαού από τα δεινά τα οποία υπέφερε επί μισό αιώνα. Είναι η Ανάστασις της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας μας η οποία είχε σβήσει από τον χάρτη της Αλβανίας. Αλλά είναι και η Ανάστασις της φιλίας και

της αδελφοσύνης μεταξύ όλων των Αλβανών σε οποιαδήποτε θρησκεία και πίστη και αν ανήκουν». Ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος, παρουσία των τοπικών αρχών, του καθολικού Αρχιεπισκόπου και του Μουφτή της πόλης συνεχάρη όλους για την καλή διάθεση που έχουν επιδείξει για ειρηνική συνύπαρξη, προτρέποντάς τους να συνεχίσουν να ζουν αρμονικά και με αγάπη. Κάτι που ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης επανέλαβε πολλές φορές στις επτά ημέρες που περιόδευσε την Αλβανία ενώ δεν παρέλειψε στις ομιλίες του να εκφραστεί με πολύ θερμά λόγια για το έργο του Αρχιεπισκόπου Αναστασίου. «Συγχαίρω αδελφικώς τον Μακαριότατο Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αναστάσιο αφ' ενός μεν για το σπουδαίο ποιμαντικό και ανακαινιστικό έργο το οποίο επιτελεί υπέρ της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας και του ποιμνίου της, αφ' ετέρου δε, διά την ανοικτή καρδιά και τους ανοικτούς ορίζοντες που έχει και συνεργάζεται άνετα και αρμονικά με όλους τους Αλβανούς μεταδίδοντας το γνήσιο Οικουμενικό πνεύμα της Ορθοδοξίας» είπε ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος σε ομιλία του στη Σκόδρα ενώ λίγες ημέρες αργότερα στο Αργυρόκαστρο τόνισε: «Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αναστάσιος είναι δώρο στην ανθρωπότητα. Έχει μετατραπεί η Αλβανία σε ένα απέραντο εργοτάξιο. Αναστηλώνει παλιούς ναούς και δημιουργεί και τον ευχαριστούμε».

Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αναστάσιος δεν μπορούσε να κρύψει την ικανοποίησή του για τον ιδιαίτερα θετικό αντίκτυπο της επισκέψεως του Πατριάρχη Βαρθολομαίου στην Αλβανία. Σε ομιλία του, αναφερόμενος στον Προκαθήμενο της Ορθοδοξίας, είπε ότι «είναι ένα ιδιαίτερο δώρο του Θεού η παρουσία του στην ηγεσία της Εκκλησίας μας, ένα ιδιαίτερο δώρο για όλη την Οικουμένη».

Ο αλβανικός τύπος και τα ηλεκτρονικά μέσα ενημέρωσης, κρατικά και ιδιωτικά, κάλυψαν εκτενώς την επίσκεψη του Πατριάρχη Βαρθολομαίου. Η κρατική τηλεόραση μετέδωσε ζωντανά τη Θεία Λειτουργία που τελέσθηκε στον καθεδρικό Ναό του Ευαγγελισμού της Θεοτόκου στα Τίρανα, στην οποία προεξήρχαν ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης με τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αλβανίας κ. Αναστάσιο και έλαβαν μέρος οι Μητροπολίτες, Δαρδανελλίων Αντώνιος, Σεβαστείας Δημήτριος, Βερατίου Ιγνάτιος και Κορυτσάς Ιωάννης.

Συγκινητική ήταν και η ατμόσφαιρα στην εορταστική εκδήλωση της ορθοδόξου αλβανικής νεολαίας. Επίσης ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης είχε την ευκαιρία να συζητήσει με τους Πρόσβεις της Ελλάδας και της Τουρκίας, οι οποίοι παρέθεσαν δείπνα προς τιμή του.

Στον αποχαιρετιστήριο χαιρετισμό του ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος ευχαρίστησε την Εκκλησία της Αλβανίας και το λαό με την πολιτική του ηγεσία για την ειρηνική του επίσκεψη και αναφέρθηκε στον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αναστάσιο ως «άνδρα σπάνιον και δυσεύρετον, πολυτάλαντον, πολύπειρον, πολυτάξιον, πολυγλωσσον, πολυαγάπητον, πλήρη συνέσεως, αγάπης, οργανωτικότητας, ζήλου και πάσης αρετής, διεθνούς κύρους και αναγνωρίσεως», σκιαγραφώντας το πορτρέτο ενός Ιεράρχη σε πολυσήμαντη αποστολή. Και κατέληξε λέγοντας ότι «η συμβολή της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας εις την πρόοδο της φιλίας Αλβανίας είναι πράγματι μεγάλη».

Δίκαια η επίσκεψη του Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχη στην Αλβανία χαρακτηρίστηκε ως εξαιρετικά σημαντική μιά και είναι βέβαιο ότι θα αποτελέσει ενισχυτικό παράγοντα στο έργο ανασυγκρότησης της Ορθοδόξου Αυτοκεφάλου Εκκλησίας της Αλβανίας, που ξεκίνησε πριν από οκτώ χρόνια.

Ο πρωθυπουργός της Ελλάδος στο Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο



Νικ. Μαγγινάς

Το σύμβολο της ειρήνης, ένα μικρό βλαστάρι ελιάς, ποτίζει ο πρωθυπουργός της Ελλάδος Κώστας Σημίτης, κατά την επίσκεψή του στο γραφείο του Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχη κ. Βαρθολομαίου. Η γλάστρα με την ελιά αποτελεί δώρο του Έλληνα Πρέσβη στα Τίρανα προς τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη, κατά την πρόσφατη επίσκεψη του Παναγιωτάτου στην Αθηνά.

του Νικόλαου Μαγγινά

Ως «μυθικό τόπο που μας συνδέει με την ιστορία, την παράδοση και τη θρησκεία μας», χαρακτήρισε το Φανάρι ο Πρωθυπουργός της Ελλάδος Κωνσταντίνος Σημίτης, μετά τη συνάντησή του με τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη κ. Βαρθολομαίο, στο Φανάρι στην Κωνσταντινούπολη.

Στη συνέχεια Πρωθυπουργός τόνισε με έμφραση ότι: «Θέλουμε με την παρουσία μας να επισημάνουμε τη σημασία που έχει για εμάς η Ορθοδοξία, η δραστηριότητα του Πατριαρχείου», και πρόσθεσε: «Το Πατριαρχείο είναι για εμάς εκείνο το οποίο μεταφέρει τα μηνύματα της Ορθοδοξίας, την παρουσία της Ορθοδοξίας σε όλο τον κόσμο».

Τον Πρωθυπουργό της Ελλάδος συνόδευαν η κυρία Σημίτη, οι υπουργοί Εξωτερικών Γεώργιος Παπανδρέου και Τύπου Δημήτρης Ρέππας, ο Πρέσβης της

Ελλάδος στην Άγκυρα, ο Γεν. Πρόξενος στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κ.α. Ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης σε δηλώσεις του τόνισε ότι το Πατριαρχείο υποδέχθηκε τον Πρωθυπουργό με ιδιαίτερα αισθήματα τιμής και αγάπης και συνεχάρη τον Πρωθυπουργό της Ελλάδος για τα ανοίγματα που κάνει, για την συμφιλίωση, την καλή συνεργασία και την καλή γειτονία των δύο λαών, Ελλάδος και Τουρκίας.

Ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος κατά τη συνομιλία που είχε με τον πρωθυπουργό Κ. Σημίτη τον ενημέρωσε για τη δραστηριότητα του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου, την πορεία των θεολογικών διαλόγων με τις άλλες χριστιανικές εκκλησίες, αλλά και την προώθηση της οικολογικής συνειδησίας που το Πατριαρχείο έχει αναλάβει με την οργάνωση διαφόρων Συμποσίων, σεμιναρίων κ.α. Τον ενημέρωσε επίσης και για την πορεία του θέματος της επαναλειτουργίας της Σχολής της Χάλκης.

Αλλοι πολιτικοί ηγέτες στο Φανάρι

Στη Διάσκεψη του Οργανισμού Ασφαλείας και Συνεργασίας στην Ευρώπη, ΟΑΣΕ, που διεξήχθη στην Κωνσταντινούπολη έλαβαν μέρος Πρόεδροι κρατών, Πρωθυπουργοί και άλλοι αρμόδιοι παράγοντες.

Διάφοροι πολιτικοί ηγέτες κατά την εκεί παραμονή τους επισκέφθηκαν τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη κ. Βαρθολομαίο, στην έδρα του Πατριαρχείου στο Φανάρι.

Εκτός του προέδρου των ΗΠΑ Μπίλ Κλίντον και του Πρωθυπουργού της Ελλάδος Κ. Σημίτη το Φανάρι επισκέφθηκαν οι πρόεδροι της Αυστρίας, της Ρουμανίας, της Κύπρου και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης καθώς και οι πρωθυπουργοί της Νορβηγίας, της Π.Γ.Δ. της Μακεδονίας και του Βατικανού.

• Ο Πρόεδρος της Αυστρίας Τόμας Κλέσιλ κατά τη συνάντησή του με τον Πατριάρχη Βαρθολομαίο, έδειξε ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον και θέληση να πληροφορηθεί για τα προβλήματα του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου και της ελληνικής Ομογένειας. Ο Αυστριακός Πρόεδρος που προσκάλεσε τον Πατριάρχη στην Αυστρία, είχε την επιθυμία να προσευχηθεί στον Πατριαρχικό Ναό και κατά την άφιξη και κατά την αναχώρησή του από το Πατριαρχείο. Ο Πρόεδρος πρόσφερε στον Πατριάρχη, το αυστριακό κρυστάλλινο «ποτήρι φιλίας».

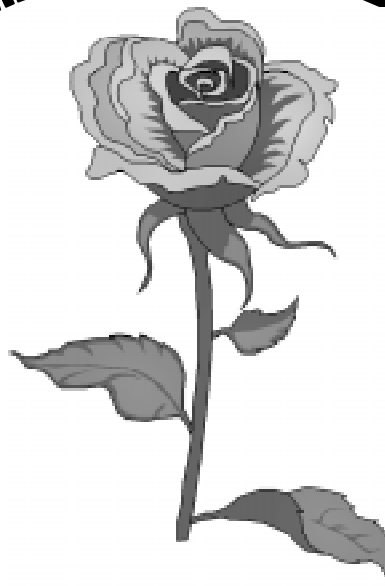
• Εγκάρδια και φιλική συνομιλία με τον

Πρόεδρο της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας Γλαύκο Κληρίδη είχε ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης κατά τη συνάντησή του με τον Κύπριο ηγέτη, στον οποίο ο Πατριάρχης ευχήθηκε επίλυση του χρονίζοντος κυπριακού προβλήματος. Ο Πατριάρχης δεν παρέλειψε να τονίσει στον Κύπριο πρόεδρο ότι το κυπριακό πρόβλημα έχει πλήξει την ελληνική ομογένεια της Πόλης και το Πατριαρχείο, χωρίς φυσικά τη βούληση των Ελληνοκυπρίων. Ο Πρόεδρος Κληρίδης εξέφρασε τη χαρά και τη συγκίνησή του για την παρουσία του στο κέντρο της Ορθοδοξίας και τη συνάντησή του με τον Πατριάρχη, προς τον οποίο πρόσφερε ως δώρο ποιμαντορική ράβδο.

Ο Κύπριος Πρόεδρος ανακοίνωσε στον Πατριάρχη Βαρθολομαίο παρουσία του Μητροπολίτη Πριγκηπονήσου Συμεών, την απόφαση της κυπριακής κυβέρνησης να αποκαταστήσει τις ζημιές που προκλήθηκαν στο ναό του Αγίου Δημητρίου της νήσου Πριγκήπου, κατά τους σεισμούς του Αυγούστου.

• Στη συνάντησή με τον Πρωθυπουργό της Π. Γ. Δ. της Μακεδονίας Λούτσκο Γκερεγορέβσκι, στα θέματα που συζητήθηκαν, ο Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος έθεσε το θέμα της κανονικότητας της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας στα Σκόπια, παροτρύνοντας τους πολιτικούς και εκκλησιαστικούς παράγοντες να συνεχίσουν το διάλογο με το Πατριαρχείο της Σερβίας.

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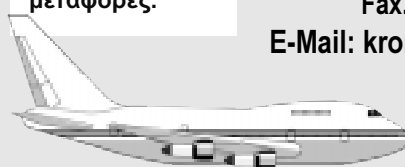
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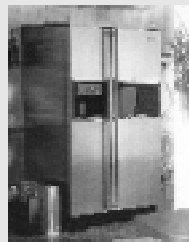
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ORTHODOXY WORLDWIDE

Seeing the Way: A Legacy of Faith

by Elizabeth Economou

Since the age of 12, Basil Labi had thoughts of becoming a priest some day. More than a decade-and-a-half later, he is well on his way.

The twenty-seven year-old Ghanaian native is one of 14 new students at Hellenic College this year with plans to enter Holy Cross School of Theology after completing his B.A. in Religious Studies.

And while Labi has had a rather rocky start adjusting to life in a foreign country, he realizes his challenges over the next seven years will most likely pale in comparison to the ones he expects to face as young priest serving the Orthodox Church in West Africa.

Located on the coast of Guinea, Ghana is wedged between the Ivory Coast to the west and Togo to the east. In 1957, Ghana was the first Black African colony to gain independence from a colonial power.

Today, four priests, under the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, serve the needs of all the Ortho-



A studious moment in the HC/HC library. (November 1999)

dox faithful in Ghana, which number some 3,000. And—no doubt—Labi is eager to return to his country to help make a difference there.

While he had plans to first study Business Administration at the University of Ghana near the capital city of Accra, and

then attend an Orthodox seminary, he admits to having had a change of heart after coming to terms with the immediate need for more church leaders. "Because I saw the way," says Labi, "I decided to come here sooner."

Labi is extremely passionate about his conviction. "No matter how long it takes, I have to do this," he says, "I was brought up in this situation; it means a lot to me."

It turns out "this situation" he is referring to has to do not only with destiny, but with a desire to perpetuate a family legacy as well.

When Labi was a young boy he lived with his paternal grandfather, Fr. Gregory Labi, who was a priest in the so-called "Orthodox Church" parish of Saints Peter and Paul set in the lush village of Larteh, about 25 miles east of Accra. That church, according to Labi, was Orthodox in name only and more similar in worship and doctrine to the Methodist denomination.

But it was in 1970, just two years before Labi was born, where traces of "canonical" Orthodoxy began to providentially surface in subtle ways to a community that had called itself Orthodox since colonial times.

A serendipitous find of the book, *The Orthodox Church* by Bishop Kalistos (Ware), in the campus library at the University of Ghana would eventually set the stage for Orthodoxy's debut there. After reading this book, several young adults from the Larteh parish, including Labi's father, realized that the church they belonged to was not Orthodox at all.

This confirmation led the group on a quest to learn more about the Eastern Orthodox Church established by Christ and his Apostles.

Four years later, the city of Accra was hosting a World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting, and it was there where Labi's father first made contact with Fr. Thomas Hopco, of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York.

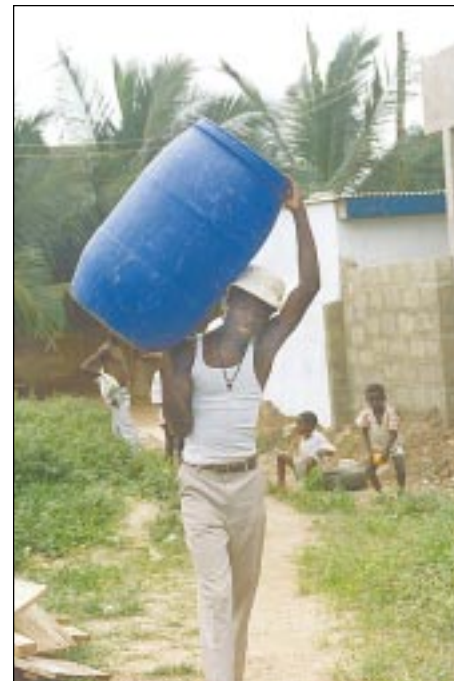
Their dialogue initiated a process—including gaining direction from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria—that would eventually lead a number of parishes in the eastern and western part of Ghana to finally become truly Orthodox.

That was 1974.

Eight years later on September 14th, 1982, on the feast day of the Elevation of the Precious Cross, Labi recalls: "the entire Church of Ghana—some ten parishes—was canonically accepted into the Holy Orthodox Faith."

On that same day, Labi's father, was also ordained a priest. Today Kwami Labi is serving a four year post with the WCC as the executive secretary for Community and Justice in Mission and Evangelism in Geneva, Switzerland. He is also the secretary general of the Archdiocese for the Orthodox Church in Ghana.

Meanwhile, young Labi is forging ahead with his rigorous curriculum and is especially eager to learn Greek. "In being Orthodox that's one of the main things you have to know," says Labi, "the important



Basil at the work site of the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral near Accra, Ghana. (August 1991)

books are written in Greek, which are much more important than the translations."

Unlike the United States, books in Ghana are scarce. And according to Labi the system of teaching in this country differs as a result. He says teachers in Ghana actually do more teaching because students have less access to books.

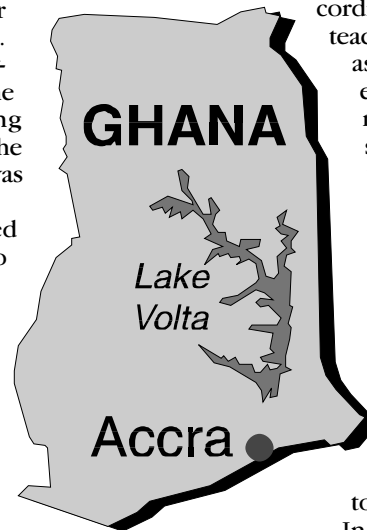
In the summer of 1991, I traveled to Ghana on mission team with the Greek Orthodox Church Home and Overseas Mission Program. It was there where I first met Basil Labi. And what I remember most vividly about him and his friends was their zeal to learn about their faith.

In order to earn money for

books about catechism, liturgical worship, and church doctrine, they would grow juicy red peppers, on a swath of land near their church in Larteh, hoping to sell them at the local outdoor market.

It is no wonder Labi is thrilled to be poring himself into his studies.

So far, Labi is encouraged about the path he has chosen. "I know it [Orthodoxy] is the right faith," he says, "and there is no doubt about it, we have found the true faith as we sing in the liturgy."



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CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Man-Power and Pokemon

by Fr. Angelo Artemas

After a three-decade attempt to suppress all things masculine, popular culture has recklessly returned to the caveman.

Professional wrestlers of the WWF and WCW are more vulgar, brutish, senseless and animalistic than just a few years ago.

Comedy Central cable television network features “The Man Show” featuring men with short attention spans who are entertained by shallow “manly” things.

An off-Broadway comedy, “Return to the Caveman” has won critical praise for its sharp and humorous insights into raw masculinity.

And the controversial film “Fight Club” drew big box-office numbers, even though critics who loved the movie reported that the male-to-male violence was excessive and disturbing.

As the new millennium approaches, masculinity seems to be taking a turn toward the pre-historic. Parents, teachers and youth leaders all too often accept the “boys will be boys” axiom.

In today’s prolonged adolescence environment, boys will be boys right through the age of 40. The widely held assumption that boys are more aggressive, violent and prone to rampages compared with their female counterparts is nothing but a myth.

Biology and hormones simply do not result in a bunch of ruthless hunters and cavemen. Research shows that young boys are just as caring and emotional as girls, and may actually be more lovingly bonded with their mothers than young girls.

Biology does not pre-determine violent male behavior, environment and societal standards and expectations do. The predominant media continues to foster the violent male-without-emotions model.

Too many parents cooperate with the media and, as a result, the most frightening thing in society is no longer young adult minority men from poor neighborhoods on the streets, but junior high middle to upper-class white boys at the nearest fashion center.

In a most surprising turn of events, it seems that boys themselves are tired of the violence and aggressiveness, and this has resulted in the runaway success of Pokemon.

That’s right, Pokemon is a rebellion away from violence. While fanatic observers have accused the Pokemon characters of being violent and demonic, nothing could be further from the truth.

Pokemon, or the 151 “pocket monsters,” are not violent and aggressive monsters, but emotional and sensitive creatures. Their first instinct is to cooperate with others. They are trained by their mas-

ters to be focused and disciplined. They don’t use guns or other arsenals. Their non-violent nature results in peaceful resolutions to conflict.

In the first Pokemon movie, a group of evil scientists clone the most disciplined Pokemon ever known (Mew). The new monster (Mewtwo) is designed to help them rule the world. But through their discipline, sentiments and tears the other Pokemon convert Mewtwo, who finishes the movie by confessing “The circumstances of one’s birth are irrelevant, but it is what you do with your life that determines who you are.” -such subtle wisdom from a cartoon.

Isn’t it better for little boys to be trading cards instead of punches? Isn’t it better for little boys to be playing video games about training monsters instead of playing video games about gunning down neighbors? Isn’t it better for boys to be intellectually strategizing about acquiring certain cards instead of watching television or surfing the net?

But why do little boys have to learn about emotions, tears and non-violence from Pokemon? Most parents don’t understand the popularity of Pokemon because these same parents don’t understand how they are failing their boys.

Fathers who think hunting is what boys should do don’t get it, neither do fathers who push their sons to never show emotions or weakness. Little boys have a need for virtues to be extolled, not raw masculinity.

What boys need in a role model are men, not overgrown boys. Men don’t need to be senseless brutes without emotions.

Throughout the history of Orthodox Christianity, many male saints have consistently modeled manhood. Manhood is not about hunting and killing, but about taming and healing. Manhood is not about burping and swearing, but about fasting and praying. Manhood is not about sexual conquests and reckless rage but about sexual purity and exemplary discipline. Manhood is not about worshipping material belongings and ruling others but about worshipping God and having communion with all. Manhood is not about anger and hate but about patience and love.

The overwhelming characteristics of male saints were their gentle demeanor, sensitivity and faith. One look at the Book of Genesis shows that the first man was not a hunter and a caveman but a gardener and a steward, responsible for taming all creation.

The latter roles may be more appealing to Picachuthan to Sylvester Stalone or Arnold Schwarzeneger, but doesn’t the world need more saints and fewer pretenders?



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BISHOP GEORGE

► page 6

dream.

While at Halki, he met the sister of a classmate, Maria, and the two eventually married.

After graduating in 1957, he became ordained and was appointed parish priest at the Church of the Virgin Mary in Constantinople.

In 1960, he was sent to Canada where he served St. Demetrios Church in Hamilton, Ontario.

In 1962, he moved on to St. George parish in Manchester, N.H. While there, he pursued doctoral studies at Boston University in the evenings and eventually earned his Ph.D.

Fr. George arrived in Bethesda in 1971 and remained there until his election to the episcopacy by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on May 18, 1998, as Bishop of Komanon, an ancient See in Armenia where St. John Chrysostom died in exile. He was ordained June 13 and served as an auxiliary bishop until his elevation as Bishop of New Jersey on April 17.

Scholar and author

One of the bishop's prime achievements was his prolific writing and scholarship. He was the author of two books, "The Odyssey of Hellenism in America, which won an award from the Academy of Athens, and also wrote "From Mars Hill to Manhattan."

Readers of the Orthodox Observer knew Bishop George best as the writer of the "Tell Me Father" column for more than 10 years. At his death, he was in the process of compiling his articles into a book. One of his daughters is continuing the

project.

He also produced numerous articles for scholarly journals and other publications, including the Hellenic Chronicle in Boston and National Herald.

Bishop George is survived by three daughters and sons in law: Alexandra and John Mosko of Nassau, Bahamas, Eleni and Dr. George Spiro of Morgantown, W.Va., and Vasiliki and Charles Szczesny of Bethesda; six grandchildren: Stella, George Arthur, Stratton, Maria and Joseph; and two brothers, Elias Papaioannou of Brantford, Ontario, and John Papaioannou of Greece.

Memorials may be made to the Bishop George Memorial Fund, a trust fund that will be used to support his goals for the education of future clergy. Contributions can be mailed to the Diocese of New Jersey, 115 Grove St. East, PO Box 2620, Westfield, NJ 07091.

ECUM. PATRIARCHATE

► page 5

Among the recommendations of the symposium were the development of an institutional means to continue the momentum of the symposia. This would include the appointment of an environmental officer at the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as well as an executive committee or institute for the study of environmental problems and action in the Danube River basin.

Fr. John Chrysavgis is a professor at Holy Cross School of Theology.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

► page 6

New initiative

Another exciting pedagogical initiative that the DRE is preparing to market next month is an interactive CD-ROM module on the Triodion titled "The Royal Road".

The CD-ROM affords individual learners or instructors the capability of examining each Sunday of Pre-lent, Great Lent and each day of Holy Week by integrating hymnology, iconography, scripture, patristic and liturgical information.

Aside from providing self-diagnostic quizzes for each segment of instruction the CD learning environment allows learners to select from a menu of video and audio clips of liturgical services and hymns which can be listened to in either Greek or English. In this fashion, both learners and catechists may develop a greater appreciation and knowledge of the season of the Triodion by proceeding through the CD instructional module at their own pace according to their own specific educational objectives.

Festival topic

Finally, the DRE has integrated hymnology into the category of Oratorical Festival topics. Our youth are now encouraged to compose and deliver a homily that discloses how the psalms, hymns and sacred songs of Orthodox Christianity convey spiritual truths. Through the assistance of the National Forum of Choirs such systemic learning programs and resources will continue to be developed for the purpose of bequeathing Orthodoxy's rich hymnology to a generation that can both

chant and comprehend its wisdom!

Songs that uplift

According to St. John Chrysostom "nothing uplifts the soul, and gives it wings, and liberates it from the earth, and releases it from the fetters of the body, and makes it aspire after wisdom and deride all the cares of this life, as the melody of sacred songs."

The time has come for us as pastors, parents and parish catechists to become members of a contemporary theological chorus of diverse voices whose rich melody may give wings to the souls of those entrusted to our care.

We should all join our respective resources and talents and continue to pursue the development of curricula and pedagogical resources such as CD-ROMs and more programming such as the ISOS that will focus on the rich hymnological tradition of the Orthodox Church.

If we so rise to the challenge hymnology may once again be re-integrated into our contemporary educational ministry — a holy work that should liberate our minds from the cares of this world and guide us to a better understanding of the rich theological heritage of our Faith's sonorous wisdom.

Rev. Dr. Frank Marangos is director of the Archdiocese Department of Religious Education; frfrank@omaccess.com

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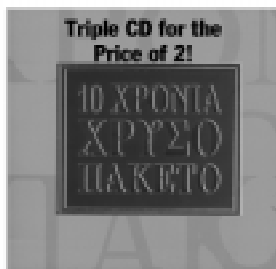
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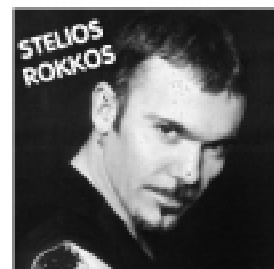
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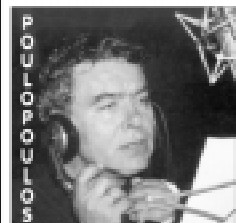
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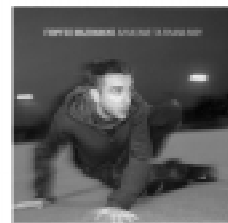
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REFLECTIONS

A Giant of Our Clergy

by Fr. Demetrios Kavadas

Our presbyteres were relatives. When Maria slept in the Lord six years ago, many of us silently prayed for strength from above.

That event opened rivers of endless opportunities to teach all of us that life is a precious gift from the hand of God and we must strive to make the most of it.

He proved again and again that it is great to be alive! His theme continues that message to those who had "an antenna" to catch what he meant: He wanted daily to launch it into the deep where the spiritual treasures exist in the "humanity" and "divinity" of our Holy Church.

He succeeded my humble diakonia at the parish of St. George in Manchester, N.H. He changed the ship's course. A problematic parish for the Archdiocese since the 1930's, now for the first time and in a strange but dynamic way Fr. George united the oppositions in that parish, and made it a cathedral, more importantly he was able to make it into a magnificent house of worship.

When Fr. Steve Papadoulis and I joined Fr. George who came to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the new church in 1991, we all recognized that Fr. George was full of boundless energy to explore, to wrestle with adventure and to use the power of the Lord in proving how the impossible road of life may become a challenge for success!

Life and the Church rewarded in abundance his academic scholarship, his ability to search and record historical events "from Manhattan" to Constantinople, to the hills of Brookline to the famous Academy of Athens, to the pastorate of another Church of St. George in Bethesda, Md.

I use to tease him with a brotherly private salutation: "Yiassou Megale." He proved so often that "small things may come in big packages."

And...he delivered! We'll miss his voice at the national clergy-laity congresses, at priestly gatherings but, most of all, some of us will miss his voice on the phone.

I come to bear witness to the fact that he stood a "tall brother," a comforting father and a "sweet bishop" during many times in my family tragedies. He called and he comforted and he promised that with the Lord better days will be coming.

I know that it is not proper to do this in public but I am positive that "Father George" wants me to thank His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch and great leader of Orthodoxy Bartholomew for the great confidence, trust and challenges he offered to "Fr. George."

History will record that he is the only married clergyman who was chosen to the ranks of Episcopacy. The elevation was extremely timely, harmoniously accepted and effectively executed.

Bishop George of New Jersey served as an Archiepiscopal Vicar from August 26th to September 19, close to a month of "delicate transitional circumstances," keeping the divine gift of peace, preparing with meticulous details the new enthronement and receiving the new leader with politeness, firmness of protocol and a didactic archieratical prudence.

Whoever succeeds Bishop George in the New Jersey Diocese will discover immediately that the shortness of time in establishing that "throne" was the strong foundation that all "earthquakes" will stand incapable of ruining the "planting" system of the new establishment.

We should all express our condolences to His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, who declared that "this is a tremendous loss for the Church."

We should tell his three daughters and his six grandchildren that "Pappou" went to establish a place in Heaven, as an invisible ambassador of good will towards this Holy Church of America and the entire world.

We will miss him in Philadelphia and for the rest of our lives until we meet again in the world of eternal bliss.

Till then, may we continue our prayers for the repose of his soul

Pray for us from heaven "Fr. George."

Fr. Kavadas is pastor of Assumption Church in St. Claire Shores, Mich.



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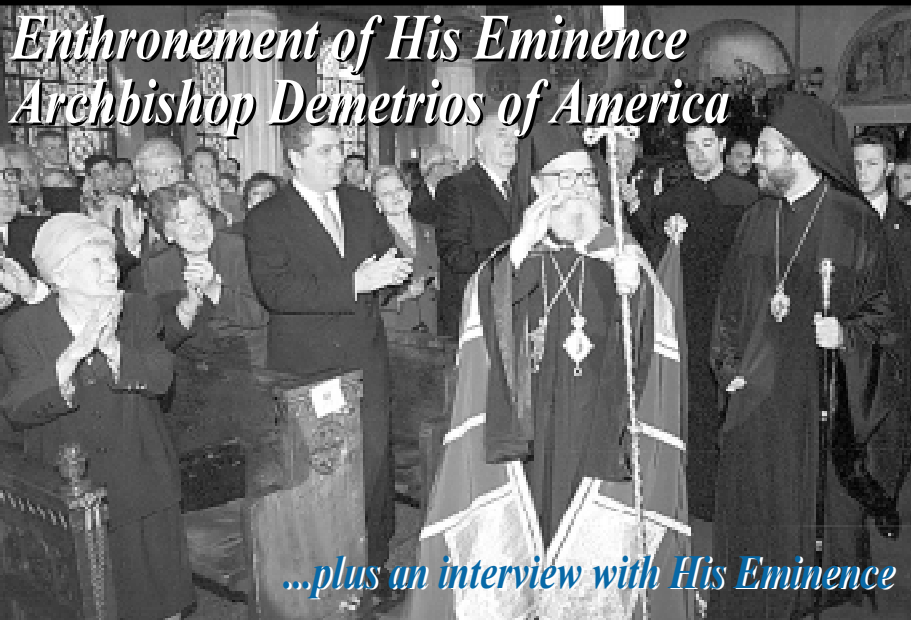
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RELATING TO THE FAITH

by Rev. Dr. Dumitru Macaila

In the fourth century Christianity established one day to celebrate the event of the birth of Christ. Before that time Christ's birth was celebrated on the date of Theophany along with His baptism and the manifestation of the Holy Trinity. So, from this point forward Christmas was transferred from Jan. 6 to Dec. 25 to replace the pagan feast of the Sun with the Christian worship of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God.

On the 25th of December all Christians throughout the world celebrate the Incarnation of the Logos, i.e., the Nativity of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews points out that the goal of Christ's kenosis was "that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

For it was fitting for Him, for Whom are all things and by Whom are all things;... to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings... and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:9-10; 15).

While St. Paul asserted that the incarnate Logos has destroyed the law of death and created a new life for every human being, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (I Cor. 15:22).

Notice that Christ came to create a new life not only for a chosen group of people, but for all people. This is because all people have been created in God's image, and as through Adam they all inherited mortality, now through Christ they all are to inherit immortality.

The question is: Was the expectation of a "Savior" a common phenomenon among all peoples? I want to point out there was no nation on the earth without such an expectation.

Many awaited Savior

The hope of a Savior reflects a general belief in the Incarnation of God to save humankind. St. John Chrysostom theologized that as human nature could not ascend to God, God Himself would descend to earth. While St. Basil the Great asserted that the descent of God to humanity was the only way to correct human disorder.

The religious belief in the coming of a Savior was handed down from one generation to the next throughout Asia. Confucius (551-479 B.C.), the great philosopher of the Far East, predicted the coming of a "Holy One" as a yearning of the people. He would be the God-Man and would possess the highest, the redeeming opinion. He was expected to manifest divine powers, and at the same time be Man and Savior. These Confucian prophecies on the coming of the "Holy One" uncover conspicuous similarities to Christian fulfillment in the Person of Christ.

In India, the feeling of sin and guilt, generated a genuine hunger for a redeeming Savior as a real and historical Person. The religions of India taught that when men worshipped one God the earth was fertile, but when sin came into the world, corruption and death dominated. They prayed that the coming of the one Savior into the world will restore the blissful state. They professed that the Savior was expected to free all past and present people through His own passion, and that universal salvation for the living and the dead will be made manifest.

By the same token, Buddha described the corruption of men as a fall from a blissful state.

Buddha himself pointed out that he was not the expected "Savior," and that

after 500 years his teaching will fall (he lived in the fifth century B.C.).

Most importantly, he prophesied the coming of a Ruler of peace who would not be understood as his reincarnation, neither as his deification. He stressed that he was not to be identified with this Ruler of peace, but that He would be understood as a personality different from Buddha. He "will be the invisible conqueror of evil and grant peace and justice to the world... His teachings will penetrate as absolute law and will sound like a heavenly melody, and He will satiate men with the real Truth."

Hinduism, also, teaches the necessity of incarnation of the High God for the salvation of humankind, which cannot help itself. Their attitude brings about the belief in repeated incarnation.

The last incarnation was expected at the end of the evil age of this world. The appearance of Vishnu as God-Man would be a transcendent condition of God, as the Son, to restore human beings and to judge

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST The Expectation of All Nations

the evil ones and reward the good at the end of this world.

These expectations were a constant yearning not yet realized, but the excellence and redeeming works would take place in the reality of God's Incarnation.

The Persians expected a Savior, the God-Man, Who would be born of a Virgin. The prophecy tells also that His birth would be announced by the appearance of a star different from others. It will be His star, and He would be all-knowledge for the renewal and cleansing of the world. He would be the Savior.

Enter the Magi

As we all know, the three Magi, who came from the East, perhaps from Persia, are the scholars of their time who have come to worship Jesus and to present gifts to Him: "gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Mat. 2:11).

The appearance of the star helped them understand the tremendous consequence of the birth of Christ. They understood that the star was a sign of the Messiah Himself, and of the light He will bring into the world.

Yet, 2,000 years after the Magi worshipped Christ, two thirds of this world's inhabitants did not accept Him! What a tragedy!

As to the ancient Greeks, they were searching for the one highest and true God in a human figure, Who as God and Man, Savior and Redeemer, would be incarnate, as foretold by Aeschylus, a great poet of tragedy (525-456 B.C.), in his "Prometheus Bound."

Aeschylus' Savior would be a child born of a virgin and of God, and He would be a God-Man, as prophesied by Isaiah. Socrates (469-399), foretold the coming of a God in human form.

Socrates' Savior would be a real historical Person, a Savior Who would be sent by God to renew the cosmos with the spirit of martyrdom. He would undergo humiliation and will be nailed to a high pole.

This prediction of Socrates was seen by St. Clement of Alexandria as an accurate description of the Christian Messiah, and he wrote in his work, *Stromates*: "I do not know if there is a more explicit manifestation than that of the Greeks which have born witness to our Savior."

The thinkers of the Roman world foresaw a time when one teacher would "conquer" everything. Cicero (106-43 B.C.), predicted that He would visit humankind

as God-Man, prediction fulfilled in Pilate's directing at Christ and saying: "Behold the Man!" (John 19:5). The poet Vergilus (70-19 B.C.), seems to paraphrase Isaiah the prophet, also, when he says: "The virgin (star) is coming again; already a new generation is sent by the highest heaven."

He goes on to say that the One Who would come from heavens will bring salvation of humankind. The virgin star will signify the return of the Kingdom of the highest God. The child who would be born is God Himself, the self-life.

Stopped short

I have to point out that, all the ancient religions and philosophies did not realize the true vi-

sion of the knowledge of God, neither true communion with Him, nor true salvation. They stopped short of the reality of the Savior, for they remained only yearnings of what was to take place in the future.

Nevertheless, they amazingly reflect the same expectations of a Savior, expectations which are fulfilled in Christianity in the Person of Christ, the incarnate Logos of God, Who took on human flesh when the fullness of time had come.

The prophesy of the Old Testament was not mere yearning, inspired by what theologians call *logos spermatikos* or *rationes seminales*, but a revelation by the true God for the salvation of humankind.

The revelation of the coming of the Messiah was not a conjecture or a vague expectation, but a prophecy to be realized in time. This prophecy was recognized and proclaimed by Christ Himself, He stressed that He was the fulfillment of divine prophecy.

He was the Savior Who came as God-Man to redeem humankind from sin. He was the fulfillment of God's design for the salvation of humankind made known after our ancestors' fall: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed: He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15).

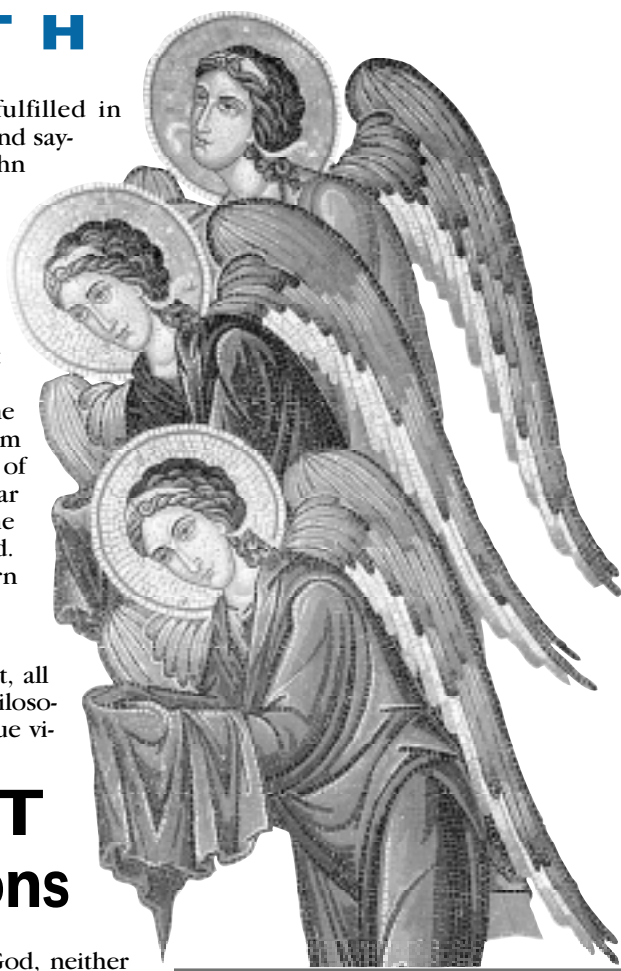
Here are Christ's words: "You search the Scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39). "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me" (John 5:46). "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad... Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:56, 58).

Prophecies fulfilled

Thus, Christ Himself, the Savior of the world, gives substantial existence to the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah. He was the true Savior, "Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14; Mat. 1:23), "God with us" sent by the True God.

From the beginning of the Old Testament up to the last prophecy of St. John the Baptist, the promises of God's plan to save humankind were fulfilled in the In-



carnation of the Logos, our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Yet, in many countries of today's world, especially in the Muslim ones, to worship Christ, the only true Savior of the world, is a forbidden reality. I am reminded that when Muslims opened the largest mosque of Europe in Rome in 1995, the Pope pointed out that in much of the Islamic world religious freedoms were denied non-Muslims.

Vatican Radio even noted then that Saudi Arabia, which paid the bill for the building of mosque, doesn't allow open worship by Christians. This is because many Islamic leaders say the Koran itself forbids it and they call it a non-negotiable point.

Yes, they call it a "non-negotiable point" while accusing Christians for being fanatics and bigots if they try to preach the Incarnation of the Son of the only true God, Who took on human flesh to save humankind, Muslims included! What a crying to heaven tragedy!

I conclude with the beautiful words of St. Gregory of Nazianzos from his sermon "On the Festival of Christ's Birthday."

"O new commingling! O strange conjunction! The Self-Existent comes into being, the Uncreated is created, That which cannot be contained is contained, by the intervention of an intellectual soul, mediating between the Deity and the corporeity of the flesh.

"And He Who gives riches becomes poor, for He assumes the poverty of my flesh, that I may assume the richness of His Godhead. He that is full empties Himself, for He empties Himself of His glory for a short while, that I may have a share in His fullness.

"What are the riches of His Goodness? What is the mystery that is around me? I had a share in the image; I did not keep it; He partakes of my flesh that He may both save the image and make the flesh immortal... He lighted a candle, His own flesh, and swept the house, cleansing the world from sin... Do you disbelieve in His Godhead? This did not even the demons, O you who are less believing than demons!"

Christ is born, glorify Him! Christ from heaven, go out to meet Him! Christ on earth, let us preach Him, the greatest Gift ever, to those "who are less believing than demons!"

CULTURE & HERITAGE

How Greek Studies Came to Stockton College

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from an introductory address by the Rev. Dr. Demetrios Constantelos, scholar in residence and Charles Cooper Townsend Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies Emeritus, at Richard Stockton College in New Jersey. Terms derived from Greek are in italics.

by Fr. Demetrios Constantelos

I will tell you briefly a true story, which explains how Greek language and literature were introduced to the curriculum of Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. No salt, no pepper, just some paraphrasing!

Once upon a time, the president of an institution of higher learning had a cordial conversation with one of the school's professors. They talked about educational politics and ideologies. In the course of their discussion, the professor emphasized that the academic organization of the school offers a plethora of programs. Indeed he said our academic catalogue includes: *history, philosophy, theater, music, graphics, mathematics, physics, economics, econometrics, psychology, gerontology, physical therapy, biology, zoology, anthropology* (I hope today's culture is able to see that there is a difference between zoology and anthropology!), *archaeology, energy mechanics, geology, petrology, oceanography, photography, metallurgy, ecology, pathology, parasitology, entomology, ichthyology, herpetology, astronomy, genetics, botany, physiology, biotechnology, embryology, ethics, logic, bioethics, histology, organic and*

inorganic chemistry, macroeconomics, microeconomics, dendrology, ornithology, microbiology, organizational program analysis, theory and dynamics of programming policy, thermodynamics, characterization of proteins and...

The professor was in good mood and, like a broken record, desired to identify more basic and general problems and methods to education, when the president of the college interrupted him saying: Okay, okay, I get it. You mean to tell me that all these scientific terms derive from Greek right? Ecstatically he said, yes, of course, these and many more. Greek is the language of the Bible, too, is it not? The president asked.

Of course, the Bible, the holy book of *Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Evangelicals, Methodists, Orthodox, Pentecostals, Presbyterians* and other Christians was written in Greek –the New Testament in particular and some of the *inter-testamental* books, known as Deuterocanonical, for some as *Apocrypha*.

The President smiled and said to the professor: well, I will give you half a line for Greek language and literature and if you succeed I will make it a full line next year.

A committee was appointed, announcements were made, resumes were received from qualified candidates from the United States, Greece, Italy and Canada.

Dr. Ippokratis Kantzios with degrees from the University of Thessaloniki, Temple University, and Bryn Mawr College (Ph.D.), instructor was selected and appointed to teach classical, biblical and modern Greek.

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1 S	Col. 2:8-12; Luke 2:20-21, 40-52	16 SUN	Col. 3:12-16; Luke 17:12-19
2 SUN	2 Tim. 4:5-8; Mark 1:1-8	17 M	2 Tim. 2:20-26; Luke 19:37-44
3 M	Phil. 2:12-16; Luke 6:24-30	18 T	2 Tim. 3:16-4:4; Luke 19:45-48
4 T	Phil. 2:17-23; Luke 6:37-45	19 W	2 Tim. 4:9-22; Luke 20:1-8
5 W	1 Cor. 9:19-27; Luke 3:1-18	20 Th	Titus 1:5-2:1; Luke 20:9-18
6 Th	Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7; Mt. 3:13-17	21 F	Titus 1:15-2:10; Luke 20:19-26
7 F	Acts 19:1-8; Jn 1:29-34	22 S	Eph. 1:16-23; Luke 12:32-40
8 S	Eph. 6:10-17; Matt. 4:1-11	23 SUN	Col. 1:12-18; Luke 18:35-43
9 SUN	Eph. 4:7-13; Mt. 4:12-17	24 M	Heb. 8:7-13; Mark 8:11-21
10 M	Heb. 3:5-11; Luke 20:27-44	25 T	Heb. 9:8-10, 15-23; Mark 8:22-26
11 T	Heb. 4:1-13; Luke 21:12-19	26 W	Heb. 10:1-18; Mark 8:30-34
12 WHeb.	5:11-6:8; Luke 21:5-7, 10, 11, 20-24	27 Th	Heb. 10:35-11:7; Mark 9:10-16
13 Th	Heb. 7:1-6; Luke 21:28-33	28 F	Heb. 11:8, 11-16; Mark 9:33-41
14 F	Heb. 7:18-25; Luke 21:37-22:8	29 S	Eph. 5:1-8; Luke 14:1-11
15 S	Eph. 2:11-13; Luke 13:18-29	30 SUN	Col. 3:12-16; Luke 18:18-27
		31 M	Gal. 4:28-5:10; Mark 6:54-7:8

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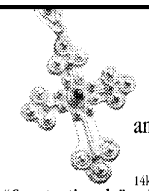
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It's Never Just Coffee

by Billy Tragus

Sitting in Starbucks the other day across the street from the other Starbucks, I bumped into a friend from church who also happened to be drinking a four dollar grande, double, skinny, decaf, vanilla latte. I asked him to join me and we began talking about all those deep life issues you talk about in a coffee house. You know, things like; the depleting ozone layer, the president's intern, the war in Kosovo, Ally McBeal, earthquakes in Greece, turkey, Mexico and Taiwan, cloning, BayWatch moving to Hawaii, shopping online, if Ross and Rachel will get back together, workaholics, frequent flyer miles, single parenthood, which cell phone plan is best, the Guess Catalog models, Direct TV, domestic terrorism, Swing and Ska music, Generation-X beginning to finally act their age and the first wave of the Net-Generation entering the work force, and of course the biggest issue on people's minds right now, the threat of a Y2K disaster on New Year's Eve.

Near the end of our rap session, after recapping the last half of this decade, my friend turned to me with a look of concern and asked me in a low and serious tone, "Do you think that all those Y2K rumors about the world coming to an end are true?" I pondered his question as I took a sip of my fresh, hot, decaf, latte, and realized that I had no idea. In fact, I realized that no one really knows for sure! Hence, that was my answer to him. "I don't know." Then I asked the question, "If the world does continue to exist past midnight, December 31, what will be your New Year's resolution?" He didn't have an answer or resolution.

Resolutions are funny things. So many of us make resolutions every year, such as dieting, exercising, working or studying, yet so few of us actually fulfill these resolutions. I tend to believe that this is because resolutions require such a great amount of discipline and personal effort on our part. As Christians, we might want to make a resolution that is spiritual in nature. Even though none of us can predict the end of the world, we do know that our life on this earth will end one day and that we are all called to live as Christians in a society that no longer strives to uphold Christian values and lifestyles.

Even though we will perish from this earth, we Christians have great hope in knowing God's promise to us which we read about in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Our goal as Christians is to live eternally with God in heaven. So why not have our resolutions reflect what we hope to achieve as Christians? That is to believe in Christ so that we will never perish.

What does it mean to believe in Christ? Believing is more than a thought or an emotion. True belief in Christ is an action. It means answering a call to prayer and coming to the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. It means seeking out the lonely and spending time with that person. It means living a humble life, giving to the poor and visiting the sick and elderly, especially yiayia and papou. It means being part of a community in prayer and fellowship. So this New Year's worry not about "Y2K" and focus on "Y2J", that is saying "Yes 2 Jesus". And about the end of the world, well, treat every day like it is your last.

Billy Tragus is the Youth Director for the Diocese of San Francisco

SAINTS AND FEASTS
Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ — December 25

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . . " (John 1:14)

- St. Gregory the Theologian said "The Nativity of Christ is not a festival of creation, but a festival of RECREATION." The Nativity was a renewal of the world, a renewal which sanctified the whole world. Let us try to understand this event through the icon, which reveals to us many aspects about its meaning.
- The Theotokos and the Christ Child** – The central figures, the Virgin Mary is depicted reclining upon a blanket, and the baby Jesus in a manger or fodder bin. In the lower right corner one can see midwives washing the newborn Christ child. This very human detail accompanying childbirth, signifies the human birth of Jesus.
 - The Cave, Manger and Animals** – The hills around Bethlehem held many caves where domestic animals were kept by night. It was in such a humble cave that Jesus was born. The Gospel narrative does not mention a cave, it speaks only of a manger. A manger, however, suggests a stable because it is used to feed animals, and shepherds used caves to give shelter to themselves and to their flocks. Even though the Gospel account does not mention animals, logic fills the narrative - Joseph had a donkey to travel with and the manger was full of hay to feed the animals. An ox and donkey are represented as the animals.
 - Saint Joseph** – Tradition relates that Joseph (*lower left*) was an elderly wid-



ower, thus having white hair and beard. He is depicted being tempted by Satan to doubt the virginity of Mary and the divine origin of Jesus. In the Orthodox Church, Joseph is considered the Guardian of Christ and His Mother and is remembered as the "Betrothed," pointing out or emphasizing Mary's ever-virginity.

- Satan** – Depicted as an elderly hunchback tempting Saint Joseph (*lower left center*). Whereas everyone else in the icon should be done in bright colors, Satan, the Prince of Darkness, is portrayed in dark, drab garments.

- Angels** – A multitude of Heavenly host praise God and sing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." A group offers worship to Christ (*top left*), while another angel announces the glad tidings to the Shepherds (*top right*).
- Shepherds** – The arrival of Jesus is announced by the angel to the shepherds who were out in the fields of Bethlehem (*top right*). Lowly shepherds become the first to share the message of salvation with others.
- Star** – The star, (*top center*), is a royal symbol signifying a god or deified king. This star signifies the extraordinary importance of the Birth of Christ. Because of the star, the Wise Men set out in search of a newborn King. The troparion of the feast proclaims "those who worshiped the stars were taught by a star" to adore Jesus as Lord.
- Wise Men and their Gifts** – Tradition claims that the Wise Men (*left center*), who come from the East, outside of Israel, are representative of all mankind and bear witness to the fact that Jesus has come as King and Lord for all people. They come to Christ bearing gifts: *Gold*, which befits a King, as Jesus is the King of Israel and the entire universe; *Frankincense*, which befits a sacred God who is worshiped, as Jesus is God; and *Myrrh*, a fragrant ointment, for a man who is to suffer and die, as Jesus has come to die as the perfect sacrifice for people.

Challenging Christmas Trivia

- As long as Christmas has been celebrated, it has been on December 25th. True _____ or False _____
- Joseph was from:
a. Bethlehem c. Nazareth
b. Jerusalem d. Minnesota
- How did Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem? a) camel b) donkey c) Joseph walked & Mary rode the donkey d) none of the above
- Mary and Joseph were married when Jesus was born. True _____ or False _____
- What did the innkeeper tell Mary and Joseph?
a) "There is no room at the inn"
b) "I have a stable you can use"
c) "Come back after the Christmas rush and I should have some vacancies"
d) Both a and b
e) None of the above
- Jesus was delivered in a:
a) stable b) manger c) cave d) barn
- A "manger" is a: a) stable for domestic animals b) wooden hay storage bin. c) feeding trough
- Which animals does the Bible say were present at Jesus' birth?
a) cows, sheep, goats b) cows, donkeys, sheep c) sheep and goats only d) miscellane-
- neous barnyard animals e) lions, tigers, elephants f) none of the above
- Who saw the "star in the East"?
a) shepherds b) Mary and Joseph
c) three Wise Men d) both a and c
- What "sign" did the angels tell the shepherds to look for?
a) "This way to baby Jesus." b) A star over Bethlehem. c) A house with a Christmas tree d) A baby that doesn't cry e) None of the above
- What did the angels sing?
a) "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come".
b) "Alleluia" c) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" d) "Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace, goodwill toward men".
- What is a "Heavenly Host"?
a) the angel at the gate of heaven
b) the angel who invites people to heaven
c) the angel who serves drinks in heaven
d) an angel choir e) an angel army
- The baby Jesus cried:
a) when the doctor slapped him b) when the little drummer boy started banging on his drum c) just like other babies d) he never cried
- What is "myrrh"?
a) an easily shaped metal b) a spice used for burying people c) a drink

What Do You Think About . . ?

to actress Melissa Joan Hart, better known as **Sabrina the Teenage Witch**, who violated her licensing agreement with Archie Comic Series by posing for *Maxim* magazine in a less than wholesome way.

to the television drama *Little Men*. Inspired by the writings of Louisa May Alcott, this series, set in rural 19th century Massachusetts, follows the adolescent lives of students in a boarding school. The issues and themes are contemporary as many of the hurdles and life struggles that these teens face remain timeless. Check out this family friendly show on Friday evenings on PAX TV.

Challenge is the youth supplement to the Orthodox Observer, a service of the Department of Youth & Young Adult Ministries. Articles reflect the opinion of the writers. Write to: Youth & Young Adult Ministries, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 8 East 79th Street, New York, N.Y. 10021

Contributors to this page
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DIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Metropolitan Iakovos Honored on Anniversary

CHICAGO – A thousand persons gathered Oct. 21 at a Chicago Hilton banquet to honor Metropolitan Iakovos of Krinis, presiding hierarch of the Diocese of Chicago, for his name day and to celebrate his 30 years as a hierarch of the Church and 28 as head of the Diocese.

Archbishop Demetrios attended, as did 17 other hierarchs.

They were Metropolitan Christopher, head of the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Midwestern America; Metropolitan Soterios of Toronto and All Canada; Metropolitan Maximos of Aenos, presiding hierarch the the Diocese of Pittsburgh; Metropolitan Methodios of Aneon, presiding hierarch of the Diocese of Boston; Metropolitan Athenagoras of Panama and Central America; Metropolitan Isaiah of Proikonisou, presiding hierarch of the Diocese of Denver; Metropolitan Nikitas of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia; Bishop Alexios of Atlanta, Bishop Nicholas of Detroit, Bishop John of Amorion, Bishop Philotheos of Meloia, Bishop Vsevolod of Skopelos, presiding hierarch, the Western Diocese of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA; Bishop Longin, Serbian Orthodox Diocese of America and Canada-New Gracanica; Bishop Damaskinos of Jaffa, Patriarchate of Jerusalem; and Bishop Demetrios of Xanthos.

In his address to the audience, Metropolitan Iakovos remembered the hierarchs who were influential in his life, among them Patriarchs Athenagoras and Demetrios, Archbishop Iakovos, and an uncle, Metropolitan Iakovos of blessed memory.

"Special thanks, as well, must go to our globally respected Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeos and our beloved new



WITH FAMILY members who traveled from Greece, Boston and Ohio to honor the Metropolitan. At right is his younger brother, Demetrios.

fasts of the Church together, as one people, one family in Christ. For 20 years now, we have greeted new life in baptism, sealed convert life in chrismation, blessed married life in matrimony, hallowed monastic life in tonsure, nurtured priestly life in ordination, and bid farewell to earthly life in burial.

"For 20 years," he continued, "we have reclaimed portions of God's Midwestern earth in groundbreakings, blessed it and inaugurated new endeavors and homes in *hagiasmo*, set apart temples and houses of worship in consecrations."

He also mentioned the establishment of two monasteries in his diocese, and ministries including the Philanthropy Fund, the Bishop's Task Force on AIDS and the Feed-the-Hungry program among the programs established under his ten-

"Opportunities for education in both our Orthodox faith and Hellenic culture are similarly vibrant. Annual religious education seminars, Philoptochos, Clergy and YAL retreats, celebrations of Orthodox books and of the Greek cultural and linguistic inheritance are all marked by the presence and contributions of widely

known and respected speakers."

He also exhorted the faithful to look ahead with an "attitude of gratitude."

"The turn of the Millennium calls for new gifts, new sacrifices that the years to come may prove to bring God's saving and healing grace to a world lost and deeply wounded by centuries of wars and divisions, of hatred and suffering."

The Metropolitan began his service to the church as a parish priest in Somerville. He also served as president of Hellenic College-Holy Cross (1971-76) and headed the Diocese of Detroit before becoming bishop of Chicago on Jan. 23, 1979.

He recently told the Observer that he has strived in his service to the Church "to minister to the spiritual needs of the individual and the Church" and to keep it "united, organized and financially secure."

Relatives of Metropolitan Iakovos who attended the event included: Demetraki Garmatis (brother) and Ioanna Garmatis (niece) both of Athens, Greece; and six cousins, Nicholas Miminis of Andover, Mass., Mark Miminis of Lexington, Mass., James Miminis of Winchester, Mass.; Charles Gillis of Arlington, Mass., Maria Joyce of Freehold, N.J., and George Michaels and wife, Angela, of Akron, Ohio.



METROPOLITAN IAKOVOS officiates at rededication service, assisted by Fr. Angelo Pepps.

Sioux Falls Church Rededicated after Disastrous Fire

SIOUX CITY, Iowa – Holy Trinity Church recently held a rededication (Anagenisis) service following extensive repairs to damage caused by a major fire.

The electrical fire occurred in February 1996 and caused substantial damage to the church interior, including the pews, flooring, iconostasis screen and several icons as well as significant smoke and heat damage. Parishioners decided to replace the damaged contents, rather than repair the damage.

The parish contracted with architect Chris Kamages, woodcarver Steve Kavroulakis of Crete, Greece, and iconographer Elias Damianakis of Port Rickey, Fla., to work on the project.

The large altar area was redesigned and a solea was added.

Most of the church interior was replaced, including the altar table. Metropolitan Iakovos of Krinis, presiding hierarch of the Chicago Diocese officiated at the weekend events. Highlights of the rededication included: vespers and tonsuring of the parish acolytes,

and banquet. In addition to Metropolitan Iakovos, other guests included the Roman Catholic bishop of Sioux City; Bishop Daniel Di Nardo; and Sioux City Mayor Dr. Thomas Padgett.

Sunday Services included the rededication service, at which His Eminence placed the original holy relics in the new altar.

After the services, the Philoptochos sponsored a luncheon in the church hall. Many former parishioners had come to partake in the weekend events.

Assisting the Metropolitan were Frs. Evangelos S. Pepps, pastor of Holy Trinity; Constantine Balomenos, former pastor of Holy Trinity; Thomas Begely, pastor of St. Thomas Antiochian Orthodox Church of Sioux City, George Wilson of Lexington, Ky.; Benjamin Henderson of Sioux Falls, S.D., and Angelo Pappas, former pastor of Sioux Falls parish.

Leti Michaels served as chairwoman of the rededication/anagenisis weekend.



METROPOLITAN IAKOVOS and Archbishop Demetrios, escorted by Fr. Chris Kerhulas, banquet chairman, receive an ovation from the faithful as they walk through the banquet hall.

Archbishop Demetrios, whose singular brilliance shall guide us as a beacon into the next millennium," he said.

"I also offer my deepest gratitude to my brother Metropolitans of our Eparchial Synod for their warm synodal spirit, brothers who have brought blessing to this evening with their presence."

Reflecting on his ministry in the Diocese, the Metropolitan said: "For 20 years we have kept the sanctifying feasts and

ure. Discussing the Diocese youth programs and religious education programs, the Metropolitan said: "Working as a family, we continue to realize a vital youth movement nurturing students – from JOY through GOYA through the Young Adult League – by the efforts of our Diocesan Youth Office. With thankfulness to God, we annually experience a Greek Orthodox Junior Olympics of singular vitality and vibrancy.

DIOCESE *news*



Groundbreaking

photo by Savas

Metropolitan Iakovos of Krinis, presiding hierarch of the Diocese of Chicago, officiates at the recent groundbreaking ceremony for a new addition to the Kimisis Tis Theotokou Church in Racine, Wis. With the Metropolitan are Fr. Emmanuel Lillios, pastor, and Jim Loukidis, parish council president.

Church, School Bring Thanksgiving to Less Fortunate

LEXINGTON, Mass. — St. Nicholas Church and its Church School, served Thanksgiving meals on Nov. 28 to more than 50 children, teens, adults and seniors of the Greater Boston area.

Middle school and high school students served a turkey dinner with all the fixings and dessert to the homeless, mentally retarded, physically handicapped or with other special needs.

Besides a delicious meal, the afternoon event include entertainment and dancing.

The event was coordinated by Fr. Constantine Newman, pastor, and Drew C. Bililies, Church School director, teachers and parishioners.

Hellenic Times to Award \$100,000 in Scholarships

NEW YORK—The Hellenic Times will award \$100,000 in scholarships next year to Greek American students across the nation.

The Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund was instituted in 1990, and since then more than \$400,000 has been distributed to college and graduate school students.

Last year, applications requests topped 1,000 from all 50 states, Canada and Greece.

Scholarships will be awarded at the annual Hellenic Times Scholarships Dinner Dance scheduled for May 5, 2000.

Last year 1,500 attended the Scholarship Awards Dinner to see CBS' Thalia Assuras and actress Paula Cale of "Providence" receive honors as Humanitarians of the Year.

For more information on helping with the program, or for scholarship applications, call (212) 986-6881, or visit the Website at HTSFund.org, or write: Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund, Attn: Nick Katsoris, 823 Eleventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

Eastern Orthodox Scouting Group Holds 39th Retreat

GARRISON, N.Y. — The Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting (EOCS) recently held its 39th annual religious retreat at St. Basil Academy.

The EOCS, founded by the Standing Conference of Eastern Orthodox Bishop of America (SCOBA) in 1960, has the responsibility to create, expand, and enhance Eastern Orthodoxy among Orthodox Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

The EOCS provides Scout religious activities on a national level.

The retreat officially opened with a welcoming prayer by Rev. Johannes L. Jacobse, host for the weekend, and assistant director of the academy.

Holy Cross seminarians developed and directed the retreat program, led by the Very Rev. Gerasimos Makris, the director of Student Life, and Deacon Dr. Brant Pelphrey, assistant to the president.

They provided a spiritual experience for the Scouts and training for the seminarians who made the four-hour trip to volunteer their time and expertise for this spiritual weekend.

Six Orthodox priests volunteered to hear confessions from the Scouts, with many of them traveling several hours to assist.

The Boy Scouts camped in the wooded area while the Girl Scouts camped in the dormitories and others camped in tents nearby.

After a Lenten dinner, the Scouts and



DEACON DR. Brant Pelphrey of Holy Cross School of Theology prepares to address and entertain Scouts at opening ceremonies of the retreat at St. Basil's.

their leaders were treated to a huge campfire directed by Scouter George Holt, who led the group in songs and stories. Deacon Brant entertained everyone with his guitar and songs.

The day's activities ended with rap sessions divided according to age groups.

The retreat came to a close with the Divine Liturgy at St. Basil Chapel with most of the participants partaking of Holy Communion. After church services the retreat

concluded with the final assembly in the church because of inclement weather, where recognition's and thank you's were given.

Chairman Tony Triant was recognized for his many continuous years of retreat chairmanship and several Scouts were honored with Alpha Omega religious awards.

For information on the EOCS and its events and programs contact Chairman, George N. Boulukos, 862 Guy Lombardo Ave., Freeport, NY 11520.

OPT Announces Orthodox Unity Web Page

Orthodox People Together, a network of Orthodox Christians dedicated to united witness in North America, is resuming its publication of news promoting Orthodox unity by launching a new web page. The web page is currently under construction at www.OrthodoxPeopleTogether.org and the E-mail address is OPTAmerica@aol.com.

OPT fosters Orthodox unity by encouraging and reporting on growth toward administrative unity in America as well as publishing news of national, regional and grass-roots inter-Orthodox activities, and educational programs. The group urges all Orthodox Christians to contribute to the new website's effectiveness by submitting articles and news from the U. S., Canada, and South America.

Volunteers for ongoing staffing of the

website are very much needed, and are asked to contact OPT's E-mail address to offer assistance.

The currently active OPT board members will function initially as editorial board for the website. They include George Bedrin, Grand Isle, Vt., OCA; Ms. Demetra Jaquet, Golden, Co., Greek; Phil Tamoush, Torrance, Calif., Antiochian; and Fr. John Tkachuk, Montreal, Canada, OCA.

In print from 1988 to 1996, the quarterly OPT Newsletter reached over 4,000 Orthodox Christian hierarchs, clergy and laity throughout North America, publishing inter-jurisdictional news about united Orthodox ministries already actively working together nationally and locally, as well as items of interest for all Orthodox.

An invitation is being mailed to all OPT members to access the newsletter's

new electronic version online.

OPT was founded under the spiritual blessing of Bishop Kallistos of Zelon, of blessed memory, while he served as bishop of the Denver Diocese.

OPT was blessed to receive continued guidance from His Grace Bishop Maximos of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh as its spiritual advisor.

Since its incorporation in Colorado in 1988 as a 501C3 nonprofit organization, OPT has sponsored six national conferences on Orthodox unity in the U.S.

Under its sponsorship, the first Directory of Orthodox Parishes in North America was published in 1992.

The current updated version of the Directory continues to be available in print or electronic form from Phil Tamoush at Oakwoodpub@juno.com.

Applicants Sought for Nicholson Fellowship

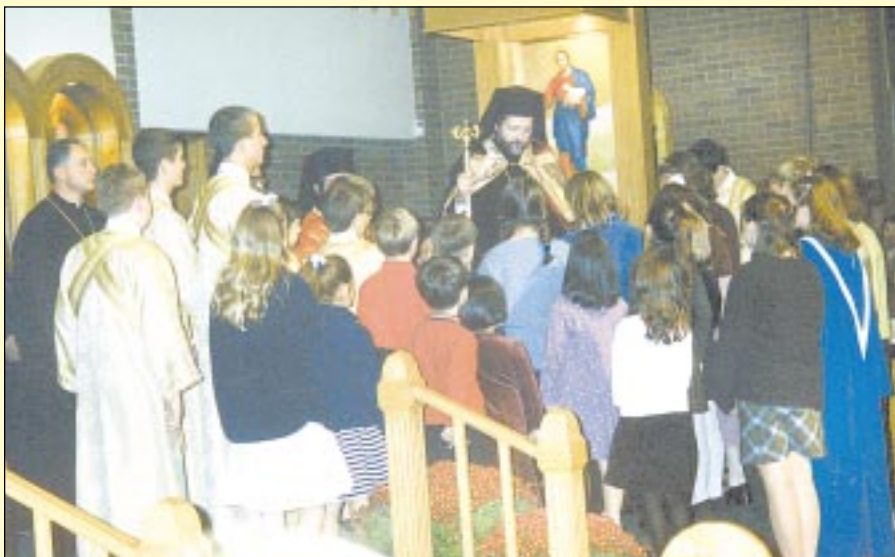
EVANSTON, Ill. — The Graduate School of Northwestern University will accept applications for its Nicholson Fellowships through Jan. 14.

The fellowships provide full tuition and a nine-month stipend to graduate students in the basic sciences, including chemistry, physics, biotechnology, engineering, and also in business.

Recipients must be U.S. citizens, preferably Ph.D. candidates, especially those of Greek descent.

The awards are named in honor of the late John N. Nicholson, a Chicago-area physician for 50 years and Greek community leader.

More information: contact Mary Pat Doyle, The Graduate School, Northwestern University, Rebecca Crown Center, 633 Clark St., Evanston, IL 60208-1113.



Speaks to children

Bishop Nicholas of Detroit gives a sermon to children at St. Demetrios Church in Saginaw, Mich., during Vespers on Oct. 25. He visited the parish for its feast day.

President Clinton Visits Ecumenical Patriarchate

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The official reception took place at the Hall of the Throne with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Metropolitans of the Ecumenical Throne.

The Patriarchate's Great Benefactor, Panayiotis Angelopoulos, who reconstructed the Patriarchal House of the Phanar "from the ashes," also attended.

Patriarch Bartholomew afterward met with the President in the patriarchal office, in the presence of the synodical hierarchs of the Ecumenical Throne: Metropolitans Chrysostomos of Ephesus and Joakeim of Chalcedon and Archbishop Demetrios of America.

Also present were members of the American delegation.

The meeting lasted about half an hour and took place in a cordial and emotional atmosphere.

During their discussion, Patriarch Bartholomew explained the Ecumenical Patriarchate's initiatives regarding peace, friendship and reconciliation among peoples of the world.

He also referred to efforts in environmental protection, making special reference to the recent ecological symposium on the Danube.

Patriarch Bartholomew asked for President Clinton's contribution to religious freedom issues. The President agreed that freedom of religious expression and worship must exist throughout the world.

The issue of the re-opening of the Theological School of Halki also was discussed. Both the President and Mrs. Clinton expressed their deep personal interest in the resolution of this issue.

During the exchange of gifts Patriarch Bartholomew offered the first lady two precious silver candlesticks.

He then offered Secretary of State Madeleine Albright an icon of Mary Magdalene saying, "This is the saint whose name you bear." The Patriarch offered Chelsea a pair of cuff links and a gold and silver brooch in the shape of a butterfly.

Then the Patriarch offered the President the parchment created at the Patriarch's request by Fr. Luke, artist hagiographer of Xenophontos Monastery on Mount Athos.

This unique gift/work of art depicts four scenes: the creation of the cosmos, the birth of Christ, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, whereas the text of the verse from St. Paul's letter to Hebrews, forms the shape of the cross.

After their meeting, the Ecumenical Patriarch guided President Clinton to the Chapel of St. George where the President and Mrs. Clinton stood in front of a portion of the pillar where Christ was whipped. They touched it with their hands and prayed.

This part of the column of flagellation is one of three; the other two parts are in Jerusalem and at the Vatican.

President Clinton is the first President to visit the Center of Orthodoxy at the Phanar while still in office.

This fact reaffirms the significant role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate not just for the Orthodox and the other Christians but also in the international political scene.



The President lights a candle in the Patriarchal Church of St. George, in the Phanar.



A work of art which depicts four scenes: the creation of the cosmos, the birth of Christ, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, whereas the text of the verse from St. Paul's letter to Hebrews, forms the shape of the cross, was the unique gift offered to President Clinton by His All Holiness.



President Clinton proudly displays the Patriarch's gift as he poses next to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew along with his family and Archbishop Demetrios of America, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Ephesus and Metropolitan Demetrios of Sevasteia.

Photos by Nicholas Manginas



President Clinton with his family and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright pose for a picture with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and members of the Holy and Sacred Synod. Also shown is Mr. Panayiotis Angelopoulos, the Patriarchate's Great Benefactor.