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Finding the Cross Becomes a 'Family Tradition'



Metropolitan Anthony Dies Following Short Illness

SAN FRANCISCO – Metropolitan Anthony, the spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, with jurisdiction over the seven western states, died on Christmas Day, five weeks after he was diagnosed with Burkitt's Lymphoma.

He was 69. At the time of his death, he was surrounded by clergy, family and friends, including his sisters, Eleni Koniaris and Chrysoula Antonopoulos and their families, and his sister-in-law, Giannoula Gergiannakis, and her family.

In announcing the passing of Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, deeply moved, issued the following statement:

"Today, at the evening of Christmas day, a very prominent and beloved Hierarch of our Church in America, Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco, was called by Jesus Christ our Lord to leave this perishable world, and meet Him, and be forever with Him in the company of the saints and

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ANDREW McAdams is filled with joy, holding the cross in one hand and his Epiphany trophy he just received from Archbishop Demetrios in the other. Behind him are Metropolitans Alexios of Atlanta and Epiphanius of Spain along with local clergy and members of the media.

TARPON SPRINGS – An estimated 20,000 people gathered along the banks of Spring Bayou under sunny skies and 75-degree temperatures for the 99th annual Epiphany celebration and Blessing of the Waters service, culminating in the tossing of the cross into the bayou by Archbishop Demetrios.

Forty-three teenage boys made the traditional dive into the 65-degree waters and, 20 seconds later, Andrew McAdams III, 17, of Palm Harbor emerged triumphantly holding up the white cross.

He is a fifth cousin with last year's successful diver, James Hughes.

After he came out of the water, Andrew received a blessing from Archbishop Demetrios and a warm embrace from his mother Aphrodite who comes from the island of Kalymnos.

"I've never gripped anything so tight in my life," Andrew said after the dive.

The day's events began with services at St. Nicholas Cathedral.

In his sermon at the divine liturgy, Archbishop Demetrios spoke of the recent

tsunami tragedy in Southeast Asia and how survivors need clean drinking water.

"Think about the destructive factor of water, but then think about the saving factor of water," he said, referring to the waters of Baptism and their significance on Epiphany.

The congregation prayed for the victims of the Southeast Asia tragedy during the Liturgy.

Following the service, Archbishop Demetrios together with Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta and Metropolitan Epiphanius of Spain led the faithful along the traditional procession route to the bayou, located a few blocks away from the cathedral.

Accompanying him were local clergymen led by the Very Rev. Sebastian Skordallos, dean of the cathedral, who was recently assigned to the parish and participated in his first Epiphany.

He succeeded Fr. Tryfon Theophilopoulos, who participated in the event for

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Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco Laid to Rest

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the righteous. His life epitomizes the statement by St. Paul the Apostle, 'If we live we live to the Lord, and if we die we die to the Lord' (Rom. 14:8).

Deeply saddened by the sudden separation, we are comforted by the certainty that our beloved brother is with God, leaving behind a precious legacy of a total dedication to Christ and His Church, an amazing Episcopal work, a remarkably strong love for the people, a burning passion for Orthodoxy, and a joy for multidimensional ministry. We are sure that now the Holy Metropolis of San Francisco has a permanent, strong ambassador to God in the person of her departed Hierarch and we fervently pray for the repose of his soul among the great saints and pastors of the triumphant Church in heaven."

Bishop Anthimos of Olympos, a close friend and assistant at the Metropolis, noted "Although we are deeply saddened by the passing of this very dynamic hierarch of the Church, we are confident he is with the Lord. The Lord took him on Christmas Day, as if to remind us that his entire life and ministry were a gift to us, to his family, to the Church."

Assisted by Fr. Stephen Kyriacou, the Dean of the Annunciation Cathedral, the Bishop administered "last rites" prior to the Metropolitan's death and conducted a Trisagion immediately following.

Metropolitan Anthony's body lay in state in the Bishop Anthony Chapel of the Annunciation Cathedral from Dec. 27, through Tuesday evening, December 28, where hundreds of faithful paid their respects and signed the Book of Condolences.

Offering remarks following the Trisagion were Archon Theofanis Economidis, vice-president of the Metropolis Council of San Francisco; Rev. Theodore Dorrance, president of the Metropolis Clergy Syndesmos; His Grace Bishop Anthimos of Olympos; Consul General of Greece in San Francisco, Dimitrios Touloupas; Honorary Consul General of Cyprus in San Francisco, Nicholas Theophanous; His Eminence Metropolitan Sotirios of Toronto, representing Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Demetrios.

The next morning began with the Divine Liturgy presided over by Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago, the senior Metropolitan of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese of America assisted by five priests from the Metropolis of San Francisco

More than 1,500 faithful attended the Funeral Service, which began at 11:00am, and was presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America. Metropolitan Sotirios of Toronto represented the Ecumenical Patriarch. Also participating in the service were Metropolitans Iakovos of Chicago, Isaiah of Denver, Alexios of Atlanta, Nicholas of Detroit, Tarasios of Buenos Aires, Bishops Anthimos of Olympos, Savas of Troas, and Gerassimos



FUNERAL services for Metropolitan Anthony were held at the Ascension Cathedral in Oakland with Archbishop Demetrios presiding, many Hierarchs and other clergy participating.

of Krateaia. In addition over one hundred priests from across the country took part in the service. Choir members from the Metropolis sang during the Divine Liturgy and the Funeral Service that followed. The youth of the Metropolis, whom Metropolitan Anthony particularly loved and guided over the years, were dressed in traditional Greek costumes and stood as honor guards in the central aisle and by the casket of their spiritual father. The laity of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America represented Mr. Michael Jaharis, vice-chairman of the Archdiocesan Council and Mrs. Georgia Skeadas, president of the National Philoptochos.

At the conclusion of the funeral service, condolences for and personal memories of the departed Metropolitan were offered by Rev. John Bakas, dean of St. Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles; Rev. Stephen Kyriacou, dean of the Annunciation Cathedral in San Francisco; Bishop John C. Wester, representing the Roman Catholic Archbishop of San Francisco William Levada, William Swing, Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco, and Metropolitan Anthimos of Olympos. Metropolitan Sotirios of Toronto conveyed words of comfort on behalf of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and shared with the congregation thoughts, impressions and memories related to the deceased hierarch.

The Eulogy was delivered by Archbishop Demetrios, who started by expressing the gratitude of the Church to the clergy and laity, the doctors, nurses and medical personnel, who assisted Metropolitan Anthony in various ways, during the difficult time of the final weeks of his life at the hospital in Sacramento, Calif.

Then, the Archbishop highlighted three specific aspects of the legacy that Metropolitan Anthony leaves behind, the legacy of faith as a power to build and to plant (Jeremiah 1:9-10), the legacy of faith as freedom, liberation and independence (Galatians 5:13) and the legacy of faith as

joy (John 16:11).

Metropolitan Anthony was laid to rest in the Greek Orthodox Memorial Park in Colma, until necessary preparations are finalized at the Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring, in Dunlap, Calif., where—in accordance with his wishes—will be the Metropolitan's final resting place.

Also, in accordance with Metropolitan Anthony's expressed wishes, donations to the Hellenic Heritage Museum are requested. Checks should be forwarded to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, 372 Santa Clara Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94127.

Metropolitan Anthony was pre-deceased by his brothers, Mihalis Gergiannakis and George Gergiannakis, and a sister, Stella Roumeliotakis. He also leaves behind twelve nephews and nieces and a number of grand nephews and grand nieces.

Brief illness

The Metropolitan was admitted to U.C. Davis Medical Center in Sacramento on Nov. 18, with a diagnosis of Burkitt's lymphoma, a malignancy of the lymph nodes.

Metropolitan Anthony underwent intensive treatment with chemotherapy and immunotherapy. His initial response had been favorable, but his condition required continued treatments and continued to deteriorate.

Archbishop Demetrios was with Metropolitan Anthony at the Medical Center on Nov. 21 and 22 and had visited him again on Dec. 23, just two before his passing.

The Metropolitan had announced on June 7 that he planned to retire at the end of 2005.

A resident of San Francisco for the last 26 years, Metropolitan Anthony emerged from humble and austere beginnings. The son of Emmanuel and Eleftheria Gergiannakis, he was born March 2, 1935 in the village of Avgeniki on the island of Crete, Greece, the third of six children, growing

up during the brutally difficult years of the Nazi occupation.

After completing his elementary education, he became the first member of his family to leave the village, attending the ecclesiastical school of Chania, Crete, and ultimately graduating from the Halki Theological School of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1960.

He was ordained a deacon on July 27, 1958 while still at the Halki seminary, and a priest on Sept. 29, 1960 in Crete. After his ordination to the priesthood, he came to the United States to pursue postgraduate studies and serve the Church in this country.

He served several parishes including Holy Trinity in Ansonia, Conn. (1961-1964), Assumption Church in Chicago Heights, Ill. (1964-1969), and the Assumption Church in Madison, Wis. (1969-1973).

While serving in Madison, he was given the title of Archimandrite on Sept. 11, 1971.

Along the way he earned a Master's of Divinity at Yale University and pursued doctoral studies in Contemporary Church History at the University of Chicago, and in Russian and Balkan History at the University of Wisconsin.

In 1974, he was appointed dean of St. George Cathedral in Montreal, Canada.

During his priesthood, he served as a member and chairman of the Supreme Council of the Department of Education of the Archdiocese; as Archdiocese Vicar for the Montreal Greek Orthodox community; as a member of several inter-religious and interfaith communities; and as president of the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Montreal.

He also was a member of the Canadian Council of Churches, the Archdiocesan Council of Presbyters, and the 1976 Olympics Committee.

On April 13, 1978, he was elected titular bishop of Amisos by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and was consecrated at Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral in New York on May 21, 1978, by Archbishop Iakovos, and Bishops Silas of Amphipolis, Philotheos of Mela, Sotirios of Constantia, and Anthimos of Christoupolis.

He was given the responsibility of the Eighth Archdiocesan District in Denver until his election as Bishop of San Francisco in 1979. He was enthroned in July of that year as the first ruling bishop of the newly established Diocese of San Francisco.

He has exemplified a ministry of the broadest perspective and has emphasized the need for intensive religious experiences through religious education for all ages, continuing professional education for the clergy, interfaith and ecumenical concerns, social service and philanthropy, cultural endeavors, and various activities for the youth.

The Metropolitan has appointed commissions on youth, senior citizens, Greek language, spiritual renewal, folk dancing, all of which are actively sponsoring programs in these vital areas.

The annual Folk Dance Festival—the largest exhibition of authentic Greek folk dance in the world—represents one of the most successful of these programs, growing from 16 dance groups to 105 competing in dance and authenticity of costume.

He established numerous parishes and sanctioned the development of mission parishes, encouraged expansion programs as well as new senior housing and established three new monasteries, which are growing beyond their walls.

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Epiphany Day in Tarpon Springs

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29 years before retiring last summer.

"Here in Epiphany we have the element of waters," Fr. Skordallos, a native of Cyprus and former pastor in Marietta, Ga., told the press

"We are going to be aware of the potential that water has of becoming a blessing or a very dangerous element."

Present at this year's festivities were the ambassador of Greece in the United States George Savaides, the mayor of Tarpon Springs Beverly Billiris, U.S. congressman Michael Billirakis, the director of the General Secretariat of Greeks Abroad George Markakos and representatives from Greek-American organizations.

The day before, AHEPA held its 69th Annual Epiphany banquet in the community's new "Alex and Faye Spanos/Michael and Maria Pappas" center. During the event AHEPA's supreme president Franklin Manios bestowed upon retired admiral Michael Kalleres with the organization's Medal of Freedom.



DOVE bearer Catherine Velardocchia, 14 yrs. old



RETIRED VICE ADMIRAL KALLERES proudly displays the AHEPA Medal of Freedom and is accompanied by Archbishop Demetrios Ahepa supreme president Franklin Manios, U.S. Rep. Michael Billirakis, ambassador of Greece George Savaides and other members of the banquet dais.



He founded St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, Calif. And other camps in the Metropolis. The Ranch facilities are used extensively on a year round basis for well-organized camping and retreat programs.

The annual Kids n' Cancer program was established for children with terminal cancer, their parents, and all necessary medical staff.

On Nov. 24, 1997, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected then Bishop Anthony of San Francisco as Metropolitan of the Dardenelles, exarch of the entire Hellepont, and Presiding Hierarchy of the San Francisco Diocese.

The acceptance ceremony of his elevation to the rank of Metropolitan took place at the Patriarchal Church of St. George on Dec. 20, 1997. In 2002, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elevated the Diocese to San Francisco to a Metropolis.

Over the years, he served as a member of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese of America. He proved a source of inspiration for countless thousands, not only Greek Orthodox faithful, but also religious and civic figures who recognized in him a great leader and a true man of faith.

One of his major undertakings was to organize and host the 2002 Clergy Laity Congress in Los Angeles.

Together with the Metropolis

Philoptochos, he created the Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund, a multi-million dollar scholarship account providing funding for seminarians and students from the Metropolis to attend Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Mass.

He also led an inter-Church pilgrimage in early April 2003 with two other hierarchs from sister Churches to Canterbury, England, Rome and Constantinople – the historic centers of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches respectively, which included audiences with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Pope John Paul II, and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

On April 25 of this year, he consecrated St. George Church in Palm Desert, Calif.

Metropolitan Anthony will be remembered for his enthusiasm, his vigor, and his prophetic vision for the Metropolis of San Francisco. He challenged his faithful to be more than we believed we could be, to accomplish more than we ever thought possible, to dream great dreams and to make them a reality. A source of inspiration for countless thousands, not only Greek Orthodox faithful, but also religious and civic figures who recognized in him a great leader and a true man of faith, his presence and legacy will be felt for generations to come.

Parts of this story were contributed by Marissa Costidis, Jim Golding, Frosene Phillips and Stavros Papagermanos



OFFICIAL NOTICE

CANDIDATES ELIGIBLE FOR ELECTION TO THE OFFICE OF METROPOLITAN OR AUXILIARY BISHOP

In accordance with Article 14 of the Charter of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the pertinent Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (Advisory and Consultative Role in Hierarchical Elections) there follow herewith the names of the Auxiliary Bishops (in order of ordination to the Episcopacy) and other clergy (in alphabetical order) who constitute the current list of candidates eligible for election to the office of Metropolitan or Auxiliary Bishop as the case may be. This list has been duly ratified by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

CELIBATE CLERGY

of the

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE of AMERICA
at least 35 years of age with a theological degree
from an Orthodox institution and sufficient service
in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
as of December 23, 2004

(* indicates widowers)

His Grace Bishop DIMITRIOS of Xanthos
His Grace Bishop SAVAS of Troas
His Grace Bishop GERASIMOS of Kratea
His Grace Bishop ANDONIOS of Phassiane
V. Rev. Archimandrite IGNATIOS APOSTOLOPOULOS
V. Rev. Archimandrite TIMOTHY BAKAKOS
V. Rev. Archimandrite CONSTANTINE BEBIS (*)
Rev. Fr. KYPRIANOS BOUBOUTSIS
V. Rev. Archimandrite JOHN CONSTANTINE
V. Rev. Archimandrite JOACHIM COTSONIS
V. Rev. Archimandrite NEKTARIOS COTTROS
V. Rev. Archimandrite VASILIOS FLIONIS
V. Rev. Archimandrite DAMASKINOS GANAS
V. Rev. Archimandrite ANASTASIOS GARABOA
V. Rev. Archimandrite NICHOLAS GRAFF
V. Rev. Archimandrite JOHN HEROPOULOS
V. Rev. Archimandrite NICHOLAS HUGHES
V. Rev. Archimandrite DEMETRIOS KANTZAVELOS
V. Rev. Archimandrite J. GABRIEL KARAMBIS
V. Rev. Archimandrite ALEXANDER KILE
V. Rev. Archimandrite FRANGOULIS (FRANK) M. KIRLANGITIS(*)
V. Rev. Archimandrite LUKE KONTGAS
V. Rev. Archimandrite KONSTANTINOS KOSTARIS (*)
V. Rev. Archimandrite CYRIL LOEB
V. Rev. Archimandrite GERASIMOS MAKRIS
V. Rev. Archimandrite STAVROFOROS MAMAIES
V. Rev. Archimandrite CONSTANTINE MERSINAS
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V. Rev. Archimandrite SERAPHIM POULOS
V. Rev. Archimandrite POLYCARP RAMEAS
V. Rev. Archimandrite GERASIMOS RASSIAS (*)
V. Rev. Archimandrite NEKTARIOS SERFES
V. Rev. Archimandrite SEBASTIAN SKORDALLOS
V. Rev. Archimandrite JOHN TRAVIS

Comments concerning any of the individuals on the list should be sent in writing and marked "STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL" to:

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
8 East 79 Street
New York, New York 10021

Comments should be received no later than February 7, 2005.

From the Office of the Archbishop of America

Archbishop Demetrios Appeals for Help to the *Tsunami* Victims

NEW YORK – Following the cataclysmic Dec. 26 tsunami that swept across the Indian Ocean killing more than 150,000 people in 10 nations, Greek Orthodox Christians around the globe have been generously offering assistance to the vast numbers of persons suffering as a result of the tragedy.

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America in an encyclical to the Greek Orthodox parishes and organizations urged the faithful to open their hearts and generously contribute to the “Asian Disaster Relief Fund” established at the Archdiocese. He further asked the parishes of the Archdiocese to have a special collection for this purpose on Sunday January 9.

The Metropolis of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, under whose jurisdiction lie the affected areas, is working with Orthodox churches in Indonesia and India to offer assistance to some of the millions affected.



Hege Opseth-Christian Aid/ ACT

In a small camp several miles from the beach in South East India.

There is a significant Orthodox presence on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, including numerous churches, schools, and other philanthropic sites.

Metropolitan Nikitas has been in contact with Indonesian Orthodox clergy and Orthodox brethren in southern India since the time of the disaster and reported that none of the faithful have been seriously injured, and very little damage has been done to churches and related buildings.

Most of the affected Orthodox faithful reside in Medan, on the eastern coast of northern Sumatra in Indonesia and there was concern that the powerful earthquake could have caused serious damage.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew contacted Metropolitan Nikitas, expressing his paternal love and sympathy for those who are suffering from this terrible calamity. His All Holiness stated that “he and the Mother Church are praying for relief from this catastrophe.”

The earthquake, which was centered off the western coast of North Sumatra, was the most powerful earthquake in the world in the last 40 years, registering 8.9 on the Richter scale. Orthodox faithful in Bangkok and in southern India, both thousands of kilometers from the epicenter, reported feeling the shaking early on Sunday morning.

While the earthquake caused significant damage to the infrastructure in nearby Aceh, North Sumatra, those results were dwarfed by the damage to occur merely hours later.

Massive tsunamis, or tidal waves, ravaged across the Andaman Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and greater Indian Ocean, causing death and destruction in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and as far west as Somalia and Kenya in Africa.



Paul Jeffrey photos

Tsunami young survivor in Batticola, Sri Lanka holds tight onto his umbrella, the only thing he now has for protection against the elements. The man on the right, only found these two photos of his family members amidst the debris in Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

Anyone working, living, or vacationing by the coast in the affected areas was washed out to sea or sent running for his or her life.

Over a third of the victims found so far have been children, as they stood the least chance of surviving in rushing water.

Though not directly affected by this disaster, the Orthodox Metropolis of Hong Kong and South East Asia has chosen to act as an intermediary between those who have suffered great losses and those who would like to help them recover. At the request of His Eminence Metropolitan



Nikitas, an “Orthodox Asian Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund” has been established.

Millions of Orthodox Christians around the world have been donating to this immense tragedy.

IOCC Efforts

At the forefront of the global Orthodox Christian response is the International Orthodox Christian Charities, bolstered by a groundswell of charitable giving, is bringing life-sustaining assistance to some of the hardest hit victims of the South Asia tsunami.

ARCHIEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

December 30, 2004

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort those who are in trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

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, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philotochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America,

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During this joyous holiday season when we have been blessed with so much cheer and an abundance of gifts, who of us has not been truly shaken and deeply moved by the enormous catastrophes and the nightmarish loss of lives in Asia. In the blink of an eye, a natural disaster of unimaginable proportions has left devastation and unbearable pain in its wake for countless people. Well over 150,000 individuals have lost the most precious of all gifts, their lives. In it all, we are reminded of the fragility of life, and we acknowledge that every day is indeed a gift from God.

As an Orthodox Christian community, our first and foremost response must be a call to prayer for the eternal rest of those who lost their lives and for comfort and strength from God upon those left behind. As it is well known, the overwhelming majority of those adversely affected by this catastrophe are amongst the poorest of the poor of this globe, who have lost all of their meager belongings.

Comfort from God must be accompanied by a tangible expression of comfort, which we can offer to the survivors whose lives now depend on whatever assistance the rest of the world is able to offer them. For communities in the region, the Orthodox Metropolis of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia has commenced appropriate relief efforts.

The IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities), an organization of SCOBA (Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas), is also offering special assistance to the disaster areas affected by the earthquake and tsunamis. It is equally important, however, that all of us extend our support, through prayer and through financial assistance, to those who have been affected by this tragedy. I would therefore kindly and fervently ask on behalf of our Eparchial Synod that the Greek Orthodox faithful of America respond most generously to this appeal for a special collection to be made on Sunday, January 9, in all our parishes throughout the Holy Archdiocese. Your benevolent contributions should be forwarded to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, and designated exclusively for our “Asian Disaster Relief Fund.”

Knowing of your boundless generosity and your abiding love one for another, we are confident that you will do whatever you can to offer as much comfort as possible to the least of our brethren, who are the brethren of Christ, (Math. 25:40) and to offer in this most darkest hour a ray of hope. Let those who have survived a foreboding wave of death and destruction now be encompassed by a comforting wave of love and concern.

With paternal love in Christ,

For His Hop Demetrios

† Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America

Urgently-needed items such as medicines, tents, blankets, foodstuffs and hygiene supplies are reaching tsunami victims through airlifts being supported by the IOCC.

At the same time, a team composed of IOCC staff from Greece and Hong Kong and local Indonesian church officials is gathering on the island of Sumatra to coordinate the growing response. The team’s needs-assessment mission is a joint effort of IOCC and the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia.

The team is focusing on the situation on the ground in and around Medan, the capital of North Sumatra Province in Indonesia, where the Metropolitanate has facilities and churches that can provide support to relief efforts there. Members of the team will coordinate with IOCC’s longtime partners Church World Service (CWS) and Action by Churches Together (ACT).

IOCC also is participating in ongoing airlifts of humanitarian supplies valued at \$4 million. The shipments contain 100 medicine boxes, each designed to provide routine medicines for 1,000 adults and children for three months, and other medical supplies; shelter and sanitation kits; blankets and emergency foodstuffs; and other critical supplies requested by IOCC partners in the region.



YAKKUM Emergency Unit/ACT

Grief and despair in the face of this mother survivor in the Aceh province, Indonesia.

“We will continue to support these very concrete airlift efforts in the coming weeks,” said IOCC Executive Director Constantine M. Triantafyllou, “along with Orthodox church-based efforts in the United States – such as assembling and sending thousands of ‘Gift of the Heart’ health and school kits.”

IOCC is encouraging Orthodox Christians to continue assembling health kits, which are urgently needed for shipment to the areas hardest hit by the tsunami. To learn more about assembling the health kits, please visit www.iocc.org/healthkits.

“We are grateful for this unprecedented show of support,” Mr. Triantafyllou said, “which will enable IOCC to meet the immediate needs of those affected and work toward long-term recovery and reconstruction.”

Donations for IOCC’s “Asia Disaster Response” maybe sent to IOCC, P.O. Box 630225, Baltimore, MD 21263-0225. Donations may also be made online at www.iocc.org or by calling toll-free 1-877-803-IOCC (4622), or through the Archdiocese at 8 E. 79th St., New York, NY 10021, or local parishes who will forward the offerings to the IOCC.

YAL Response

The Young Adult League has set a goal for its members to assemble 5,000 health kits to aid victims of the disaster. The “Gift of the Heart” health kits will bolster the efforts of IOCC to deliver life-saving relief supplies to areas hardest hit by the tsunami.

Health kits assembled by the Young Adult League will be collected at a warehouse facility in New Windsor, Md., and



Archbishop Appoints New Director for Greek Education Department

NEW YORK – Archbishop Demetrios has named Dr. Ioannis Efthymiopoulos as director of the Archdiocese Department of Greek Education.

“The appointment of Dr. Ioannis Efthymiopoulos as director of the Department of Greek Education is a significant event in the history of contributions of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America to Greek Education and Greek Culture,” the Archbishop said in a prepared statement. “Dr. Efthymiopoulos will offer valuable services based on his vast educational experience and extensive involvement in the area of educational programs within and outside of Greece. His immediate knowledge of the Omogeneia in the United States constitutes an additional advantage that guarantees a fruitful contribution in Greek education.”

With Dr. Efthymiopoulos’ appointment, and the creative contributions offered by Maria Makedon and other department colleagues, the Department of Greek Education has the potential for enhanced and dynamic work in Greek-American education, the Archbishop noted.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Dr. Efthymiopoulos was born in Kardamas, in Ilia prefecture.

In 1968 he graduated from the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki.

In 1984 he received a master’s degree with distinction in education from the Greek government’s Ministry of Education and Religion School and, in 1988, he earned a doctorate from the School of Sciences of the Aristotelian University in Thessaloniki.

Dr. Efthymiopoulos commands extensive teaching, administrative, and consulting experience in Greece, America, Germany and Belgium. He has taught at the Experimental School and the Pedagogic Institute of Thessaloniki, the Aristotelian University and the Pedagogic Academy of Thessaloniki, and at various high schools.

Until recently, Dr. Efthymiopoulos served as educational advisor to the



Pedagogical Institute at the Regional Administration of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia.

From November 1998 until September 2002, he served as consul for educational affairs at the Education Office of the Consulate General of Greece in Chicago.

During his service in the United States, Dr. Efthymiopoulos, in cooperation with the Diocese of Chicago, organized seminars for parochial school teachers in many communities and became familiar with the Greek-American education system.

In 1994-98 he served as educational advisor for secondary education in the prefectures of Pella and Imathia and, in 1989-94, headed the Greek Department of the European School in Brussels.

In 1981-82, with a scholarship from Goethe Institute, he supervised Greek students in German schools around Munich, and from 1978-81 he headed the administration office for secondary education in Thessaloniki.

Dr. Efthymiopoulos and his wife, Athanasia Proiou Efthymiopoulou, have two adult children, one in Chicago and the other in Rome.

delivered through ongoing humanitarian airlifts to the tsunami-affected countries.

“We are grateful for the outpouring of support from Orthodox Christians across the country,” Mr. Triantafilou said, “including this generous commitment by Orthodox young people.”

Young adult chapters throughout the United States will be assembling and collecting the health kits at various functions, social gatherings and parish events through Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14.

The “Gift of the Heart” kits include basic materials such as soap, toothpaste, Band-Aids and washcloths.

“The packages may be small, but they’ll make a huge difference,” said the Fr. Mark A. Leondis, national director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the Archdiocese. “Just knowing that so many neighbors from across the globe are extending their hands has to provide hope and comfort to the victims.”

Fr. Leondis added that service and witness are two of the pillars on which the young adult ministry bases its activities.

“The national young adult service project is especially appropriate this year because Archbishop Demetrios has proclaimed 2005 as the ‘Year of the Family’ throughout the Archdiocese,” Fr. Leondis said. “This is a perfect example of how our Church family can and must reach out to others in the name of Christ, especially during challenging times like these.”

To learn more about assembling

the health kits, please visit www.iocc.org/healthkits. For more information on the young adult initiative, contact the young adult ministry at info@yal.org.

Internationally

Elsewhere in the world, the government and people of Greece have responded generously to the call for aid.

The Foreign Ministry has sent a cruise ship to the Sri Lanka area, following an offer from the Majestic International Cruises company. The ship transported 800 tons of humanitarian aid, and will function as a floating hospital, staffed by specialized medical and nursing personnel from Greek non-government organizations.

The aid collected up until this time, in funding and materials, is estimated at more than 20 million euros (about \$27-\$28 million) and includes aid from the State that will exceed 4 million euros, funds collected by the telethon being organized by the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT) in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry, which will exceed 15 million euros, aid materials being collected by the Church of Greece’s NGO, SOLIDARITY, other NGOs, organizations, municipalities, prefectures and private citizens. These efforts, which are being coordinated by the Foreign Ministry, are expected to result in the collection of over 800 tons – over 5.5 million euros worth – of aid in the form of tents, clothing, pharmaceuticals, food, etc.

— Compiled from news sources

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Five Years of Significant



A new era of Faith, Love and Hope begins as Archbishop Demetrios is enthroned.

Immediately after the Archbishop's enthronement, His Eminence is invited to seat right next to the President at the White House Prayer Breakfast.



First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton congratulates Archbishop Demetrios on his Enthronement.



Together with N. Y. Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Archbishop Demetrios leads his first Greek Independence Day parade on Fifth Avenue.



Archbishop Demetrios celebrates Divine Liturgy with the Hierarchs of the Holy Eparchial Synod during his first Clergy-Laity Congress in Philadelphia, July 2000.



The Millennium visit of His All Holiness to the U.S. and the Diocese of Detroit. Below during the arrival welcome event with Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit and Metropolitan Anthony of blessed memory.



Secretary of State Madeleine Albright hosted a State Department Dinner to salute Archbishop Demetrios, May 12, 2000



Archpastoral Ministry

PRESIDENT BUSH WELCOMES ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS
Presents His Eminence with Greek Independence Day Proclamation

Athenagoras Human Rights Award to Archbishop Anastasios

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Achbishop Demetrios visits U.N. Secretary Kofi Annan and along with other international religious leaders promotes the UN Resolution for the protection of religious sites.



Archbishop Demetrios visits Hellenic College-Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Mass., many times during the year as he did in May 2001 for the 59th Annual Commencement Ceremonies. In the photo with hierarchs, staff, graduates and U.S. Ambassador Nicholas Burns.



ON SACRED GROUND (clockwise from top-left) **Archbishop** Demetrios offers his blessing to this soldier. **Prayer** for America Service, at Yankee Stadium, Sept. 23, 2001; His Eminence offers a prayer. **On** Ground-Zero Sept. 14, with President Bush. **Many** were the visits to ground zero, this one in early October (center) with George Papandreou, Foreign Minister of Greece. **Next** to the President, Sept. 20 at the White House, with other religious leaders. **Icon** and liturgical book that survived the carnage.



Five Years of Significant



FIRST Official Visit to Greece in January 2002: His Eminence addresses members of Greek Parliament; Visits with many leading personalities of the Greek government including the President of the Hellenic Republic Kostas Stephanopoulos, Archbishop Christodoulos of Greece, Prime Minister Kostas Simitis; he was also feted at a special ceremony at the University of Athens.



(TOP) Alex Spanos Grand Marshall of the 2002 Greek independence Day Parade and his wife Faye march up New York's Fifth Avenue together with Archbishop Demetrios and Mayor Michael Bloomberg.
 (RIGHT) Three new bishops were ordained in early 2002; from top to bottom the ordinations of Bishop Savas of Troas, Bishop Gerasimos of Kratsea and Bishop Andonios of Phasiane.
 (BOTTOM) The 36th Clergy-Laity Congress was held in Los Angeles with an increased focus on awareness of the Faith.



Archpastoral Ministry



(Three top rows, left to right)
A festive atmosphere with Ladies of the National Philotochos at St. Basil's Academy.
Another warm welcome at the White House.
Enthronement of Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey.
Investiture of the 2003 class of Archons.
Archbishop Demetrios leading a Patriarchal delegation to the Vatican and meeting with Pope John Paul II in late June 2003.
Official induction ceremony to the prestigious Academy of Athens.
Children's Medical Fund Luncheon in Michigan with actress Nia Vardalos and Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit.



(TOP) **His Eminence** speaking to children at the 37th Clergy-Laity Congress in New York, late in July 2004; **Mayor** of Bari, Italy brings contribution for rebuilding St. Nicholas; **Archbishop** Demetrios receives Ellis Island Medal, May 15; (RIGHT) **Prime Minister** of Greece Konstantine Karamanlis visits with his wife Natasha; **Special** blessing for special children at NY area parish, just before Holy Week 2004.



(BOTTOM ROW left to right)
At the beginning of the new School Year His Eminence visits with students of the Archdiocesan Schools;
Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visit in March 2004. In the Archbishop's office with Sen. Hillary Clinton and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



OPINIONS

EDITORIAL

Metropolitan Anthony (1935-2004)

The end of 2004 was marked with great sadness at the sudden, untimely passing of Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco, who dynamically served the Greek Orthodox Church in the western United States for more than a quarter century.

Untimely because, at only age 69, he died on Christmas Day five weeks after he was diagnosed with Burkitt's Lymphoma. Earlier in 2004, he had announced his intention to retire at the end of this year.

From humble beginnings on the island of Crete, where as a youth he had been a goatherd, he pursued his dreams beyond his village and island to become a great hierarch of the Orthodox faith in a great nation.

Metropolitan Anthony was a straightforward, candid, at times blunt, man who preferred deeds to a preponderance of words.

In his final encyclical written a few days before his passing, Metropolitan Anthony himself admits he has "been known to be impatient with visionaries and idealists. When people come to me and want to share their ideas, I have often said, 'Show me your good ideas by putting them into action.'"

He practiced what he preached.

Over the 25 years of his ministry, he consecrated 25 new churches and organized 20 new communities and missions.

He made his diocese the most progressive in the Church in the use of English in services and emphasis and support of youth through various programs including the Metropolis Folk Dance and Choral Festival and a series of youth conferences in the 1980s that culminated in great youth rally held in conjunction with the Clergy-Laity Congress in 1982, the first of two congresses held in California.

Metropolitan Anthony saw to the spiritual needs of all the faithful, beginning with the establishment of the St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, Calif., and three monasteries, beginning in 1989 with the Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring

at St. Nicholas Ranch, followed by St. Anthony's in Florence, Ariz., and St. John the Forerunner in Goldendale, Wash.

He saw to it that his metropolis ministered to the poor. Through the Philoptochos' efforts the "Kids 'n' Cancer/Camp Agape" program has served hundreds of children in California, Washington and Oregon.

With an eye to future generations, he strongly promoted the training of priests at Holy Cross School of Theology and sent a large percentage of those who have studied for the priesthood to the school.

The Metropolitan did not want finances to be a barrier to someone wanting to be a priest so he established the Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment that has become a major project of the Metropolis Philoptochos, which each year sponsors a Holiday Luncheon fund-raiser.

Metropolitan Anthony also gave strong support to home missions and to missionary and humanitarian efforts overseas.

Through the Diocese Philoptochos in 1982, a "Pennies and Prayers" program was established to raise funds for home missions.

Overseas, the diocese raised \$75,000 in aid for starving children in Ethiopia. Similarly, in 1992, he gave strong support to the "Russia Challenge" relief effort that sent missionaries and much-needed aid to the Ukraine and Russia.

The Metropolitan actively promoted strong relations other Christian Churches. In April 2003 He led an inter-Church pilgrimage with two other hierarchs from the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches to Canterbury, England, Rome and Constantinople – the historic centers of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

Metropolitan Anthony was the first bishop appointed for the then-newly created Diocese of San Francisco in 1979. He has left a legacy that will be an inspiration and a challenge to his successors.

His memory will be eternal.

An Opportunity and A Warning

The tragic, cataclysmic tsunami of Dec. 26 that killed more than 150,000 people in the nations surrounding the Indian Ocean within the space of a few minutes should serve as both an opportunity and a warning to us.

First, it's an opportunity to put into action Christ's teaching to care for the poor, the suffering and the sick so well will have "treasure in heaven."

One criterion He will judge on is how we respond to those in desperate need. As Jesus states in Matthew 25:40 to those who did His will, "...inasmuch as you did it to the least of these, My brethren, you did it to Me."

The Archdiocese, along with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Church of Greece, and other Orthodox Christians around the world, have responded immediately and generously to the call to help the countless thousands of people who have survived and are left homeless and suffering from the effects of the tsunami, most of whom are under the Metropolis of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia.

Interestingly, none of these nations are "Christian," but there are many Christians in these countries, especially in Indonesia, where there reportedly is a significant presence of Orthodox Christians.

And, ironically, there has been considerable persecution of Christians in some of these nations, particularly Indonesia, to the point where there is a fear of personal safety and destruction of property. Therefore, this also presents us with an opportunity to "love our enemies" and to "do good to those who hate you."

This awesome display of nature (and God's power) should also serve as a warning to us that death may come at any time and in an instant.

Throughout the New Testament Christ said to be constantly prepared spiritually. "You also be ready," Jesus said in Matthew 12:40, "for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." This latest tragedy should serve as a reminder that we should always be vigilant.

Archpastoral Reflections

Family Prayer



This month of January we embark upon our Year of the Family, a period of intensified ministry to families across America. As we begin this very special New Year, it is worthwhile to reflect upon the connection of our own families to the Church, and to consider the extraordinary manner in which the Church influences the growth and development of our families. This reflection constitutes in itself a valuable spiritual exercise for us as Orthodox Christians living in a challenging and complex society.

Our theme for the Year of the Family follows the biblical phrase used by the Apostle Paul, *kat' oikon ecclesia*, "the church in the home" (Romans 16:5,

by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America

Colossians 4:15). This phrase hearkens to the early Christian communities who met in homes for worship, teaching, and fellowship. Here, we see a unique connection between the Church and family life. Like the early Christians, we too are called to cultivate nurturing environments within our own homes that promote a closer, more direct relationship between our family and the Church. This is what is meant by the phrase "connect your family to the Church", which is an important sub-theme for this Year of the Family.

How may we take steps to promote environments within our homes that bring our families closer to the Church? A very practical way to do this is to schedule regular periods of time as families to come together for prayer, even if only for a few moments each morning or evening. A helpful way to promote family prayer is to set aside an area of space within the home exclusively for this purpose. Already, our Archdiocesan Center for Family Care is developing resources to guide families in establishing an iconostasion in the home for this purpose.

An equally important and practical component for connecting your family to the Church is the establishment of a weekly family night. During such a time, families can come together to read the Scriptures and to reflect upon important events happening in the world around us. By extension, parishes should also promote healthy families by conducting a monthly parish family night, a designated period of time where families within the community can come together for prayer, fellowship, and also social outreach activities.

Each of these components are but initial steps in promoting the spiritual health of families and their connection to the Church. They are also components that underscore the tremendous importance of families as essential building blocks of society and the Church. By devoting time this month to reflecting upon the conditions of our own families and their relationship to the Church, we take important steps toward strengthening our connection to the Church and our growth in Christ, the Redeemer of our souls. Moreover, we embark together upon an important and ultimately endless journey of faith as one united Greek Orthodox family in Christ.

As we consider the extraordinary ability of the Church to transform lives and communities, I pray that we continue to reflect upon the tremendous influence of the Church upon our families each and every day. May the love of God strengthen and nurture your families each and every day of this very promising and very special New Year.

St. Michael's Christmas Celebrations



GREEK ORTHODOX residents at St. Michael's Home in Yonkers, N.Y., have a very merry Christmas at the facility. They received a visit from Archbishop Demetrios who celebrated the Divine Liturgy there, assisted by Bishop Andonios of Phasiane, the director. Many of the residents received Holy Communion and later sat to a luncheon with His Eminence.

Archiepiscopal Encyclical

On the Feast of Saint Basil and the New Year

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, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

My Beloved Christians,

As Greek Orthodox faithful we commemorate on the first day of each New Year the life and legacy of Saint Basil the Great, a revered ecumenical Hierarch and Teacher of our Church whose renowned intellectual and spiritual legacy has shone brilliantly for centuries. Today, we particularly remember Saint Basil for his enduring commitment to the development of institutions of care, such as orphanages and hospitals, and to the spiritual and physical health of all persons in need of care.

In light of this remarkable inheritance which we have received as Greek Orthodox Christians, it is appropriate that we begin the New Year by considering the quality and scope of our own Greek Orthodox institutions of care throughout our Archdiocese. One of these institutions, named in tribute of Saint Basil, is our Saint Basil Academy in Garrison, New York. For over fifty years, Saint Basil Academy has provided a home to children and young people from across America, many of whom come from troubled family situations and are in need of a nurturing environment, a place where they can know the peace and the love of Jesus Christ.

Today, in addition to serving as a home for children in need, Saint Basil Academy also plays the equally important role of serving as an administrative home for our new Archdiocesan Center for Family Care. This Center, which is charged with the sacred task of ministering to the diverse needs of Greek Orthodox families throughout America, will occupy a prominent position in our national ministries throughout this New Year, 2005, which we have designated as the Year of the Family. Accordingly, as we affirm the importance of the family as a blessed gift from God, the mission of Saint Basil Academy prompts us to consider the vital importance of children as precious members of our families. It is for this reason why the Academy is a sacred institution of care worthy of its namesake.

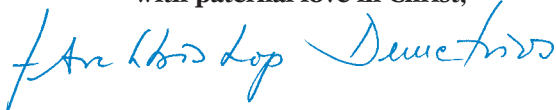
Each year on this day, we are led by our National Ladies Philoptochos Society and the many local Philoptochos chapters in collecting funds for this vital ministry of love. This effort continues to be a tremendous source of support for the Academy.

Thus, as we begin the New Year, and as we distribute pieces of the traditional Vasilopeta in honor of Saint Basil to the members of our communities and homes, let us especially remember the truly outstanding service of care, healing and peace at Saint Basil Academy.

Let us also remember and praise the continued good work of the diligent clergy, staff, and volunteers who oversee the important operations of the Academy. Your contributions to the Academy will truly assist in bringing the love and care of Jesus Christ into the lives of many children who are in need.

I pray that the light of God's love and peace shine upon all of you and your families throughout the New Year, especially upon the children within your homes and communities, and upon all the children who reside at Saint Basil Academy. May this New Year, 2005, be a year of prosperity for all sacred institutions of care throughout our Archdiocese, and may it also be a year of health and love for all families throughout our nation and our world.

With paternal love in Christ,



† Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America

Bishop Andonios to Lead Pilgrimage to Pontos

NEW YORK – Bishop Andonios of Phasiane will lead a pilgrimage from New York to Pontos and Constantinople from June 25 to July 5.

The group will visit the historic cities and shrines of the Pontian Greeks including, Samsunda, Kerasunda, Trapezounda, and Panagia Soumela Monastery.

In Constantinople, they will also visit the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Agia Sophia, Baloukli, Panagia Vlahernon and the Grand Bazaar.

For more information please email contact: Adam Hartofilis at Cloud Tours 718-721-3803, e-mail: Cloudtours@aol.com; or Bishop Andonios at 212-774-0283, e-mail: bishopandonios@goarch.org



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Fr. James Moskovites And Lila Prounis Honored



Fr. Moskovites (left photo) receives the honor from Dr. Calvin O. Butts, president of the Council; present at the event was Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos. The Council of Churches of the City of New York also honored Mrs. Prounis pictured (right photo) with Dr. Calvin O. Butts, and Dr. John E. Hiemstra, executive director.

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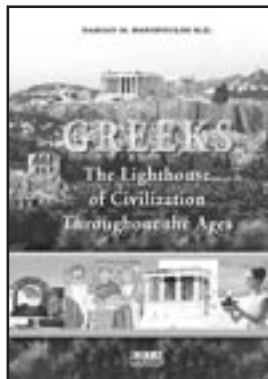
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NEW YORK – Fr. James Moskovites of Annunciation Church in New York, and Lila Prounis, the Archdiocese's Non Governmental Organization representative at the United Nations, were honored by The Council of Churches of the City of New York at its recent annual award and recognition banquet.

The Council honors each year clergy and lay leaders of the City of New York who have shown exceptional leadership skills and outstanding services, and have made a difference in their churches, in the City and in the world.

Fr. Moskovites received The Recognition of Exceptional Ministry Award. Ms. Prounis received The Recognition Award

for her work at the United Nations.

The Council of Churches of the City of New York, the oldest ecumenical organization in the United States, has 29 denominational members and affiliated agencies throughout the five boroughs of New York City.

The Archdiocese is member of the Council represented by Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos.

Many distinguished clergy, governmental representatives and lay persons were in attendance at this auspicious event, including Fay Vasilakis, wife of the Greek ambassador to the United Nations and Greek Consul General Katherine Bouras.

Byzantine Scholar to Deliver Manolis Lectures at PAOI

BERKELEY, Calif. – Fr. Robert Taft, the world's leading expert on Byzantine liturgy and former vice-rector of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome delivered the Paul G. Manolis Distinguished Lecture Series on Jan. 18-20 at the Chapel of the Pacific School of Religion on the campus of the Graduate Theological Union.

The Paul G. Manolis Lectures

This is the second distinguished lecture series delivered under their new name, honoring churchman, community leader, and director of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute, Paul G. Manolis.

The Distinguished Lecture series was

inaugurated in 1988 as a way of bringing to Bay Area the best scholars from throughout the world to speak on topics of concern to the Orthodox Church.

Many of the lectures have been published by InterOrthodox Press, the Institute's publishing arm.

The previous Distinguished Lecturers have been Bishop Kalistos Ware (1988), Fr. John Meyendorff (1989), Jaroslav Pelikan (1990), Metropolitan Methodios Fouyas (1992), Sir Dimitri Obolensky (1994), Lydia Black (1996), Christos Yannaras (1998), Kyriaki Karidoyanes FitzGerald (2000), and Archbishop Anastasios Yannoulatos (2003).

Theological Consultation Meeting at Holy Cross



MEMBERS of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Theological Consultation in North America gathered recently for a three-day session at Holy Cross School of Theology for their semi-annual meeting. Those attending were: (first row, from left) Dr. Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Fr. Thomas FitzGerald, Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh, Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, Fr. Brian Daley, Bishop Demetrios of Xanthos and Sister Mary Jean Goulet. (second row) Fr. John Long, Dr. Paul Meyendorff, Frs. Emmanuel Gratsias and Ronald Roberson. (third row) Fr. Nicholas Apostola, Dr. Thomas Bird, Frs. Robert Stephanopoulos, Peter Galadza, John Gavin, Sidney Griffith, David Petras, Dr. Robert Haddad, Frs. Alexander Golitzin and James Dutko.

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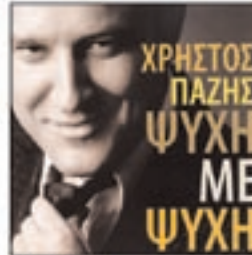
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Ο Αγιασμός των Υδάτων στην πόλη των Θεοφανείων: Παράδοση και Ευλογία

ΤΑΡΙΠΟΝ ΣΠΡΙΝΓΚΣ – Ο 17χρονος Ελληνοαμερικανός Αντριου Μακ Άνταμς, γεννημένος στην Φλόριδα και με καταγωγή από την Κάλυμνο ανέσυρε τον Σταυρό από τα ήρεμα νερά του κολπίσκου «Σπρινγκ Μπαϊγιού» στην εφετινή τελετή κατάδυσης του Σταυρού στην οποία χοροστάτησε ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος και παρευρέθηκαν 20 και πλέον χιλιάδες πιστών και επισκεπτών από την Φλόριδα αλλά και άλλες πολιτείες, όπως η Νέα Υόρκη.

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Το πρωί, μετά την αρχιερατική Θεία Λειτουργία στον Καθεδρικό ναό του Αγίου Νικολάου, ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος μίλησε στο εκκλησίασμα για την εορτή των Θεοφανίων, μια εορτή άμεσα και άρρηκτα συνδεδεμένη με το στοιχείο του νερού και τον αγιασμό των υδάτων και συνέδεσε την εορτή με τις μεγάλες καταστροφές του φαινομένου τσουνάμι στην νοτιοανατολική Ασία που προκλήθηκε από νερό αλλά και την μεγάλη ανάγκη των πληθυσμών εκεί για



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Μετά τον αγιασμό εντός του ναού, σχηματίστηκε πομπή η οποία με επικεφαλής την εικόνα της Βάπτισης του Χριστού κατευθύνθηκε προς την ειδική εξέδρα που είχε στηθεί στο μέσο της προκουμιάς του Μπαϊγιού.

Στην κορυφή της πομπής ήταν τα παιδιά του κοινοτικού σχολείου και ακολουθούσαν οι ιεροπαίδες, η χορωδία και οι ιεροψάλτες. Μαζί με τον Σεβασμιώτατο Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριο στην πομπή βάδιζαν ο Σεβασμιώτατος Μητροπολίτης Ατλάντας κ. Αλέξιος και ο Σεβασμιώτατος Μητροπολίτης Ισπανίας κ. Ελιφάνιος. Επικεφαλής των άλλων κληρικών της περι-

οχής ήταν ο νέος ιερατικός προϊστάμενος του Αγίου Νικολάου Αρχιμανδρίτης Σεβαστιανός Σκορδάλος και την πομπή συμπλήρωναν οι επίσημοι και οι τοπικοί παράγοντες.

Πριν την τελετή ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος διάβασε ειδική προσευχή και ευλόγησε την ομάδα των νεαρών δυτών που αμέσως μετά βούτηξαν στα νερά του γραφικού κόλπου και βιάστηκαν να επιβιβαστούν στις άδειες βάρκες που τους περίμεναν, διαλέγοντας εκείνη την στιγμή όποια θεωρούσαν πιο κατάλληλη και βολική.

Μια 14χρονη κοπέλα, η Κάθριν Βελαντόσια, μέλος της χορωδίας του Καθεδρικού, κρατούσε στις παλάμες της ένα άσπρο περιστέρι, που συμβολίζει το Άγιο Πνεύμα, και εις ανάμνηση της Βάπτισης του Χριστού στις όχθες του Ιορδάνη ετοιμάστηκε να το αφήσει καθώς ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος τελείωνε την ανάγνωση του ιερού Ευαγγελίου.

Τα μάτια χιλιάδων θεατών, δεκάδων φωτογράφων και τηλεοπτικών συνεργείων στράφηκαν τότε προς την μεριά των δυτών που περίμεναν με αγωνία όρθιοι πάνω στις μικρές βάρκες να δουν τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο να ρίχνει τον Σταυρό. Ο νεαρός Αντριου Μακ Άνταμς, πήδησε από την βάρκα στην οποία είχε επιβιβαστεί, μαζί με τους υπόλοιπους δύτες

► **σελ. 16**

ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΒΟΗΘΕΙΑ ΕΝ ΟΨΕΙ ΤΩΝ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΑΣΙΑΣ

30η Δεκεμβρίου 2004

Εύλογητός ὁ Θεός καὶ Πατὴρ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν οἰκτιρῶν καὶ Θεὸς πάσης παρακλήσεως, ὁ παρακαλῶν ἡμᾶς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ δύνασθαι ἡμᾶς παρακαλεῖν τοὺς ἐν πάσῃ θλίψει διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως ἧς παρακαλούμεθα αὐτοῖ ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ· (Β' Κορινθ. 1:3-4).

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τοὺς Μοναχοὺς καὶ Μοναχές, τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ Μέλη τῶν Κοινοτικῶν Συμβουλίων, τὰ Ἡμερήσια καὶ Ἀπογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὴς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴν Νεολαία, τὴς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὀργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμον πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

Προσφιλεῖς μου Χριστιανοί,

Ποιὸς ἀπὸ μᾶς πού ζοῦμε στή χαρά τῶν Ἑορτῶν, καί πού ἔχουμε εὐλογηθῆ μέ τόσο ἀγαλλίαση ψυχῆς καί ἀφθονία δῶρων, δέν συγκλονίσθηκε ἀληθινά καί δέν συγκινήθηκε βαθεῖα ἀπὸ τὴν τεράστια καταστροφή καί τὴν ἐφιαλτικὴ ἀπώλεια τῆς ζωῆς χιλιάδων ἀνθρώπων στήν Ἀσία! Ἐν ριπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ, μιά φυσικὴ καταστροφὴ ἀπίστευτων διαστάσεων ἀφησε στό πέρασμά της ἐρήμωση καί ἀβάστακτη ὀδύνη γιὰ ἀναρίθμητους ἀνθρώπους. Περισσότερα ἀπὸ 130.000 ἄτομα ἔχασαν τὸ πολυτιμώτερο ἀγαθὸ τους, τὴν ἴδια τους τὴν ζωὴ. Στὴν περίπτωσιν τῆς τραγωδίας αὐτῆς ἀντιλαμβάνομεθα πόσο εὐθραυστὴ εἶναι ἡ ζωὴ, καί πόσο ἡ κάθε ἡμέρα εἶναι πράγματι δῶρο ἐκ Θεοῦ.

Ἐν ὄψει τῆς τραγωδίας, ἡ πρώτη καί κύρια ἀπάντησή μας ὡς Ὀρθόδοξοι Χριστιανικῆς κοινότητος, πρέπει νὰ εἶναι ἡ προσευχὴ ὑπὲρ αἰωνίου ἀναπαύσεως τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτῶν πού ἔχασαν τὴν ζωὴ τους, καί ὑπὲρ ἐκ Θεοῦ παρηγορίας καί ἐνισχύσεως αὐτῶν πού ἐπέζησαν τῆς καταστροφῆς. Ὅπως εἶναι γνωστὸ, ἡ μεγάλῃ πλειοψηφεία αὐτῶν πού ἐπέζησαν ἀπὸ τὴν πρωτοφανή συμφορὰ ἀνήκει στοὺς πτωχότερους τῶν πτωχῶν τῆς γῆς. Αὐτοὶ ἀκριβῶς οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἔχασαν ἀκόμη καί τὰ ἐλάχιστα πού εἶχαν.

Ἡ παρηγορία ἐκ Θεοῦ πρέπει νὰ συνοδευθῆ καί ἀπὸ τὴν ψιλαφτητὴ ἔκφραση παρηγορίας τὴν ὁποία μποροῦμε νὰ προσφέρουμε σ' αὐτοὺς πού ἐπέζησαν τοῦ ὀλεθρίου πλήγματος, σ' αὐτοὺς πού τῶρα ἐξαρτῶνται ἀπὸ τὴν βοήθεια πού ὁ κόσμος εἶναι σὲ θέσιν νὰ τοὺς προσφέρῃ. Γιὰ τὴς κοινότητες τῶν περιοχῶν πού ἐπλήγησαν, ἡ Ὀρθόδοξος Ἱ. Μητρόπολις τοῦ Χόνγκ-Κόνγκ καί τῆς Νοτιοανατολικῆς Ἀσίας ἔχει ἤδη ἀρχίσῃ κατάλληλες προσπάθειες βοήθειας. Ἡ IOCC (Διεθνεῖς Ὀρθόδοξες Χριστιανικὲς Φιλανθρωπίες) ἡ ὁποία ἀποτελεῖ ὄργανωση τῆς SCOBA (Μόνιμος Ἐπιτροπὴ τῶν Κανονικῶν Ὀρθόδοξων Ἐπισκόπων Ἀμερικῆς) προσφέρει ἐπίσης εἰδικὴ βοήθεια στὶς περιοχὰς πού ἐπλήγησαν ἀπὸ τοὺς σεισμούς καί τὸ φαινόμενο Tsunami. Ἐν τούτοις, εἶναι ἐξ ἴσου σημαντικὸ καί ὅλοι ἐμεῖς διὰ τῆς προσευχῆς καί διὰ τῆς οἰκονομικῆς βοήθειας νὰ προσφέρουμε τὴν συνεισφορὰ μας σὲ ὅλους αὐτοὺς πού ὑπῆρξαν θύματα τῆς ἀπίθανης τραγωδίας.

Γι' αὐτὸν τὸν λόγο, καί ἐξ ὀνόματος τῆς Ἐπαρχιακῆς μας Συνόδου, θερμότητα παρακλῶ ὅλους τοὺς Ἑλληνορθόδοξους μας πιστοὺς τῆς Ἀμερικῆς νὰ ἀπαντήσουμε μέ ἄκρα γενναιοδωρία σ' αὐτὴ τὴν ἐκκλήσιν κατὰ τὴν περιφορὰ εἰδικοῦ δίσκου τὴν Κυριακὴ 9 Ἰανουαρίου 2005 σὲ ὅλες τὴς ἐνορίες μας ἐν Ἀμερικῇ. Οἱ φιλόνητες προσφορὰς σας πρέπει νὰ σταλοῦν τὸ ταχύτερο στὴν Ἱερὰ Ἀρχιεπισκοπὴ μέ τὴν ἀποκλειστικὴ ἔνδειξη «Γιὰ τὸ Ταμεῖο Βοηθείας Ἀσιατικῆς Καταστροφῆς».

Γνωρίζοντας τὴν ἀπεριόριστη γενναιοδωρία σας καί τὴν μόνιμη πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγάπη σας, εἴμεθα βέβαιοι ὅτι θὰ κάμετε πᾶν τὸ δυνατόν γιὰ νὰ προσφέρετε ὅσο πῶς μεγάλη ἀνακούφιση καί παρηγορία δύνασθε στοὺς ἐλαχίστους τῶν ἀδελφῶν μας, πού εἶναι ἀδελφοὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Ματθ. 25:40) καί γιὰ νὰ χαρίσετε ἀκτίνας φωτὸς ἀγάπης σ' αὐτὴν τὴν σκοτεινὴ ὥρα τῆς συμφορᾶς. Ἄς βοηθήσουμε ὥστε αὐτοὶ πού ἐπέζησαν τῆς ἐπιδρομῆς τοῦ κύματος τοῦ θανάτου καί τῆς καταστροφῆς νὰ νοιώσουν τὸ παρήγορο ἀγκάλισμα τῶν κυμάτων τῆς ἀγάπης καί τῆς στοργῆς.

Μέ πατρικὴ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπη,

† ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής Δημήτριος

Ο Αγιασμός των Υδάτων στην πόλη των Θεοφανείων: Παράδοση και Ευλογία

► σελ. 15

και κατευθύνθηκε προς το σημείο που είδε να πέφτει ο Σταυρός. Όπως είπε μετά, όταν βούτηξε δεν διέκρινε από την επιφάνεια του νερού τον Σταυρό αλλά μόλις πλησίασε αισθάνθηκε κάτι και πρόλαβε να τον σφίξει στα χέρια του με όση δύναμη διέθετε. Όταν πλέον τον ανέσυρε, οι διοργανωτές φώναξαν δυνατά το όνομα του και ένας-ένας όλοι οι δύτες έσπευσαν κατόπιν να τον αγκαλιάσουν και του έδιναν συγχαρητήρια, ενώ ασπάζόταν τον Σταυρό.

Ακολουθώντας πιστά την παράδοση, ο νικητής συγκινημένος και κρατώντας ψηλά τον Σταυρό προχώρησε αμέσως μετά προς την εξέδρα όπου βρισκόταν ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος και τρέμοντας γονάτισε μπροστά του για να δεχθεί την ευλογία του και στην συνέχεια να δεχτεί τα φλας των φωτογράφων.

Η μητέρα του Αφροδίτη Μακ Άνταμς, που κατάγεται από την Κάλυμνο, δεν μπόρεσε να κρύψει την συγκίνηση της και έτρεξε να τον αγκαλιάσει.

Αργότερα, όταν η ομάδα των δυτών επέστρεψε στο ναό ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος πρόσφερε στον Άντριου Μακ Άνταμς ένα χρυσό σταυρό και στους υπόλοιπους ένα δίπτυχο με εικόνες.

Η εορτή των Θεοφανείων και ο Αγιασμός των Υδάτων στο «ελληνικό χωριό» Τάρπον Σπρινγκς είναι η μεγαλύτερη και μαζικότερη εορταστική τελετή της κατάδυσης του Τιμίου Σταυρού εκτός Ελλάδος και συγκεντρώνει κάθε χρόνο –τα τελευταία 99 χρόνια– χιλιάδες προσκυνητές από όλη την



ΔΗΜ. ΠΑΝΑΓΟΣ

Οι νεαροί βουτηχτές στο Τάρπον Σπρινγκς παίρνουν την ευλογία του Αρχιεπισκόπου Δημητρίου λίγο πριν τη μεγάλη στιγμή της κατάδυσης του Τιμίου Σταυρού.

Αμερική. Φέτος παρέστησαν μεταξύ άλλων ο πρέσβης της Ελλάδος κ. Γεώργιος Σαββαΐδης, η δήμαρχος του Τάρπον Σπρινγκς κα Μπέβερλι Μπιλέρης καθώς και ο ομοσπονδιακός βουλευτής κ. Μάϊκλ Μπιλιράκης, ο αναπληρωτής Γενικός Διευθυντής της Γενικής Γραμματείας Αποδήμου Ελληνισμού κ. Γεώργιος Μαρκάκος και οι πρόεδροι των Ομοσπονδιών Ελληνικών Σωματείων Φλόριδας και Νέας Υόρκης. Μιχάλης Σέρβος και Νίκος Διαμαντίδης.

Λίγο μετά το μεσημέρι, στο γειτο-

νικό με το Μπαϊγιού πάρκο «Κρέγκ Πάρκ», αντήχησαν ήχοι ελληνικοί, ήχοι παραδοσιακής μουσικής καθώς πολλά χορευτικά συγκροτήματα από διάφορα μέρη έλαβαν μέρος στο καθιερωμένο φεστιβάλ.

Οι εκδηλώσεις, που διοργανώνονται με την ευκαιρία των Θεοφανείων ξεκίνησαν από την παραμονή, με το επίσημο δείπνο που διοργάνωσε η ΑΧΕΠΑ και φέτος πραγματοποιήθηκε στο νεότερο κοινοτικό κέντρο που φέρει τα ονόματα των δωρητών: «Άλεξ και Φέϊ Σπανού –

Μάϊκλ και Μαρία Πάλπας». Στο δείπνο παρευρέθηκε ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος, ο βουλευτής κ. Μάϊκλ Μπιλιράκης και ο πρόεδρος της ΑΧΕΠΑ κ. Φράνκλιν Μανιός.

Με το Μετάλλιο της Ελευθερίας της ΑΧΕΠΑ τιμήθηκε ο ελληνοαμερικανός αντιναύαρχος ε.α. του αμερικανικού ναυτικού Μάϊκλ Καλίρης. Εξ άλλου, ο καθιερωμένος χορός για την ημέρα των Θεοφανείων διεξήχθη φέτος στο κοινοτικό κέντρο, το βράδυ της Παρασκευής 7 Ιανουαρίου και είχε ιδιαίτερη επιτυχία. Κοινή είναι πάντως η πεποίθηση ότι με την ευκαιρία των 100 χρόνων, που θα γιορταστούν σε πανηγυρικό κλίμα το 2006, ενδέχεται να παραστεί στην τελετή της κατάδυσης και ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης κ. Βαρθολομαίος.

Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος κ. Δημήτριος έφτασε στο αεροδρόμιο της Τάμπα το μεσημέρι της Τετάρτης 5 Ιανουαρίου και κατευθύνθηκε προς το γραφικό Τάρπον Σπρινγκς όπου και επισκέφθηκε το απογευματινό σχολείο της Κοινότητας του Αγίου Νικολάου. Εκεί, αφού συνομίλησε με τους μαθητές δέχθηκε εκ μέρους τους χρηματικό ποσό 230,75 δολαρίων, προσφορά τους στο ταμείο για την βοήθεια των θυμάτων του τσουνάμι στην Νοτιοανατολική Ασία.

Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος εξέφρασε την χαρά του και την ικανοποίησή του για την προσφορά των μικρών μαθητών και τους ευχαρίστησε για το παράδειγμα ανθρωπισμού και αλληλεγγύης που δίνουν σε όλους τους συνανθρώπους τους.

Ο ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΔΙΟΡΙΣΕ ΝΕΟ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΗ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ – Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος ανακοίνωσε στις 7 Ιανουαρίου το διορισμό του Δρ. Ιωάννου Ευθυμιόπουλου ως διευθυντού του Τμήματος Ελληνικής Παιδείας της Ελληνικής Ορθοδόξου Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής.

Την ανακοίνωση του διορισμού του κ. Ευθυμιόπουλου, ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος κ. Δημήτριος συνόδευσε με την ακόλουθη δήλωση: «Η ανάληψη της διεύθυνσης του Τμήματος Ελληνικής Παιδείας από τον Δρα Ιωάννη Ευθυμιόπουλο αποτελεί σημαντικό γεγονός στην ιστορία της προσφοράς της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής στην Ελληνική Παιδεία και τον Ελληνικό Πολιτισμό. Ο Δρ. Ευθυμιόπουλος θα προσφέρει πολύτιμες υπηρεσίες λόγω της πλουσιοπάτης εκπαιδευτικής του εμπειρίας και του εκτεταμένου έργου του στον τομέα εκπαιδευτικών προγραμμάτων εντός και εκτός του Ελλαδικού χώρου. Η άμεση γνώση του ομογενειακού κόσμου της Αμερικής αποτελεί ένα επί πλέον αποφασιστικό πλεονέκτημα το οποίο εγγυάται την καρποφόρο διακονία του στον χώρο της Ελληνικής παιδείας της Ομογενείας».

Με την ανάθεση της Διεύθυνσης Παιδείας στον Δρα Ευθυμιόπουλο, ο οποίος ανέλαβε καθήκοντα αμέσως, και την συνεχιζόμενη δημιουργική προσφορά της κυρίας Μαρίας Μακεδών και άλλων συνεργατών, το Τμήμα Ελληνικής Παιδείας αποκτά δυνατότητες ευρύτερης προσφοράς και δυναμικής εργασίας στο νευραλγικό τομέα της Ομογενειακής Παιδείας.

ΒΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΑ ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ

Ο Δρ. Ιωάννης Ευθυμιόπουλος



ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΤΗΣ

Στην έδρα της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής πραγματοποιήθηκε πρόσφατα ο ετήσιος διαγωνισμός ορθογραφίας (spelling bee) με την συμμετοχή μαθητών από τα ημερήσια σχολεία της Αρχιεπισκοπικής περιφέρειας. Οι μικροί διαγωνιζόμενοι με την κ. Μαρία Μακεδών και τον κ. Thomas DeMarco, διευθυντή του "Σχολείου Δημήτριος και Γεωργία Καθοσιδή" του Brooklyν.

γεννήθηκε στον Καρδαμά της Ηλείας. Το 1968 επεράτωσε τις Πανεπιστημιακές του σπουδές στο Αριστοτέλειο Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλονίκης.

Το 1984 συμπλήρωσε με άριστα μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές παιδαγωγικής επιπέδου Masters στη Σχολή Επιμόρφωσης του Υπουργείου Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων και το 1988 ανεκνήρυσθη διδάκτωρ της Σχολής Θετικών Επιστημών του Αριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης.

Ο Δρ. Ευθυμιόπουλος διαθέτει ευρεία διδακτική, διοικητική, παιδαγωγική, συμβουλευτική και καθοδη-

γητική εμπειρία στην Ελλάδα, στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες, στη Γερμανία και το Βέλγιο. Έχει διδάξει σε διάφορες βαθμίδες εκπαίδευσης όπως στο Πειραματικό Σχολείο και στο Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο της Θεσσαλονίκης, στο Αριστοτέλειο Πανεπιστήμιο και στην Παιδαγωγική Ακαδημία Θεσσαλονίκης καθώς και σε διάφορα γυμνάσια και λύκεια.

Έως πρόσφατα ο Δρ. Ευθυμιόπουλος διετέλεσε Σχολικός Σύμβουλος-Πάρεδρος του Παιδαγωγικού Ινστιτούτου της Περιφερειακής Διεύθυνσης πρωτοβάθμιας και δευτεροβάθμιας εκ-

παίδευσης Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας.

Από τον Νοέμβριο του 1998 έως τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2002 διετέλεσε Συντονιστής Εκπαίδευσης Εξωτερικού στο Γραφείο Παιδείας του Γενικού Προξενείου της Ελλάδος στο Σικάγο.

Κατά την διάρκεια της υπηρεσίας του στις Η.Π.Α., ο Δρ. Ευθυμιόπουλος συνδιοργάνωσε με την Ιερά Επισκοπή Σικάγου επιμορφωτικά σεμινάρια για τους δασκάλους των κοινοτικών σχολείων σε πολλές ενορίες και σχολεία και είχε την ευκαιρία να γνωρίσει εκ του σύνεγγυς τις ιδιομορφίες του ελληνοαμερικανικού εκπαιδευτικού συστήματος στις Η.Π.Α.

Εξ' άλλου ο Δρ. Ευθυμιόπουλος υπηρέτησε ως Σχολικός Σύμβουλος-Πάρεδρος του Παιδαγωγικού Ινστιτούτου της Περιφερειακής Διεύθυνσης δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης των Νομών Πέλλας και Ημαθίας (1994-98) και ως Υπεύθυνος του Ελληνικού τμήματος για την απόκτηση του Baccalaureate του Ευρωπαϊκού Σχολείου Βρυξελλών (1989-94).

Από τον Μάρτιο του 1981 έως τον Ιούνιο του 1982 με υποτροφία του Γερμανικού Ινστιτούτου Goethe, παρακολούθησε την φοίτηση Ελλήνων μαθητών σε Γερμανικά σχολεία της περιοχής του Μονάχου και κατά το χρονικό διάστημα 1978-81 διετέλεσε προϊστάμενος των Γραφείων Διεύθυνσης Δευτεροβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Θεσσαλονίκης.

Ο Δρ. Ευθυμιόπουλος συνοδεύεται από την σύζυγό του Αθανασία Πρωίου Ευθυμιόπουλου.

Έχουν δυο ενήλικα παιδιά, το ένα από τα οποία ζει στο Σικάγο και το άλλο στη Ρώμη.

Εξεδήμησε προς Κύριον ο Μητροπολίτης Αγίου Φραγκίσκου Αντώνιος

ΑΓΙΟΣ ΦΡΑΓΚΙΣΚΟΣ – Αλεβίωσε ανήμερα Χριστούγεννα 25 Δεκεμβρίου 2004, σε ηλικία 69 ετών ο Μητροπολίτης Αγίου Φραγκίσκου Αντώνιος μετά από σύντομη ασθένεια. Ο Μητροπολίτης Αντώνιος σύμφωνα με ιατρική διάγνωση του περασμένου Νοεμβρίου είχε προσβληθεί από σπάνια μορφή καρκίνου γνωστή ως Berkitt's lymphoma.

Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος, ο οποίος είχε επισκεφθεί τον μακαριστό ιεράρχη στο νοσοκομείο του Sacramento μόλις δυο μέρες πριν, βαθιά συγκινημένος ανήγγειλε το γεγονός του θανάτου και προέβη στην ακόλουθη δήλωση:

«Σήμερα, το εσπέρας των Χριστουγέννων, ένας επιφανέστατος και προσφιλέστατος Ιεράρχης της Εκκλησίας μας στην Αμερική, ο Μητροπολίτης Αγίου Φραγκίσκου Αντώνιος, εκλήθη από τον Κύριο ημών Ιησού Χριστό να αφήσει αυτόν το φθαρτό κόσμο να συναντήσει τον Κύριο και είναι για πάντα μαζί Του εν σκηναίς αγίων και δικαίων. Η ζωή του ενεσάρκωσε την διακήρυξη του Αποστόλου Παύλου "εάν τε ζώμεν, τω Κυρίω ζώμεν, εάν τε αποθνήσκωμεν, τω Κυρίω αποθνήσκομεν" (Ρωμ. 14:8)

»Βαθιά θλιμμένοι από τον αιφνίδιο χωρισμό, παρηγορούμεθα από την βεβαιότητα ότι ο προσφιλής μας αδελφός βρίσκεται με τον Θεό, έχοντας αφήσει πίσω του μία πολύτιμη κληρονομιά πλήρους αφοσίωσης στον Χριστό και στην Εκκλησία Του, ένα καταπληκτικό επισκοπικό έργο, μια αξιοσημείωτη έντονη αγάπη για τους ανθρώπους, ένα διακαές πάθος για την Ορθοδοξία και μια έκδηλη χαρά για πολυδιάστατη διακονία. Είμεθα βέβαιοι ότι τώρα η Ιερά Μητρόπολη του Αγίου Φραγκίσκου έχει ένα μόνιμο και άξιο πρόσωπο παρά τω Θεώ στο πρόσωπο του εκδημήσαντος Ιεράρχη της και προσευχώμεθα εντόμως για την ανάπαυση της ψυχής του μεταξύ των μεγάλων αγίων και ποιμένων της θριαμβευούσης Εκκλησίας εν τοις Ουρανοίς»

Η σωρός του μακαριστού Μητροπολίτου Αγίου Φραγκίσκου κυρού Αντωνίου ετέθη σε λαϊκό προσκύνημα την Δευτέρα 27 Δεκεμβρίου και την Τρίτη 28 Δεκεμβρίου στο παρεκκλήσιο του Καθεδρικού ναού του Ευαγγελισμού. Το εσπέρας της 28ης Δεκεμβρίου προεξάρχοντας του Σεβασμιωτάτου Αρχιεπισκόπου Αμερικής κ. Δημητρίου και παρούσα πολλών εκατοντάδων πιστών και των μελών της οικογενείας του μεταστάνας ιεράρχου εψάλη τρισάγιο. Ακολούθησαν σύντομες αλλά συγκινητικές αναφορές στη ζωή και το έργο του Μητροπολίτου Αντωνίου. Μεταξύ των ομιλητών ήταν ο αντιπρόεδρος του Μητροπολιτικού Συμβουλίου της Μητροπόλεως Αγίου Φραγκίσκου Θεοφάνης Οικονομίδης, ο πρόεδρος του τοπικού Συνδέσμου Κληρικών π. Θεόδωρος Dogrance, οι Γενικοί Πρόξενοι της Ελλάδος και της Κύπρου Δημήτριος Τουλούπας και Νικόλαος Θεοφάνους, αντίστοιχα και ο Θεοφιλέστατος Επίσκοπος Ολύμπου Άνθιμος, ο οποίος βρέθηκε σύμβουλος και αρωγός στο έργο του μακαριστού ιεράρχη τα τελευταία οκτώ χρόνια. Ο Μητροπολίτης Τορόντο κ. Σωτήριος εκπροσώπησε τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη κ. Βαρθολομαίο και μετέφερε την βαθιά θλίψη του ίδιου και του Παναγιωτάτου. Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ.



Δημήτριος ανέγνωσε συλλυπητήριο μήνυμα του δημάρχου του Αγίου Φραγκίσκου Gavin Newsom και μίλησε για τον εκλιπόντα ιεράρχη τονίζοντας ότι επρόκειτο για άνθρωπο που απέπνεε διαρκώς το μήνυμα της ζωής.

Χιλιάδες πιστοί κατέκλυσαν από νωρίς το πρωί της Τετάρτης 29 Δεκεμβρίου, τον Καθεδρικό Ναό της Αναλήψεως στο Oakland, όπου πραγματοποιήθηκε η εξόδιος ακολουθία, για να αποτίσουν τον ύστατο φόρο τιμής στον Μητροπολίτη τους, ο οποίος ηγήθηκε για 25 χρόνια των ελληνορθόξων στις επτά δυτικές πολιτείες των Ηνωμένων Πολιτειών.

Ο πρώτος τη τάξει ιεράρχης της Ιεράς Επαρχιακής Συνόδου, Μητροπολίτης Σικάγου Ιάκωβος προεξήρχε της Αρχιερατικής Θείας Λειτουργίας βοηθούμενος υπό πέντε κληρικών της Μητροπόλεως Αγίου Φραγκίσκου.

Μετά το τέλος της Θείας Λειτουργίας, στις 11:00 π.μ. σχηματίστηκε πομπή από το παραπλεύρως κοινοτικό κέντρο και κατευθύνθηκε στον ναό. Προηγείτο τιμητικό άγημα νέων με παραδοσιακές στολές, ιερόπαιδες με τα εξαπτέρυγα και ακολουθούσαν οι Αρχοντες του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου και εκπρόσωποι οργανώσεων και ιδρυμάτων της Αρχιεπισκοπής, ο κλήρος της Ιεράς Μητροπόλεως, Μοναχοί και Μοναχές, εκπρόσωποι άλλων ορθόξων Εκκλησιών και άλλων χριστιανικών δογμάτων, οι Ιεράρχες, οι διάκονοι και ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος ο οποίος προεξήρχε της εξοδίου ακολουθίας. Συμμετείχαν ακόμη ο Μητροπολίτης Τορόντο Σωτήριος εκπροσωπώντας τον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη και οι Μητροπολίτες Σικάγου Ιάκωβος, Ντένβερ Ησαΐας, Ατλάντας Αλέξιος, Ντιτρόιτ Νικόλαος και Μπουένος Άϊρες Ταράσιος καθώς και οι επισκοποι Ολύμπου Άνθιμος, Τρωάδος Σάββας και Κρατείας Γεράσιμος. Πλέον των εκατό κληρικών, διακόνων και πρεσβυτέρων έψαλλαν την νεκρώσιμη ακολουθία συνειπικουρούμενοι από μικτή χορωδία της Μητροπόλεως. Το λαϊκό στοιχείο της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής εκπροσώπησαν ο αντιπρόεδρος του Αρχιεπισκοπικού Συμβουλίου Εμμανουήλ Τζαχάρης και η πρόεδρος της Εθνικής Φιλοπτώχου Αδελφότητας Γεωργία Σκιαδά. Την νεολαία που τόσο πολύ



ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ

ΚΑΤΑΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΚΛΟΓΙΜΩΝ ΥΠΟΨΗΦΙΩΝ ΔΙΑ ΘΕΣΙΝ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΟΥ ή ΒΟΗΘΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ

Συμφώνως προς το Άρθρο 14 του Συντάγματος της Ελληνικής Ορθόδοξης Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής και τις σχετικές διατάξεις των Κανονισμών της Ελληνικής Ορθόδοξης Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής (Συμβουλευτικός και γνωμοδοτικός ρόλος αφορών εις τις Αρχιερατικές Εκλογές) παρατίθενται κατωτέρω τα ονόματα των Βοηθών Επισκόπων (κατά πρεσβεία χειροτονίας εις το Επισκοπικό αξίωμα) και άλλων κληρικών (κατ' αλφαβητική σειρά), τα οποία αποτελούν τον παρόντα κατάλογο των εκλογίμων υποψηφίων διά θέσιν Μητροπολίτου ή Βοηθού Επισκόπου, ανάλογα με την περίπτωση. Ο παρών κατάλογος έχει εγκριθεί δεόντως υπό του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου.

ΚΑΤΑΛΟΓΟΣ ΥΠΟΨΗΦΙΩΝ
ΠΡΟΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΑΤΕΪΑΝ ΚΛΗΡΙΚΩΝ
της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής
23 Δεκεμβρίου 2004

(*) Χηρεύσαντες

Θεοφιλέστατος Επίσκοπος Ξάνθου Δημήτριος
Θεοφιλέστατος Επίσκοπος Τρωάδος Σάββας
Θεοφιλέστατος Επίσκοπος Κρατείας Γεράσιμος
Θεοφιλέστατος Επίσκοπος Φασιανής Αντώνιος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Ιγνάτιος Αποστολόπουλος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Τιμόθεος Μπακάκος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Κωνσταντίνος Μπεμπής (*)
Οσ. Πρεσβύτερος Κυπριανός Μπουμπούτσος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Ιωάννης Α. Κωνσταντίνου
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Ιωακείμ Κοτσώνης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Νεκτάριος Κοτρώτσος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Βασίλειος Φλιώνης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Δαμασκηνός Γκανάς
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Αναστάσιος Γ. Γκαραμπόα
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Νικόλαος Γκράφ
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Ιωάννης Χαιρόπουλος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Νικόλαος Hughes
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Δημήτριος Καντζάβελος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Δ. Γαβριήλ Καράμπης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Αλέξανδρος Κίλε
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Φραγκούλης Κιρλαγκίτης (*)
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Λουκάς Κοτζαμπασάκης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Κωνσταντίνος Κωσταρής (*)
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Κύριλλος Loeb
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Γεράσιμος Μακρής
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Σταυροφόρος Μαμάης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Κωνσταντίνος Μερσινάς
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Κωνσταντίνος Μωράλης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Μακάριος Νιάκαρος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Γεώργιος Νίκας
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Ευγένιος Παπαγιαννάκος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Βασίλειος Πεντερίδης
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Σεραφείμ Πούλος
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Πολύκαρπος Ραμέας
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Γεράσιμος Ρασσιάς (*)
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Νεκτάριος Σέρφες
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Σεβαστιανός Σκορδαλλός
Παν. Αρχιμανδρίτης Ιωάννης Τράβης

Σχόλια σχετικά με οιονδήποτε εκ των υποψηφίων του καταλόγου πρέπει να αποσταλούν γραπτώς και με την σημείωσιν "STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL" στη διεύθυνση:

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
8 East 79 Street
New York, NY 10021

Τα σχόλια πρέπει να παραληφθούν όχι αργότερα από τις 7 Φεβρουαρίου 2005.

Εκ του Γραφείου του Σεβασμιωτάτου Αρχιεπισκόπου Αμερικής

Επέστρεψε στην Κρήτη η "Βάπτιση" του El Greco

Την πολυτέλεια να διαθέτει τους δύο από τους συνολικά έξι πίνακες του Δομήνικου Θεοτοκόπουλου που υπάρχουν σε όλη την Ελλάδα έχει το Ηράκλειο, καθώς στη Δότζια (δημαρχείο) έφτασε "Η Βάπτιση του Χριστού", που αποκτήθηκε σε δημοπρασία του οίκου Christie's στις αρχές του περασμένου Δεκεμβρίου. Η ασφαλής συσκευασία του πίνακα ανοιχτηκε, παρουσία του δημάρχου Γιάννη Κουράκη και πολλών δημοτικών παραγόντων, που δεν έκρυβαν την ικανοποίησή τους για τον «επαναπατρισμό» του έργου του Δομήνικου Θεοτοκόπουλου.

Ο πίνακας για ένα μικρό διάστημα και για ευνόητους λόγους θα φυλαχθεί σε ασφαλές και μυστικό σημείο, ενώ στη συνέχεια θα εκτεθεί για να τον δουν από κοντά οι Ηρακλειώτες και οι επισκέπτες της πόλης. Δεν αποκλείεται μάλιστα να εκτεθεί παράλληλα με το άλλο έργο του μεγάλου Έλληνα ζωγράφου, που βρίσκεται στο ιστορικό μουσείο Ηρακλείου. Για το λόγο αυτό, η δημοτική αρχή βρίσκεται σε συνεννόηση με το διευθυντή του μουσείου, Αλέξη Καλοκαϊρινό.

Επίσης, ο δήμαρχος έδωσε εντολή στο δημοτικό σύμβουλο Γιάννη Σερπετσιδάκη να διερευνήσει τη δυνατότητα της από κοινού έκθεσης όλων των έργων του Δομήνικου Θεοτοκόπουλου που βρίσκονται στην Ελλάδα, η έκθεση δε αυτή να ξεκινήσει από το Ηράκλειο. Ο πίνακας κόστισε συνολικά στο Δήμο



Ηρακλείου (συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των ασφαλιστρών και των εξόδων μεταφοράς) 1.162.000 ευρώ. Σύμφωνα μάλιστα με την καθηγήτρια Ιστορίας της Βυζαντινής Τέχνης του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας, Μαρία Βασιλάκη, ο πίνακας που απέκτησε ο Δήμος Ηρακλείου είναι μέρος τρίπτυχου έργου, που ο μεγάλος Κρητικός ζωγράφος ολοκλήρωσε ανάμεσα στο 1560 και 1570, περίοδο κατά την οποία βρισκόταν στην Ιταλία. Η ίδια υποστηρίζει ότι το δεύτερο μέρος αυτού του έργου βρίσκεται στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Τορόντο, ενώ καταβάλλονται προσπάθειες να εντοπισθεί και το τρίτο. Ο κ. Κουράκης δήλωσε ότι ο πίνακας ήρθε στο Ηράκλειο, αφού διασφαλίστηκε από κάθε άποψη η γνησιότητά του, ενώ παράλληλα ευχαρίστησε όλα τα μέλη της Επιτροπής Διεκδίκησης, που ήταν μάλιστα παρόντα, αλλά και όλους όσους συνέβαλαν στη συγκέντρωση του ποσού, ειδικότερα δε το ζεύγος Θεόδωρου και Γιάννας Αγγελοπούλου, για τη μεγάλη προσφορά τους, που έφτασε στα 700.000 ευρώ. Προσφορά για την οποία θα τιμηθούν από το Δήμο Ηρακλείου σε ειδική τελετή.

Πάνδημη η κηδεία του Μητροπολίτου Αντωνίου

► σελ. 17

αγάπησε ο Μητροπολίτης Αντώνιος, εκπροσώπησε το πολυμελές τιμητικό άγημα με παραδοσιακές ενδυμασίες ενώ νέοι και νέες με ενδυμασίες της Κρήτης στάθηκαν ως τιμητική φρουρά παραπλεύρως της σορού του Μητροπολίτη Αντωνίου καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ακολουθίας.

Μετά το πέρας της ακολουθίας ο π. Ιωάννης Μπάκας, ιερατικός προϊστάμενος του Καθεδρικού Ναού της Αγίας Σοφίας στο Λος Άντζελες και ο π. Στυλιανός Κυριάκου, ιερατικός προϊστάμενος του Καθεδρικού Ναού του Ευαγγελισμού στον Άγιο Φραγκίσκο μίλησαν για τη ζωή και το έργο του εκλιπόντος Μητροπολίτη τους. Συλλυπητήρια απηύθυναν ο επίσκοπος John C. Wester, εκπρόσωπος του ρωμαιοκαθολικού Αρχιεπισκόπου του Αγ. Φραγκίσκου William Levada και ο επισκοπελιανός επίσκοπος της πόλης William Swing. Συγκινητική ήταν και η αναφορά του Θεοφ. Επισκόπου Ολύμπου Άνθιμου ο οποίος δήλωσε ότι θα εκπληρώσει την επιθυμία του εκλιπόντος να τοποθετηθεί στο φέρετρό του λίγο χώμα που εκείνος είχε φέρει από την ιδιαίτερη πατρίδα του την Κρήτη. Ο εκπρόσωπος του Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχου Μητροπολίτη Τορόντο Σωτήριος μετέφερε τις συλλυπητήριες ευχές του Παναγιώτατου και μοιράστηκε με το εκκλησίασμα μνήμες και σκέψεις για το εκλιπόντα ιεράρχη.

Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριος εκφώνησε τον επικήδειο λόγο κατά τον οποίο εξέφρασε την ευγνωμοσύνη της Εκκλησίας προς όλους όσους συμπαραστάθηκαν στον Μητροπολίτη Αντώνιο τις τελευταίες εβδομάδες και ημέρες της ζωής του, τους λαϊκούς και κληρικούς, τους ιατρούς και το λοιπό νοσηλευτικό προσωπικό του Νοσοκομείου του Σακραμέντο.

Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος στάθηκε σε τρεις πτυχές της κληρονομιάς που αφήνει πίσω του ο Μητροπολίτης Αντώνιος, μια κληρονομιά πίστεως ως δημιουργική δύναμη οικοδομής και σποράς (Ιερεμ. 1:9-10), μια κληρονομιά πίστεως ως ελευθερίας, απελευθέρωσης και ανεξαρτησίας (Γαλατ. 5:13) και μια κληρονομιά πίστεως ως χαρά ζωής. (Ιωαν. 16:11)

Στη συνέχεια σχηματίστηκε μια εντυπωσιακή αυτοκινητοπομπή, η οποία συνοδεία μοτοσυκλετιστών της αστυνομίας που σταματούσαν την κυκλοφορία των λοιπών οχημάτων καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της διαδρομής, οδήγησε στο Ελληνορθόδοξο Κοιμητήριο του Αγίου Φραγκίσκου, στην Colma, όπου πραγματοποιήθηκε ο ενταφιασμός. Σύμφωνα με την επιθυμία του μακαριστού ιεράρχη η σορός του θα ενταφιασθεί μόνιμως στο χώρο του Ορθόδοξου Συνεδριακού Κέντρου του Αγίου Νικολάου και της Μονής της Ζωοδόχου Πηγής που βρίσκεται στους πρόποδες των βουνών της Νεβάδας μόλις αυτό καταστεί δυνατό.

Ο εκλιπών απολείπει τις αδελφές του Ελένη Κονιάρη και Χρυσούλα Αντωνοπούλου, την νύφη του Γιαννούλα Γεργιανάκη, δώδεκα ανίψια και ανιψιές και τις οικογενειές τους.

Ο Μητροπολίτης Αντώνιος ενέθρονίσθη ως ο πρώτος επίσκοπος της νεοϋδριθείας τότε Επισκοπής Αγίου Φραγκίσκου στις 7 Ιουνίου 1979. Υπήρξε

της ως Επίσκοπος και αργότερα ως Μητροπολίτης Αγίου Φραγκίσκου πλέον των 25 ετών έχοντας την πνευματική εποπτεία των δυτικών πολιτειών της Καλιφορνίας, Αριζόνας, Νεβάδας, Όρεγκον, Ουάσινγκτον, Αλάσκας και Χαβάης.

Ο μακαριστός Μητροπολίτης Αντώνιος γεννήθηκε στις 2 Μαρτίου 1935 στο χωριό Αυγενική της Κρήτης, το τρίτο παιδί μεταξύ των έξι της οικογενείας του, και μεγάλωσε μέσα στα δύσκολα χρόνια της Ναζιστικής κατοχής. Εφοίτησε στην Εκκλησιαστική Σχολή Χανίων Κρήτης και στη συνέχεια ενεγράφη στην διεθνώς ονομαστή Θεολογική Σχολή της Χάλκης από όπου και απεφοίτησε το 1960. Εχειροτονήθηκε διάκονος στις 27 Ιουλίου 1958, και πρεσβύτερος στις 29 Σεπτεμβρίου 1960.

Μετά την εις πρεσβύτερον χειροτονία του ήρθε στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες με σκοπό να συνεχίσει τις σπουδές του και να υπηρετήσει την Εκκλησία στην χώρα αυτή. Ενώσω υπηρετούσε ως εφημέριος απέκτησε το πτυχίο Masters of Divinity από το Πανεπιστήμιο Yale και ακολούθησε διδακτορικές σπουδές στο τομέα της Σύγχρονης Εκκλησιαστικής Ιστορίας στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Σικάγου, και στο τομέα Ρωσικής και Βαλκανικής Ιστορίας στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Ουϊσκόνσιν. Το 1974, διορίστηκε προϊστάμενος στον Ιερό Καθεδρικό Ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου στο Μόντρεαλ του Καναδά όπου και παρέμεινε μέχρι την εις επίσκοπον εκλογή του στις 21 Μαΐου 1978. Ως Τιτουλάριος Επίσκοπος Αμισσού υπηρέτησε την όγδοη αρχιεπισκοπική περιφέρεια του Ντένβερ μέχρι την εκλογή του ως Επίσκοπος Αγίου Φραγκίσκου το 1979.

Κατά την διάρκεια της ποιμαντορίας στην Μητρόπολη του Αγίου Φραγκίσκου δημιούργησε μια καταπληκτική επέκταση διακονιών και προγραμμάτων καθιστώντας την περίοδο απaráμιλλης ζωτικότητας και ανανέωσης. Κατά την διάρκεια της θητείας του αυτής δημιουργήθηκαν περισσότερες από είκοσι νέες ενορίες και ιεραποστολικές κοινότητες καθώς και τρεις Μοναστικές κοινότητες. Υπήρξε ο ιδρυτής του Ορθόδοξου Συνεδριακού Κέντρου του Αγίου Νικολάου στους πρόποδες των βουνών της Νεβάδας καθώς και η κινητήρια δύναμη για την ανοικοδόμηση του Μοναστηριού της Ζωοδόχου Πηγής στο χώρο του ως άνω κέντρου.

Ο Μητροπολίτης Αγίου Φραγκίσκου Αντώνιος καθιέρωσε τον θεσμό του Ετήσιου Φεστιβάλ Παραδοσιακών Χορών της Μητροπόλεως του Αγίου Φραγκίσκου, γνωστό ως FDF, δημιουργώντας έτσι σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο την σημαντικότερη παρουσία αυθεντικού Ελληνικού χορού, μουσικής και παραδοσιακής ενδυματολογίας. Μαζί με την Μητροπολιτική Φιλόπτωχο Αδελφότητα δημιούργησε το αποθεματικό ταμείο "Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund," ένα Ταμείο Υποτροφιών για φοιτητές προερχομένους από την Μητρόπολη οι οποίοι φοιτούν στο Ελληνικό Κολλέγιο και στην Θεολογική Σχολή του Τιμίου Σταυρού, στο Brookline της Μασσαχουσέτης. Ο εκλιπών Ιεράρχης υπήρξε μέλος της Ιεράς Επαρχιακής Συνόδου της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής. Υπήρξε επίσης πηγή εμπνεύσεως για αμέτρητες χιλιάδες, όχι μόνο Ελληνορθόδοξων πιστών αλλά και για πολλές θρησκευτικές και πολιτικές προσωπικότητες οι οποίες ανεγνώριζαν στο πρόσωπό του ένα μεγάλο ηγέτη και έναν αληθινό άνθρωπο πίστεως.

ΕΛΛΑΔΑ 04

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ - ΑΘΗΝΑ

**ΚΑΤ' ΕΥΘΕΙΑΝ ΠΤΗΣΕΙΣ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΣΤΑΘΜΟ
ΚΑΙ ΜΕ ΚΑΝΟΝΙΚΑ ΔΡΟΜΟΛΟΓΙΑ**

<p>ΑΠΛΗ ΔΙΑΔΡΟΜΗ</p> <p>ΑΠΟ</p> <p>\$ 339</p> <p>+Tax</p>	<p>ΜΕΤ' ΕΠΙΣΤΡΟΦΗΣ</p> <p>ΑΠΟ</p> <p>\$ 388</p> <p>+Tax</p>
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**Η προσφορά ισχύει
από 1 Νοεμβρίου έως 16 Δεκεμβρίου 2004 και
από 27 Δεκεμβρίου 2004 έως 31 Μαρτίου 2005**

ΤΗΛΕΦΩΝΗΣΤΕ ΜΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΓΙΑ ΑΛΛΕΣ ΕΙΔΙΚΕΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΕΣ • ΥΠΑΡΧΟΥΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΡΙΣΜΟΙ

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ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Έορτή Αγίου Βασιλείου και Νέου Έτους

1^η Ιανουαρίου 2005

Πρός τούς Σεβασμιωτάτους και Θεοφιλεστάτους Αρχιερείς, τούς Εύλαβεστάτους Ίερείς και Διακόνους, τούς Μοναχούς και Μοναχές, τούς Προέδρους και Μέλη τών Κοινοτικών Συμβουλίων, τά Ήμερήσια και Απογευματινά Σχολεία, τίς Φιλοπτώχους Αδελφότητες, τήν Νεολαία, τίς Έλληνορθόδοξες Οργανώσεις και όλόκληρο τό Χριστελώννυμον πλήρωμα τής Ίερās Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής.

Προσφιλείς μου Χριστιανοί,

Τήν πρώτη ημέρα εκάστου Νέου Έτους, τιμούμε, ως Έλληνες Ορθόδοξοι πιστοί, τήν ζωή και τήν κληρονομιά του Αγίου Βασιλείου του Μεγάλου, ενός κορυφαίου οικουμενικού Ίεράρχου και Διδασκάλου τής Έκκλησίας μας, του όποιου ή έκτακτη διάνοια και πνευματικότητα λάμπουν υπέρλαμπρα επί αιώνες. Σήμερα, τιμούμε τόν Άγιο Βασίλειο ιδιαίτερας γιά τήν συνεχή προσήλωσή του στην ανάπτυξη ιδρυμάτων παροχής φροντίδος όπως όρφανοτροφείων και νοσοκομείων, και γιά τήν άφοσίωσή του στην προσπάθεια πνευματικής και σωματικής υγείας όλων τών ανθρώπων πού είχαν ανάγκη.


Αναλογιζόμενοι αυτή τήν σημαντικότητα κληρονομιά τήν όποία ελάβαμε ως Έλληνες Ορθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί, αξίζει νά ξεκινήσουμε τόν Νέο Χρόνο σκεπτόμενοι τήν ποιότητα και τό πεδίο δραστηριοτήτων τών δικών μας Έλληνορθόδοξων ιδρυμάτων παροχής φροντίδος μέσα στην Αρχιεπισκοπή μας. Ένα άπ' αυτά τά ιδρύματα είναι ή Ακαδημία του Αγίου Βασιλείου στο Garrision τής Νέας Υόρκης, ή όποία έλαβε τό όνομα αυτό ως απόδοση φόρου τιμής στον Μέγα Βασίλειο. Επί πενήντα και πλέον χρόνια, ή Ακαδημία του Αγίου Βασιλείου προσφέρει στέγη σέ παιδιά και νέους ανθρώπους από όλη τήν Αμερική, πολλοί εκ τών όποιων προέρχονται από προβληματικές οικογενειακές καταστάσεις και έχουν ανάγκη από ένα περιβάλλον θαλπωρής, ένα περιβάλλον όπου θά μπορούν νά γνωρίσουν τήν ειρήνη και τήν αγάπη του Ίησου Χριστού.

Στίς ημέρες μας, εκτός από τό νά άποτελή έστία γιά παιδιά μέ ανάγκες, ή Ακαδημία Αγίου Βασιλείου έχει ακόμη έναν εξίσου σημαντικό ρόλο: χρησιμοποιεί και ως διοικητικός χώρος του νέου Αρχιεπισκοπικού Κέντρου Οικογενειακής Πρόνοιας. Αυτό τό Κέντρο, τό όποιο άσχολεται μέ τό ιερό έργο τής διακονίας τών ποικίλων αναγκών τών Έλληνορθόδοξων οικογενειών ανά τήν Αμερική, θά καταλάβει εξέχουσα θέση ανάμεσα στις εθνικές διακονίες μας αυτό τό Νέο Έτος, 2005, τό όποιο έχουμε όρίσει ως Έτος Οικογενείας. Έτσι, καθώς επικυρώνουμε τήν σημασία τής οικογενείας ως εύλογημένου δώρου του Θεού, ή άποστολή τής Ακαδημίας Αγίου Βασιλείου μας ώθει νά σκεφθούμε τή σπουδαιότητα τών παιδιών ως πολυτίμων μελών τών οικογενειών μας. Είναι άκριβώς αυτός ό λόγος γιά τόν όποιο ή Ακαδημία άποτελεί ιερό ίδρυμα παροχής φροντίδος και είναι αντίξια του όνόματός της.

Κάθε χρόνο αυτή τήν ημέρα οδηγούμεθα από τήν Έθνική Φιλόπτωχο Αδελφότητα Κυριών και τά πολλά τοπικά παραρτήματα στη συγκέντρωση χρημάτων γιά τήν ζωτική αυτή διακονία αγάπης. Αυτή ή προσπάθεια συνεχίζει νά άποτελή τεράστια πηγή στηρίξεως γιά τήν Ακαδημία. Έτσι, καθώς ξεκινούμε τή Νέα Χρονιά, και καθώς μοιράζουμε κομμάτια τής παραδοσιακής Βασιλόπιττας στα μέλη τών κοινοτήτων και οικογενειών μας, άς θυμηθούμε ιδιαίτερας τήν όντως έξοχη διακονία φροντίδος, ίάσεως και ειρήνης πού προσφέρει ή Ακαδημία Αγίου Βασιλείου. Άς θυμηθούμε, επίσης, και άς επαινέσουμε τό συνεχιζόμενο καλό έργο του εϋσυνειδήτου κλήρου, του προσωπικού και τών εθελοντών πού επιβλέπουν τή σημαντική λειτουργία τής Ακαδημίας. Οί εισφορές σας θά βοηθήσουν πράγματι στο έργο τής Ακαδημίας και θά φέρουν τήν αγάπη και φροντίδα του Ίησου Χριστού στις ζωές τών πολλών παιδιών πού αντιμετώπιζουν σοβαρές ανάγκες.

Προσεύχομαι τό φώς τής αγάπης και ειρήνης του Θεού νά λάμπη στη ζωή σας και στις οικογένειές σας όλόκληρο τό Νέο Χρόνο, και ιδιαίτερας στα παιδιά τών κοινοτήτων και οικογενειών σας, και στα παιδιά τής Ακαδημίας του Αγίου Βασιλείου. Είθε τό Νέο Έτος, 2005, νά είναι έτος ευμερίας γιά όλα τά ιερά ιδρύματα παροχής φροντίδος τής Αρχιεπισκοπής μας, και είθε νά είναι έτος υγείας και αγάπης γιά όλες τίς οικογένειες του έθνους και του κόσμου μας.

Μέ πατρική εν Χριστώ αγάπη,



† ό Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής Δημήτριος

Αποκαλυπτήρια ανδριάντα του Θεόδωρου, πρώτου Έλληνα στην Αμερικανική Ηπειρο

ΚΛΙΑΡΓΟΥΟΤΕΡ (Φλόριδα). – Σε κλίμα εθνικής έξαρσης και περηφάνιας έγιναν το Σάββατο 8 Ιανουαρίου, στην παραλία του Κλιάργουοτερ, τα αποκαλυπτήρια του ανδριάντα του Θεόδωρου Γκριέγκο (ή κατ' άλλους Δωρόθεος), που θεωρείται ο πρώτος Έλληνας που έφθασε στις ακτές της δυτικής Φλόριδας, τον Απρίλιο του 1528. Στην σεμνή τελετή και με την παρουσία πλήθους Ελληνοαμερικανών που κατοκούν στην Φλόριδα αλλά και επισκεπτών από άλλες πολιτείες οι επίσημοι ομιλητές αναφέρθηκαν στην ιστορία αλλά και στην σημερινή πραγματικότητα και τον ρόλο της Ομογένειας. Στην τελετή των αποκαλυπτηρίων παρέστησαν ο πρέσβης της Ελλάδος στις ΗΠΑ κ. Γεώργιος Σαββαΐδης, ο δήμαρχος της πόλης του Κλιάργουοτερ κ. Φράνκ Χίμπαντ, ο ομοσπονδιακός βουλευτής κ. Μάικλ Μπιλιράκης, ο πρόεδρος της Πανελλήνιας Ομοσπονδίας Φλόριδας κ. Μιχάλης Σέρβος, ο πρόεδρος του Εθνικού Συμβουλίου κ. Θεόδωρος Σπυρόπουλος, ο πρόεδρος του ΣΑΕ Αμερικής κ. Χρήστος Τομαράς, εκπρόσωποι των Ενόπλων Δυνάμεων της Ελλάδας με επικεφαλής τον Ταξιαρχο κ. Χρήστο Μιλίτση, και πολλοί εκ- πρόσωποι ομοσπονδιών.



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Ο κ. Σαββαΐδης τόνισε ότι η φιλοτέχνηση του αγάλματος εμπεριέχει ισχυρά συμβολικά μηνύματα και εξέφρασε τα συγχαρητηριά του προς τον δωρητή του αγάλματος κ. Μιχάλη Σέρβο. Ακολούθησε κατάθεση στεφάνων εκ μέρους των επισήμων. – Φ.Π.

ΕΙΔΙΚΕΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΕΣ ΤΗΣ ΟΛΥΜΠΙΑΚΗΣ ΓΙΑ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

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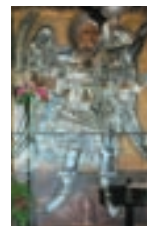


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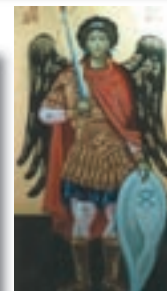
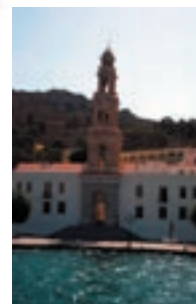
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Halki

Chonea

Mandamados, Lesvos

Symi



Elias Damianakis, Iconwriter Shrine copy from Taxiarchis



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PEOPLE

► Tenet Awarded



President Bush recently bestowed the nation's highest civilian honor on former Director of Central Intelligence **George Tenet**, the Presidential Medal of Freedom at a White House ceremony. Tenet served as director of central intelligence from 1997 until he resigned last summer.

► Publishes Article

Demetria Kaliades DeLia, Ph.D., of New Jersey, recently published an article titled "The Achilles Complex" in the professional journal *The Psychoanalytic Review*. The study was based on her doctoral dissertation completed at New York University. A classics scholar, she has a special interest in the psychological interpretation of Greek myths. She is a practicing psychoanalyst in Westfield and Newfoundland, N.J.

► Eagle Scouts

Alex Fonti, 16, of Boy Scout Troop 149, recently was honored at a special Eagle Scout ceremony in Redwood City, Calif. Fr. Constantine Efstathiou was one of the presenters at the ceremony where he read a congratulatory letter from Archbishop Demetrios. To earn Scouting's highest award, Alex had to serve as a leader in his troop, be an active participant and complete a major community service project. Alex has been a member of Troop 149, chartered to the Sequoia Kiwanis Club, for five years. His leadership for the troop included patrol leader and scribe. He has earned a total of 31 Merit Badges while a Boy Scout. He also earned the St. George and Chi-Rho Eastern Orthodox Religious Awards.

► Cypriot honor

The New Jersey-based Cypriot American Association recently honored its past president, **Evris Kontos** at a dinner dance in Garfield, N.J. Over the years he has been a tireless organizer and supporter of numerous endeavors of the Greek American community and an advocate for Cyprus freedom. He also is a founding member of PanCyprian, a member of the Cyprus Federation of America and other organizations. Mr. Kontos is an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

► Helps Children's Fund

A 13-year-old girl from River Vale, N.J., **Elena Thomopoulos**, has raised \$1,000 on behalf of the Greek Children's Fund (GCF). While other teenagers were away for Labor Day weekend, Elena celebrated her 13th birthday a few months early by organizing a pool party for 37 of her friends. She asked everyone attending her party to make a donation to the Greek Children's Fund instead of giving her a birthday present. Elena's donation will pay for a pediatric cancer patient from Greece or Cyprus to stay at the Ronald McDonald House in New York City with his/her family for one month.

► Metos Honored

Hellenic Cultural Association of Salt Lake City, recently honored **Chris S. Metos** for his 18 years of service to the cultural organization, of which he is a founder and past president.

► Author Visits

Award-winning children's book author **Eric Metaxas**, recently visited Annunciation Church in NY, where he did a reading and signed his popular book, *Squanto and the Miracle of Thanksgiving*.

St. Luke's Is Just What the Doctor Ordered

BROOMALL, Pa. – The community of St. Luke Church epitomizes the teaching in James 1:22 to "be doers of the word, and not hearers only."

The large parish in this suburb west of Philadelphia practices what is preached through its programs that feed and clothe the needy and hungry, and minister to widows and the sick.

"This parish is spirit-filled in outreach," said Fr. Christ Kontos, pastor at St. Luke's since 2000. "That's a glorious thing."

One of the parish organizations through which this is accomplished is "For Those in Need." It has raised "tens of thousands of dollars" to help needy families both in the parish and out in

retreats with guest speakers have taken place during Lent. Noted Orthodox author Frederica Matthewes Greene took part in last year's retreat. Fr. Charles Joannides will speak at the retreat to be held this March.

Fr. Kontos said the core of his ministry is to serve the many young families in the parish and large number of children.

Huge youth emphasis

Sunday school has an enrollment of 380 from pre-school through high school age, with 27 teachers. The program is fully funded by the parish, but the school also has fund-raising activities.

There is a monthly playgroup for very young children and their mothers directed by Presbytera Michele.

The group established a Women's Auxiliary in 1960. Its main purpose was to hold functions and raise funds for the building program. The present site was purchased in 1962 and groundbreaking ceremonies took place in December of that year with Archbishop Iakovos officiating. The Women's Auxiliary has since become the Philoptochos/Women's Auxiliary and continues to function.

From its ranks in recent years has emerged the dynamic current National President of Philoptochos, Georgia Skeadas. Her husband, Chris, is a member of the Archdiocesan Council.

Also in 1962, a Greek school also was established that year under the

PARISH profile

Name: St. Luke
Greek Orthodox Church
Location: Broomall, Pa.
Metropolis: New Jersey
Size: about 700 families
Founded: 1960
Clergy:
 Rev. Chris Kontos
 (Holy Cross '91)
Web site:
 www.st-luke.org
E-mail:
 FatherCK@aol.com
Noteworthy:
 Characteristics include a spirit of volunteerism and an emphasis on the youth



ST. LUKE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

MICHAEL DUFF

the greater community. One hundred percent of donations to the FTIN, as it's called, go to the needy, Fr. Kontos explained.

Another is the "Giving Tree" program. This past year, parishioners purchased more than 500 gifts that were wrapped for children of impoverished families. "It's a beautiful thing that just exploded these last few years," Fr. Kontos said.

Other organizations do their part, too

The Philoptochos provides support to a local women's shelter and, at Thanksgiving along with other volunteers from the parish, prepares hundreds of turkey dinners and bakes fresh apple pies. On a monthly basis, they prepare "gallons and gallons of soup" for needy families, the priest explained.

Youth of the parish also become involved in several outreach programs, including making pizzas, subs, sandwiches and desserts for the needy in the local area.

At the parish level, special ministries include the Philia Club that offers opportunities for older unmarried parishioners and widows and widowers to meet socially and have fellowship.

Fr. Kontos holds a Bible study every other week, dubbed a "Power Lunch" for spiritual and physical nourishment. Participants meet for an hour and a half for lunch and to study the Word of God.

Another organization, for inter-church couples, offers a setting for discussions of issues, struggles and blessings in such marriages, the priest said.

Over the past few years, adult

Older children participate in the JOY, HOPE and GOYA organizations. There is a boys basketball team that for many years has brought home the league championship for the New Jersey Metropolis, and also a girls' basketball team.

Forty-five altar boys serve on alternate Sundays.

Many children participate in the church's two dance troupes that perform at many area festivals and other functions.

Every two years, a dozen or more teens and adult chaperones participate in the Project Mexico ministry of SCOPA, and many youth attend the annual Vacation Bible School at the parish in summer.

St. Luke parish annually provides several scholarships to graduating seniors, including its own Pakuris Scholarship, for \$2,000, which is awarded to a seminarian or, if no student from the community attends Holy Cross, is given to another worthy graduate.

There is a Greek school with 75 students and two weekday evening adult Greek classes; one for conversational Greek and the other for more advanced students.

The beginnings

According to a parish history, in the mid-1950s, several members of St. George Cathedral in Philadelphia living in the Broomall area felt there was a need for a suburban church to serve two counties west of the city.

direction of Marcella Theodos. Forty students enrolled and the first classes took place at Trinity Lutheran Church in nearby Havertown.

Construction of the new church was completed in September 1963. Fr. George D. Gregory became the community's first, and longest-serving, priest. He retired in June 1993 after 30 years' service. "He was a pillar of the church," Fr. Kontos, only the

third priest to serve the community, said of Fr. Gregory. "His spirit continues to live through the good works of the people. He set the tone for what we do today."

For most of the '90s, Fr. Steven Theophilos served the parish.

On Sept. 22, 1963, the Thyranixia (Opening of the Doors) took place with Dr. and Mrs. Louis Alikakos as godparents. Because he was a physician, Dr. Alikakos named the church in honor of St. Luke the Apostle. Another physician and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Nicholas Padis, earned the honor of opening the church doors.

Doctors are still present in the community, including Dr. Cary Limberakis, who became an Archon in 2004. Another prominent doctor, Anthony Limberakis, is a supporting member, though he also attends the church in Valley Forge.

Serving the Church Is Not Just for Little Boys

My celebration of a Sunday Liturgy last summer in the Memphis Annunciation Church, surrounded by 36 of my former altar boys, from ages 22 to 62, was one of the most beautiful days of my 56 years in the priesthood. The pastor of the Annunciation Church, Fr. Paul Christy, was on a vacation with his family. I was filling in for him.

by Fr. Nicholas L. Vieron

Although the sacred event was a personal precious moment, I want to share it with you - the readers of the Orthodox Observer - because, as someone stated, "Life's precious moments don't have value, unless they are shared."

But more importantly, one of the many things I've always enjoyed about an altar boys reunion, which involves grown men, is that it sends a message to the young people that serving the Church is not just for little boys.

It is also for men! It's for adults. It is for all who love The Lord and His Holy Church.

The local newspaper, The Commercial Appeal, covered the story and published a beautiful article the following day, accompanied by colored photographs. Reporter Jody Callahan wrote, "Their old vestments wouldn't quite fit, so they borrowed the maroon robes usually worn by the choir.

And their hair was quite a bit thinner, in some cases gone. They'd put on a few pounds, and added a few inches." The reporter described the altar boy's participation in the Liturgy. I referred to the acolytes as "ministering angels."

The reporter interviewed several of them. Attorney Mike Speros commented, "It's like a brotherhood. It sounds corny, but all these guys I served with in the altar are like brothers. It was very emotional for all of us."

Chef Nick Coundourides said, "He married me. He baptized my son. Anything for Father Vieron."

Nick Taras, president of Robert Orr Sysco in Nashville who drove in for the occasion, added, "Fr. Vieron is very important to us. We've grown up with him. We served in the altar with him. We played softball with him."

A bit of levity was added by one former altar boy. "When you kneel," Jerry Stamson said, "it's a little harder to get up, but I wouldn't miss one of those reunions with that old priest for anything."

Of course, this old priest is grateful for such expressed sentiments, but the real reason why these men were with me in the altar on June 13 is their love for the Church!

I first held an altar boys reunion in 1982 and made it an annual Palm Sunday tradition until I retired in 1991. This was the first one since then.

Most of my former altar boys are now family men, successful in their endeavors - in business, restaurant owners, doctors, dentists, lawyers, teachers, executives, company presidents, entrepreneurs, but who remain active in the Church they love. I've played with them, prayed with them; I heard their confessions, sometimes they

heard mine.

They now have Fr. Paul as their pastor. But, I will always have the memories. I would like to create more memories with them; however, if God should decide that enough is enough, I am grateful for what they have given me, not just a chapter, but each one a volume in the library of my memory.

Mimi Taras, one of my first altar boys who is now 60, stated, "To be in the altar again, seeing you unfold the (antimission), raising the chalice, hearing the secret prayers, created a feeling in me I cannot describe"

Past youth advisor, Evelyn Buchanan, added, "The feeling permeated down throughout the entire congregation."

Former church organist, Katherine Skefos, left me a message, "We were all moved to tears seeing our "little boys" with you again in the altar as grown men; thank you for what you have done for our children."

Jim Boodalas said, "Being with you in the altar again brought great memories of my youth serving the Lord." Attorney Harry Skefos wrote, "We came out of respect for you but ended up being recipients of a greater love; it was wonderful standing again where I stood as a boy 35 years ago. I pray we have more opportunities in years to come to be together again to celebrate the Liturgy as we have more opportunities in years to come to be together again to celebrate the Liturgy as we did today."

Patricia Ellington Grantham, whose parents were the first couple I married when I came to Memphis in 1955, wrote, "It was a moving and emotional service bringing back precious memories with a touching re-verence."

Past parish president, George Laskaris, remarked, "The Great Procession with all 36 acolytes was one of the most moving moments I have ever experienced."

To be part of such an experience is a blessing for which I will remain eternally grateful; first, of course, to Our Lord and to His Holy Church. I am also grateful to my altar boys' loved ones who filled the sanctuary to capacity and, by their prayerful participation, enhanced the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

I thank former acolyte, Dr. Alec Collis, who gave me the inspiration for this year's reunion, and I invoke God's Healing Grace upon him in his bout with multiple sclerosis. I am also grateful to acolytes from the past who, for good reason, could not be with me June 13. They called from as far as Daytona Beach, Salt Lake City, Athens, Greece.

The names of five of my former altar boys of blessed memory were offered at the proskomidi. Robert Knight, George Abraham, Pete Kay, Andrew Scarmoutsos and John Boosalis were embraced by God at a young age in His Heavenly Kingdom. I miss them.

Last but by no means least, I am grateful to Fr. Paul Christy, the beloved proistamenos of Annunciation Church who helped make Sunday, June 13 an important day with his often published poignant announcements and with his blessings.

The Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting, EOCS Honors Kansas City Priest

and also as chairman of the Eastern Orthodox Catholic Committee on Scouting of SCOBA in America. During those years the scouting religious emblems programs were developed for scouts and scouters. He attended national and international Jamborees as chaplain representing the Church. He was active in the Detroit, Michigan Area Council Thunderbird District for which he was awarded scouting's highest adult recognition, that of the Silver Beaver.

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In Memoriam

Johnny N. Economy

Johnny N. Economy, Archdiocesan Council member and AHEPA Past Supreme President died Jan. 3 at his home in Atlanta. He was 57. Mr. Economy served as supreme president in 2000-2001. Mr. Economy held numerous offices during his AHEPA career and just concluded a three-year-term on the Board of Directors in July 2004. He also served two terms as Supreme Secretary and most elective offices at the district and chapter levels. In addition, he served as President of the AHEPA Centennial Foundation, Inc., the entity responsible for the building and dedication of the Tribute sculpture to Olympism in 1996. The sculpture rests in Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park and celebrates our ancestors' gift to humanity. Furthermore, Mr. Economy is credited for being the force behind the dedication of the George C. Marshall Statue on the grounds of the American Embassy in Athens in 2000.



He was a 30-year member of AHEPA Mother Lodge Chapter No. 1, Atlanta and served on the Board of Directors of AHEPA One Inc., Atlanta Chapter's senior citizens housing complex. In 1995, he received the National "AHEPAN of the Year" Award.

He was also active with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America being, recently appointed to serve on the Archdiocesan Council. In 2001, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I made Mr. Economy an Archon of the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle. He also served the Metropolis of Atlanta and the Board of Trustees of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Atlanta. Economy was president of Zomma Enterprises Inc., an athletic sportswear printing company he established in 1975. A native of Atlanta, he was the son of Efstathios Economopoulos of Messinia, Greece, and Evtboxia Petkas Economopoulos of Peramos, Asia Minor.

He is survived by his wife, Athena, brother Othon and sister-in-law Alice; brother-in-law George Gavalas and wife Vicki; and nephews and nieces. Funeral services took place Jan. 7 at Annunciation Cathedral with Metropolitan Alexios officiating, assisted by other clergy.

Fr. Homer Goumenis

Fr. Homer Peter Goumenis, 78, died Jan. 2. He had been retired since December 1996. Fr. Goumenis was born Feb. 26, 1926 in Lowell, Mass. After completing his education in Lowell, he attended Boston University for one year, and then switched to Holy Cross School of Theology, graduating in 1948. He also studied at the General Theological School in New York for a year, and at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbia, S.C. for three years. He was married to Christine Coleman (Karvounis) of Oklahoma City on Aug. 27, 1950. They had two children, Catherine Anastasia and David Peter Goumenis. He was ordained a deacon on Oct. 1, 1950 in Astoria by Archbishop Michael, and as a priest in Lowell on Oct. 22, 1950 by Bishop Ezekiel of Nazianzos. He also was bestowed the offikia of sakellarios, protopresbyter and economos. He served as an assistant priest at St. Demetrios in Astoria in 1950-51; and was pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Columbia, S.C., from 1951 to 1963, and as dean of Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta from 1963 until his retirement.

Fr. Constantine Theodore

Fr. Constantine Theodore, 91, died recently. He had been retired since July 1978. He was born April 9, 1913 in Boston and attended public schools in Brookline and Boston. He enrolled as part of the first class at Holy Cross Theological School when it was at Pomfret, Conn., and graduated in 1942. He married Athena A. Scaltzas of Boston in April 1942. They had two children, Christ and Anthony Theodore.

He was ordained a deacon May 21, 1942 by Bishop Athenagoras Cavadas in Cambridge, Mass., and as a priest in Springfield, Mass., by the bishop.

He served St. Spyridon Church in Newport, R.I., from 1942 to 1959, and St. John Church in Blue Point, N.Y., from 1959 until his retirement. He also had the offikia of protopresbyter and Tis Agias Tou Christou Megalis Ekklisias (from the Patriarch).

Fr. George A. Vlahos



Fr. George A. Vlahos, 81, died Dec. 18. He was a retired priest who had a long career in the Church and in psychotherapy. He was born Feb. 22, 1923 in Lowell, Mass.

After attending Lowell public schools, he enrolled at Holy Cross School of Theology and graduated in 1948. He and Fr. Goumenis were classmates. In September 1948, he married Calliope Katsaris of Canton, Ohio. They became parents of two children, Athanasios and Catherine. A few days after his marriage, he was ordained as a deacon at Annunciation Cathedral in Boston by Bishop Athenagoras Cavadas, and as a priest on Sept. 14 in Nashua, N.J., also by Bishop Cavadas. He also was bestowed the offikia of confessor, sakellarios, economos and protopresbyter. Fr. Vlahos' first assignment was for three months at Annunciation Cathedral in Boston. He was then assigned to St. George Church in Pittsfield, Mass., where he served from January 1949 until October 1950. He was sent to St. Basil Academy for a year, and then went to St. Demetrios Church in Warren, Ohio, where he served from October 1951 to November 1956. His last assignment was to Ascension Church in Oakland, Calif., from November 1956 to Dec. 31, 1967 where, under his leadership and spiritual guidance, he was instrumental in building the Church of the Ascension, now a cathedral.

Fr. Vlahos pursued higher studies and became a licensed psychotherapist, recognized for his many personal attributes and distinguished achievements in the fields of spiritual growth and human behavior. He completed his clinical training in psychology at St. Mary's Hospital, McAuley Neuropsychiatric Institute, San Francisco, and became chairman of Human Behavior at USIU and National University of San Diego. He was appointed the first director of the Logotherapy Institute in San Diego. The American Medical Society of Vienna honored Dr. Vlahos Life Membership for excellence as a professor and therapist.

Fr. George is survived by his wife of 56 years, Presbyteria Betty, a son Athan, a daughter Kathryn, their respective spouses, and two grandchildren. His funeral was held at St. Spyridon Church in San Diego, Conducted by the Very Rev. John Constantine, vicar of the San Francisco Metropolis, the pastor, Fr. Peter Costarakos and area priests.

The RCA Benevolence Fund

A Prayer..... Thanks..... and an Appeal! Even though praying is an inseparable part of our lives, lately I've been praying much harder than usual. In my 48-year ministry many people asked me this question: Are prayers always answered?

by Fr. Evagoras Constantinides

The answer is an unqualified YES! If we realize that God is not a waiter standing by waiting for us to clap our hands so that he can come forth and take our order; if we really want God to respond to us, we must approach Him with love, respect, reverence and recognition that we are turning to Him because we need His help, and not because He needs our business. And if we have exhausted all means to attain our goal, when we have come to the end of the line; if the prayers is beneficial not just to us but all concerned, then, and only then, will He respond. Also, we must always remember that God will never do anything for us that we can do ourselves. As the ancient Greeks used to say: ".....God always answers prayers with: Either Yes, or No, or...Wait a while!"

Now a word of thanks. Thanks to the couple from Lakewood, Ohio for their donation of \$100 for the fourth or fifth time. It seems it has become a monthly habit for them.

Thanks to the Ph.D. from Cambridge, Mass., for his \$500 gift with the laconic: "Class of '49."

Thanks to the couple from Germantown, Tenn., for their \$100 gift.

Thanks to a widowed presbytera for her \$200 gift in honor of Fr. Vieron, the EPISTLE publisher.

And now, the appeal. Since last December the RCA Benevolence Fund has been helping six brother priests (they were eight when we started, but two of them have since gone to their reward) and seven widowed presbyteres with very low pensions or no pension at all. The total amount required per month to meet this sacred obligation is \$5,782.

There are absolutely no expenses incurred since everything is absorbed by

yours truly personally or through donations from friends.

At the last Clergy-Laity Congress in New York, I was the last one to speak on the finances of the Archdiocese as president of the RCA. I said the following: "Whether adequately or inadequately, all the departments of the Archdiocese and the Metropolises have been provided for. But I want everybody here to know that there are six old retired priests who make only \$600 per month pension, four widowed presbyteres who receive no pension at all, two who receive \$200 per month and one who receives \$600 per month. Who will provide for them?"

The National Philoptochos passed a unanimous resolution that all chapters in America make an annual voluntary contribution to the Benevolence Fund. Each chapter must decide on the amount and then send it to the National Office.

Also, a move is afoot by some church members to undertake a large-scale project to raise substantial amounts for our Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology, and the RCA as beneficiaries.

In view of all these, we have no other alternative but to act ourselves. If we exclude the six brothers we are helping, there are some 170 of us retired brother priests who range financially from doing very well, to just making ends meet.

Whatever the case, there is no time in our ministry when we had to raise \$1,000 or so for our church or some charity, that we couldn't do it! As you have seen in previous articles in the Epistle, seven of us have donated or generated \$16,500; two widowed presbyteres have contributed \$300; 10 active brother priests have donated or generated \$13,850; 15 Philoptochos chapters have donated \$10,500; 20 lay friends, men and women, have donated more than \$40,000.

Please make your tax-exempt checks to: "RCA Benevolence Fund" and mail them to me.

Fr. Constantinides is director of the RCA Benevolent Fund.

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CLERGY UPDATE

Ordination to the Diaconate
Gregory Georgiou, by Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta at St. Nektarios Church, Charlotte, N.C., 10/31/04
George Anastasiou, by Bishop Gerasimos of Krateaia, St. Demetrios Cathedral, Astoria, N.Y., 11/07/04
Nicolaos Kotsis, by Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit, St. John the Baptist Church, Sterling Heights, Mich., 11/13/04
Peter J. Thornberg, by Bishop Savas of Troas, Sts. Constantine & Helen Church, Washington, 11/14/04
Flegas Vasileios, by Metropolitan Isaiah, Assumption Cathedral, Denver, 11/21/04

Ordination to the Priesthood
Rev. Dn. Eleftherios Legakis, by Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit, Holy Trinity/St. Nicholas Church, Cincinnati, 05/09/04
Rev. Dn. Nicolaos H. Kotsis, by Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit, St. Nicholas Church, Ann Arbor, Mich., 12/05/04

Assignments
Rev. Dn. George Anastasiou, St. Demetrios Cathedral, Astoria, N.Y., 11/08/04
Rev. Fr. Polykarpos Steve, Annunciation Church, Nassau, Bahamas, 11/14/04
Rev. Fr. Luke Veronis, Sts. Constantine & Helen Church, Webster, Mass., 12/01/04

Offikia
Metropolitan Alexios bestowed the office of Confessor upon Fr. Steve Dalber, 10/31/04
Bishop Anthimos of Olympos bestowed the office of Ekonomos upon Fr. Constantine Valantasis, 11/07/04
Metropolitan Isaiah bestowed the office of Ekonomos upon Fr. Jon Emanuelson, 11/14/04
Archbishop Demetrios bestowed the office of Ekonomos upon Fr. Steven Zorzos, 11/21/04
Metropolitan Alexios bestowed the office of Confessor upon Fr. Michael Condos, 11/29/04

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SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications Accepted for Agris Memorial Scholarship

BOSTON – The Alpha Omega Council, comprised of many of New England's leading professionals of Hellenic ancestry, will honor its late founder by presenting the 13th annual Peter Agris Memorial Scholarships to several young Greek Americans pursuing studies in the fields of journalism or communications.

The scholarships are given in honor of Peter Agris, founder and publisher of The Hellenic Chronicle, for 50 years the premier English-language national weekly newspaper for Americans of Greek ancestry. Past recipients have gone on to careers writing for several top national publications, co-writing a presidential memoir, as well as teaching in the fields of journalism and communications.

Among last year's recipients was a PhD candidate in journalism who is slated to do doctoral research this summer at the University of Athens, as well as a former Senate press and a political sector intern at the U.S. Embassy in Athens.

Criteria for candidates includes: Greek American heritage; current full-time enrollment as a journalism or communications major at the graduate or undergraduate level in an accredited college or university in the United States; active participation in school, community, church organizations; a minimum 3.0 GPA and demonstrated financial need.

The \$5,000 non-renewable scholarships will be presented at the Alpha Omega Council's annual Lifetime Achievement Award Dinner in May, during which time a noted individual will be honored for his or her contributions to Hellenism and Orthodoxy.

Peter Agris was born in Gloucester, Mass., and was raised in Cambridge, graduating from Rindge High School.

He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and later attended Suffolk University and Boston University's School of Public Communication.

In September 1950, at the age of 24, he founded The Hellenic Chronicle, an English-language weekly newspaper targeting the Greek American community. The newspaper soon gathered a national following, making it the largest Greek American national weekly newspaper in the United States. It was filled with stories about personal achievements within the

community, charitable causes, religious issues, social news, as well as current events in Greek politics and in U.S. policy toward the Mediterranean. It also followed the news of the organizations that Peter Agris took pride in, like the American Hellenic Education Progressive Association (Ahepa) and the Alpha Omega Council, which he founded in 1976.

Agris, who died in 1989, had high standards as an individual and as a journalist. Early on, Archbishop Iakovos called upon The Hellenic Chronicle to guide the steps of future generations. And it did, for a half century, the last decade published by members of his family seeking to carry on those high standards.

On Sept. 20, 2000, the 50th anniversary of the newspaper, The Hellenic Chronicle published its final edition. With the changing times came changes in the lives of Agris family members.

However, with this scholarship, the Alpha Omega Council and the Agris family seek to continue to honor the great legacy Peter Agris has left to the Greek American community and to the Greek Orthodox Church in America and to support young aspiring journalists of Hellenic ancestry.

The Alpha Omega Council's mission is to promote and encourage loyalty and patriotism in the United States; to cultivate the ideals of Hellenism; to constantly strive toward maintaining positive Greek-American relations; to unite Americans of Greek descent in fellowship and philanthropy; to help recognize the achievements of those who excel in their field individually or as a group; to help alleviate the wants of the poor and needy and to establish, maintain or aid religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational activities.

In recent years, the Alpha Omega Council has contributed more than a half million dollars to various charitable organizations.

Eligible candidates may request an application by accessing the Alpha Omega Council's website at www.alphaomegacouncil.com or by writing to: The Peter Agris Memorial Scholarship Committee, c/o Nancy Agris Savage, 9 Nonesuch Drive, Natick, MA 01760.

Applications, transcripts and a required essay must be returned no later than March 1, 2005.

\$500 for the runner-up. Georgia has been a member for 13 years in her church's and Great Neck's Girl Scout program and has held numerous leadership positions and received a number of awards.

She earned the Chi-Rho and Alpha Omega Religious Scout awards, the Girl Scout Silver and Gold awards and had participated in numerous EOCS Scout Retreats. In addition to her involvement in the scouting program, Georgia was extremely active in her religious community as a member of the junior choir, Sunday school teacher, member GOYA basketball team, and participated in several Inter GOYA Olympics.

While in high school she was extremely active in many organizations and programs, where she received a number of awards and recognitions. Because of Georgia's scholastic achievements and being an all-around spectacular individual she was accepted to a number of colleges and universities. She has chosen Loyola College in Maryland and is majoring in biology.

For applications contact: EOCS Scholarship Chairman, 862 Guy Lombardo Ave, Freeport, NY 11520

MISSION NEWS



Orthodox Volunteers Build Record Number of Homes



TIJUANA, Mexico – Thanks to the overwhelming number of volunteers, Project Mexico, a pan-Orthodox ministry under the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America, was able to build 13 homes—a record number—for needy families in the Tijuana, Mexico area this summer. “This year we were able to build more homes than ever for a number of reasons,” explains Gregory Yova, founder and executive director of Project Mexico. “We now have larger and more permanent sleeping quarters for our volunteers that replace the tents we were using. We acquired more tools and equipment. We scheduled more groups this summer, and actually had two different work groups working on two different homes at the same time.”

Nearly 400 individuals from more than 35 parishes from all jurisdictions in the United States and Canada worked on home sites scattered throughout the Tijuana area. Those families receiving the homes usually experience terrible living conditions such as dirt floors and cardboard walls.

Project Mexico homes are built without the use of power tools and are about the size of a typical American family room. The two-room homes have two windows, one door, a concrete floor and stud walls. One family was living in a very unsanitary environment.

Anilu and Julio were renting a room in a complex where the landlord cared for and butchered animals. The waste and butchered carcasses were strewn on the ground near the family's rented room.

Living in these conditions was causing the children, 4 year old Cesar and 2 year old Naydelin, to become sick. Their doctor told them they must move if their children were to get well. Anilu and Julio had been praying for several months for a house, especially since Anilu was expecting their third child in August.

Project Mexico was able to build a home for the family in a more suitable neighborhood. Their new home means

the children—and new baby—will live healthier, safer lives.

Another family desperately in need of a home included Raul and Virginia, their 4 year old son Jorge and Raul's 67 year old father, Jorge. The four of them were living in a camper that would normally fit in the bed of a pick-up truck. The camper was placed on the unstable road because their land was not level enough for the camper.

The home Project Mexico built has dramatically improved their situation and has helped this good family take a giant step forward.

Equally profound is the experience for the young volunteers. Fr. Michael Kallaur, rector of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh, has brought teen groups to Project Mexico for the past eight years, and says, “When teens leave their comfort zone and are confronted with the poverty of this third world country, it makes an impression on them.

They realize their small contributions make an important difference especially in the life of the family they are helping. The experience at Project Mexico encourages these young people to become more involved in their parish community.

The experience snowballs into something bigger and is an important building block in their lives.”

Since 1988, Project Mexico has involved over 6,900 young people in the alleviation of suffering by building homes for Mexico's poor.

In 1996 outreach expanded through the opening of St. Innocent Orthodox Orphanage that provides a home for teenaged boys who live on the streets or who have been put out of other orphanages. Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage are unique because they have been envisioned, designed, built, and operated by the combined efforts of Orthodox from all jurisdictions.

More information about Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage can be found at www.projectmexico.org.

Annunciation Parish Assists Kenyan Church

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – With the war cry, “Ken ya?” and the response, “Yes, we can!”, Annunciation Church undertook the sacred task of developing and solidifying its relationship with Holy Church of the Resurrection in Nandi, Kenya.

Having been told by Fr. Neophytos Kongai of Kenya, a Holy Cross Seminary graduate, that his dream was to build an Orthodox academy, the Academy of the

Holy Resurrection, to teach the faith to young people, not only in his parish, but also from surrounding areas, Annunciation's members adopted this vision, offering nearly \$10,000 donations for the Academy, along with a \$1,000 pledge from the Philoptochos chapter.

More funds are being pledged to help furnish books, school supplies and furniture.

The Voice of Philoptochos

Boston Metropolis Philoptochos Honor Metropolitan Methodios



Philoptochos of Boston members with Metropolitan Methodios.

BOSTON – The Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board’s recent luncheon, “A Celebration of Philanthropic Ministry” marked the 20th anniversary of the Enthronement of Metropolitan Methodios as Bishop of Boston.

More than 500 guests shared in celebrating the philanthropic ministries of Philoptochos and the Boston Metropolis under the spiritual guidance of Metropolitan Methodios. Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos President, Merope Kapetanakis thanked Metropolitan Methodios for his visionary leadership the past 20 years. She cited that “all our ministries are expanding at all levels.

Twenty years ago, she stated, “the Metropolis Center, the Philoxenia House, the Marriage Preparation Program, and the Camp and Retreat Center did not exist.”

In her closing remarks she thanked His Eminence for his love, vision, and encouragement for our children, grandchildren, and for generations to come.

The Reverend Dr. Diane Kessler, executive director of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, praised His Eminence for “the way that the Light of Christ shines within him and thus radiates within the Metropolis of Boston.”

Konstantin Bikas, consul general of Greece in Boston, recognized that the well-attended event was “indeed a weekend of Thanksgiving.”

Fr. Athanasios Demos, chancellor, shared some memories of his years at the Holy Cross School of Theology with His Eminence. Fr. Demos praised His Eminence’s “devotion to serve with distinction and excellence and that all his work is Christ Centered labor.”

Following the honored guests’ remarks, the audience viewed a video presentation “An Era of Visionary Leadership” which highlighted the philanthropic ministries in the Boston Metropolis since 1984.

The video captured the true essence of His Eminence’s twenty years of distinguished service to the Metropolis of Boston.

Following the video presentation, George Behrakis, chairman of the Camp and Retreat Center reviewed the history and development of the Camp and Retreat Center that was established in 1990.

Mr. Behrakis introduced His Eminence, thanking him for his ministry that will impact future generations for years to come.

Metropolitan Methodios thanked the Metropolis Philoptochos Board for their support of all the ministries for the past 20 years. He humbly accepted the praises awarded him during the luncheon as he said, “I have done nothing more than what was expected of me.” He continued, “I owe everything to the church. Where would we be without the church? It has kept us united and strong. We must see God’s wisdom and become Christ’s presence upon earth...be caretakers of God’s creation.” His Eminence recognized his staff for their tireless effort and all those who give of their time, talent, and resources.

The program closed with the presentation of the new retreat center rendering. The project is expected to begin in 2005. Co-Chairman Vasiliki Feldmar presented His Eminence with a gift of gold embroidered epimanikeion and epigonateion from the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board.

His Eminence also received a proclamation from the state of Rhode Island, presented by state Sen. Leonidas Raptakis. Chairman Tina Caramanis presented the Metropolitan with a commendation from Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts.

To honor the occasion, a commemorative album of His Eminence’s ministry was given to each guest.

Congratulatory letters from Archbishop Demetrios, Archbishop Iakovos, Gov. Mitt Romney, and Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino were included in the album.

The gala luncheon was truly a memorable occasion for the Metropolis of Boston.

The resounding message.... “Eis Polla eti Despota” was heard throughout the entire afternoon

St. Photios National Shrine to Honor Georgia Skeadas

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. – National Board President Georgia Skeadas will be the special honoree at the 23rd annual St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine Pilgrimage weekend Jan. 29-30. Mrs. Skeadas will be honored for the many years of support that the National Philoptochos Society has provided to the Shrine.

The feast day luncheon will take place at the Casa Monica hotel following the Divine Liturgy, at 1:30 p.m.

The two-day event also will feature keynote speaker Dr. John T. Chirban of Holy Cross School of Theology, who will be on hand to sign his new book, “True Coming of Age.”

President Skeadas Issues Appeal for Tsunami Aid

Dear Chapter President and Members,

As the death toll in the wake of the Asian earthquake and tsunami catastrophes continues to grow, the world comes together in grief to mourn the loss of life, and to pray for the survivors as they face the horrendous conditions, the many challenges, and the risk to life itself.

Our hearts are filled with compassion and the deepest desire to provide assistance to the victims of one of the worst natural disasters in history.

The aftermath has left an endless and massive relief effort to assist in this catastrophic environment that will still mean the difference between life and death for many survivors.

As we answer the call of Christ, which is to “love one another” and to assist those in need, the National Philoptochos Society has established the “National Philoptochos Society Asia Disaster Relief Fund.”

As we continue in our long established relationships with the Archdiocesan partners in disaster relief, our financial assistance will include, but not be limited to, the philanthropic relief offered by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Asian Disaster Relief Fund, as well as IOCC and UNICEF.

I encourage you to open your hearts, and give your full support to this endeavor to bring aid and comfort to the many victims of this devastation



of enormous magnitude. During this critical time, let us demonstrate our leadership by being models of generosity, as we execute our belief in our philanthropic mission.

The source for this donation may be your chapter’s emergency fund or through a targeted appeal for assistance. Please send your contribution to the National Philoptochos office, earmarked for the “National Philoptochos Society Asia Disaster Relief Fund.”

The National Philoptochos will waive the 10 percent administrative costs for this appeal.

Please keep the victims of this tragic event in your prayers and may our ever-loving God bless you for your philanthropy, love and generosity. May our assistance provide a glimmer of hope to those affected by this monstrous devastation.

With much love in Christ,
Georgia Skeadas
 President
 National Philoptochos Society

More Than 70 Years of Christian Philanthropy

The 50th Anniversary of the founding of Philoptochos was celebrated during the 5th Convention in San Francisco in July, 1982 under the leadership of Katherine Pappas.

by Terry Kokas

In September 1982 Beatrice Marks was appointed National President of Philoptochos. Mrs. Marks was the first National President to visit Philoptochos chapters in the United States, Canada, and South.

Under her leadership the National Board of Philoptochos undertook a major campaign to support the renovation of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island pledging the renovation of \$100,000 in honor of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos. A plaque has been installed.

Mrs. Marks was married to the late George Marks and they had two sons, John and Chris. She has five grandchildren and six great grandchildren, four girls and two boys.

During her Presidency, Mrs. Marks was also responsible for the establishment of the Zoe Cavalaris Education Fund, which financially assists graduates of St. Basil Academy students to attend the college or university of their choice.

A native of Chicago, Mrs. Marks and her husband owned several popular restaurants in the financial district of Chicago’s Loop area. Their son John is following in his parents footsteps by establishing restaurants and hotels in Chicago and in other cities.



BEATRICE MARKS

Mrs. Marks has the distinction of being an “archontisa” when the late Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras bestowed this great honor on her for her philanthropia.

Mrs. Marks was responsible for persuading the St. Andrew’s Woman’s Club to become a Philoptochos chapter, and was elected its first President. She also served as Diocese of Chicago Philoptochos and in September 1982, Archbishop Iakovos appointed her National President and in 1984 was reappointed National President for another two years. She is an Honorary National President and an Honorary Life Member of the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos.

Annual Spelling Bee Championship

NEW YORK – The annual Archdiocese Spelling Bee, part of the city-wide spelling bee sponsored by the Daily News, took place Jan. 13 with 11 participants from area Greek American Day Schools.

There were two winners, Tessa Medakovich, age 10, fifth grader at the Cathedral School in Manhattan, and Anastasi Varelis, age 13, of A. Fantis School in Brooklyn, an eighth grader.

There were two first-place winners because of a disputed call on the spelling of a word by one of the students and a second round of the spelling bee was deemed necessary. Both winners will move on to the city-wide level of competition.

Runner-up was George Koutsothanas, 13, an eighth grader at William Spyropoulos School in Flushing.

Other participants were Alex Demetriou, Jamaica Day School; Maria Karadimas, Transfiguration School, Corona; Anna Gnesina, Greek American Institute,



ORTHODOX OBSERVER

SPELLING CHAMPS – Tessa Medakovich and Anastasi Varelis, both first place; and runner up George Koutsothanas. Shown with them are Maria Makedon of the Archdiocese Department of Greek Education, and Dr. Thomas DeMarco, principal of Kaloidis Day School in Brooklyn, who served as moderator.

Bronx; Marianthi Kougentakis, Kaloidis School, Brooklyn; Fotini Sachpatzidis of Soterios Ellenas School, Brooklyn; Nikolas Vorontchikhine, St. Spyridon School, Manhattan; Kally Konstantinidis, St. Demetrios School, Astoria; and Aliana Burke, Three Hierarchs, Brooklyn.

Church Musician Archon Receives National Ministry of Music Award



GEORGE RAPTIS receiving his national award.

NEW YORK – George S. Raptis, longtime choir director, composer, and church music clinician in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, is one of 20 church musicians from many religious jurisdictions being recognized by the National Religious Music Week Alliance for developing outstanding religious music programs for their churches.

The Alliance is a multi-denominational organization whose purpose it is to encourage all places of worship to celebrate and honor the ministry of music.

"Our aim is to recognize men and women for exceptional performance in the ministry of music," said Kevin Samblanet, chair of the Alliance's Awards Committee. "By focusing on the accomplishments of these leaders, we encourage and support the work of all ministers of music."

Mr. Raptis' nomination, submitted by the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, was judged by a national panel.

Dr. Vicki Pappas, National Chairman of the National Forum stated, "It is a great honor for our Orthodox Church's musicians to be so highly placed among musi-

cians from so many other non-Orthodox jurisdictions, and to be recognized nationally outside of our own Church.

The awards are especially timely as our Archdiocese celebrates National Church Music Sunday on October 3, 2004, the day we set aside to recognize the contributions of our church musicians."

Mr. Raptis has been a long-time choir director of several Greek Orthodox churches in the Detroit area for more than 60 years – most notably, Sts. Constantine and Helen in Westland for 50 years (1944-1994) and St. John in Sterling Heights. He currently is the associate director of the St. Nicholas Church in Troy, and also serves as music director for the Metropolis of Detroit.

Mr. Raptis has also distinguished himself as a guest director for choirs across the United States, as a clinician for various church music workshops, as a producer of liturgical resources, and as a composer of Greek Orthodox liturgical music.

He has been invited as guest conductor and workshop clinician throughout the nine metropolises of the Archdiocese of America.



"A Place for Us" Republished in Paperback Edition



NEW YORK – Nicholas Gage, author of the 1984 best seller "Eleni" and "A Place for Us" in 1989, has republished the latter title in paperback.

The hardbound edition went out of print in 1997 but the new paperback edition, which sells for \$16, was recently produced by Chandler House Press.

While Eleni tells the story about the upheavals of Gage's family in wartime Greece, the second book, more upbeat than his original work, tells the story of his family's efforts to make a new life in America in 1950s Worcester, Mass.

Upon learning of their mother, Eleni's, death in the remote village of Lia, Epiros, her children, who she arranged to escape, eventually make their way to a refugee camp in Greece and decide to make

the arduous trip to America, where their father, Christos Gatzoyiannis, whom Nicholas had never seen, is living in Worcester and trying to find work as a chef.

Gage's family must grapple with problems of language, poverty, a strict father, traditions of the old country, teasing from classmates, and terrifying memories of war. But, slowly, they learn to adjust and find a place in their new country.

Their story has as much humor, joy and achievement as it does trials and suffering.

A Place for Us can be ordered directly from the publisher by e-mail: INFO@Tatnuck.com; by phone at (308) 757-2864, ext. 3101, through Amazon.com, or through any bookstore that can order it from the publisher.

St. Luke's Is Just What the Doctor Ordered

▶ page 21

Three years after the church was built, the community embarked on a series of building programs as its membership continued to increase. The facilities included an education building, followed by a parish house in 1968., a new church – the present house of worship – and a lower level chapel in 1985, and the community center/gymnasium in 1987.

Progress continues

The need for improved and enlarged facilities continues. "We're bulging at the seams," said Fr. Kontos. The community is planning a multi-million dollar expansion/renovation project for the existing support buildings.

Revenue to support the community and its ministries comes mainly from the stewardship program, introduced in 1979. This year, the parish surpassed its goal of \$300,000, Fr. Kontos said.

Other sources include the Greek festival, held the second or third week in September, banquets and a highly successful golf outing, which this year is scheduled May 23.

Parish members consist of second and

third generation Greek Americans, along with many converts and immigrants from various parts of Greece. Most are in the professions or in business.

Fr. Kontos, a full-time secretary and a maintenance person form the core of the church's administrative staff, but he also notes "the wonderful people who volunteer with mailings" and other projects for helping the parish to run smoothly.

"Thank God I had a great teacher in Milwaukee, Fr. James Dokos," said Fr. Kontos, whom he credits for teaching him the administrative skills needed to perform his many duties.

When he's not engaged in one of his ministries, he also maintains St. Luke Church's extensive web site, which includes multi-media presentations.

"It's what I do when I can't sleep," Fr. Kontos joked. About 300 families are included on the parish's e-mail list.

Fr. Kontos said the biggest challenge he faces is to focus on his ministry and make weekly church services "like Easter Sunday." He adds, "We are moving in that direction and that's a blessing."

— Compiled by Jim Golding



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What's Up WITH Divorce

Divorce is not an uncommon word in our society. In fact, over 50 percent of today's marriages end in divorce - this means one out of every two couples will get divorced! We may think that our Orthodox Christian families aren't part of this growing epidemic, but this is not the case. If your parents were divorced years ago, you may have been the only one in school without mom and dad living under the same roof. Today you would have to search far and wide to find a school, or even one family, that has not been affected by divorce. While this information will not help you through the sudden changes you may face during a divorce, it does help to know that you are not alone.

by Rev. George Orfanakos

Often times during a divorce, our churches focus on the parents and their needs, while neglecting to consider the lingering effects that a divorce will have on you. As a result, you may at times feel left behind through this life-changing ordeal. For this reason, I would like to give you a list of rights that all young people, facing the divorce of their parents, have:

- You have the right to know how important you are in the eyes of our Heavenly Father. In our worst moments, He does not abandon us, but rushes to our side and carries us in His tender embrace.

PARENTS and YOUTH Workers Corner

Families trying to cope with divorce

For a session to do with teenagers, visit our website at www.youth.goarch.org. All sessions can be found in the "For Youth Workers" section.

Recommended books for families trying to cope with divorce: "Mom's House, Dad's House" by Isolina Ricci, and "Surviving the Breakup: How Children and Parents Cope With Divorce", by Judith Wallerstein and Joan Kelly.

New Resource: GOYA Curriculum
Order the newest resource from our Department, The GOYA Curriculum, provides GOYA leaders with curriculum for the Ecclesiastical year. The book contains 12 sessions with activities, discussions, and handouts for the teenagers to take with them. A must have for every GOYA advisor! All of our resources can be ordered by printing out the order form on our website at www.youth.goarch.org and mailing it in with payment.

Youth Worker List-Server

Sign up for our Youth Worker list-server! We send weekly resources, ideas and activities for parents and youth workers. Send an e-mail to listserv@listserv.goarch.org. Leave the subject blank and in the body of the e-mail type in "subscribe youth" (without the quotation mark). You'll get confirmation of your subscription shortly after.

- You have the right to want a satisfying relationship with each parent.

- You have the right NOT to be caught between your parents as they struggle with each other.

- You have the right to your feelings whether they are anger, frustration, pain, love or whatever.

- You have the right to mourn the losses you are experiencing as a result of the divorce (relationships, home, etc.)

- You have the right to work through your feelings and to receive cooperation from other family members in dealing with problems you are experiencing.

- You have the right to be young and not worry about "adult" problems!

Along with these rights, you should begin to understand that your parents' divorce is not your fault, and you could not have prevented it at all. I know that living through a divorce is such a tremendous weight, and that many times life seems chaotic, but here are three things you can do to take control of your situation and help yourself to begin to feel better:

Don't go through this period alone

Sometimes we bottle all of our emotion inside and don't want to let it out, but that is really the worst thing you can do. Take it from me; the best thing is to find someone you can talk too. Not just your mother, father, family member or friend, but perhaps your parish priest or a professional counselor who will listen to what you have to say, and even more importantly, know how to help! The longer you keep those feelings bottled up inside, the harder it will be to move on with your life.

Care for yourself emotionally, physically and spiritually

Divorce will take a toll on your health and spiritual life. You will feel tired and exhausted, and many times will not be able to sleep or eat. It is so important to make sure that you are taking care of your body. Do something you enjoy. Make time for yourself. Make sure you remain

physically active throughout the day and remember to maintain a healthy diet. Most importantly, take time to pray and lift up your problems to God. He will always listen to what you have to say and will comfort you in ways you never imagined possible. Receive Holy Communion frequently and participate in the sacraments of the Church.

Now more than ever, you need the healing power of Christ inside you. Invite Him into your heart and ask Him to make you feel whole again.

Expect to experience a wide range of feelings

The hardest thing to deal with is the way you are going to feel each day. At times, divorce will make you feel angry and depressed. Even though you may try hard to accept the reality of the situation, sometimes you may be overcome with anxiety. Each day, maybe each minute, you will feel different. This is normal and part of the various stages we go through when we experience loss.

Even though you might feel broken inside now, you will see that the suggestions described above will help you begin to feel better. Whether it is your own family or friend's family who have experienced a divorce, it is important to remember that you are not alone.

As Orthodox Christians, we not only have our friends and family for support but we also have the church-- her saints, sacraments and prayers. In the end, it would be good for us all to emulate the prayer of Saint Basil the Great as found in the Divine Liturgy attributed to him: "Preserve (all) marriages in peace and harmony; nurture the infants; instruct the youth; give courage to the weak and re-unite those who have been separated."

If there is one thing we can and should remind our parents, whether married or not, it is that the greatest gift a mother can give her children is to honor and respect their father, and the greatest gift a father can give his children is to honor and respect their mother.

Father George is the pastor at the Greek Orthodox Church of St. George in Clifton, New Jersey. If you would like to contact him, you may do so by emailing him at frgeorge@stgeorgeclifton.org

Did You Know...

That a Family can Survive Divorce?

A family can even become holy after something as traumatic as divorce. For example, take a look at this story: Helen was the daughter of a blue-collar worker but caught the eye of a powerful political official.

They were married and had a son together. Several years later, Helen's husband received a huge promotion, gaining more power and prestige as well as a nice title.

He decided that he should have a wife who reflected his new high-status position, so he divorced Helen and married his boss's stepdaughter.

However, Helen stayed involved in the life of her son, who loved her very dearly.

When Helen's ex-husband died, her son inherited the fortune and responsibilities of his father.

Helen's son named her co-president of his fortune and empire, and Helen spent the rest of her life serving the poor and donating money to have churches built. She also traveled frequently, making pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

On one of these pilgrimages, she uncovered the cross on which Christ himself was crucified. Thanks to her, we have relics of this cross today.

Do you know who Helen and her son are - the Roman Emperor Constantine and his mother, Helen, who were later canonized as saints.

In the early fourth century St Constantine stopped the persecution of Christians and made Christianity a legal religion in the empire. His mother uncovered the true cross.

The church celebrates their memory on May 21 and commemorates the Elevation of the Cross on Sept. 14.

Movie Review THE INCREDIBLES

At first glance, the movie The Incredibles looks like another children's movie about a family of superheroes; but it's so much more.

by Anastasia Kanistras

The movie tells the story of a family of superheroes after 15 years of not being able to use their powers. The city these superheroes lived in banned all superheroes from using/showing their powers. There was a superhero relocation program to help with this.

The superheroes were not allowed to tell anyone about their past and they also had to try to control their children from using their powers in public.

The movie focuses specifically on two of the superheroes Mr. Incredible, and Elasti-Girl, who get married and have three children. The two oldest children Dash and Violet, who also have super-

heroes powers, go on an adventure with their mother to save their father, who has been captured.

The movie also shows how difficult it is for the superheroes to live normal lives, trying not to be themselves and hiding their true identity. In the superhero relocation program, each superhero is given a "normal" name, and a job.

Each member of the family has a different superpower, which can be very hard to control in times of stress.

In the beginning of the family's adventure the children do not really know how to use their powers.

However, when the family is at risk, they overcome all odds. The movie uses comedy to show how support within family is important, and that being different is not always a bad thing.

I saw this movie together with the rest of the GOYA at my church and our GOYA

advisor. Just about everyone in the theater was laughing the entire two hours of the movie. This movie is a great movie for people of all ages, a great family movie.

Anastasia is a senior in high school in East Hampton, N.Y.. For the first 10 years of her life she lived in Patras, Greece. She attends Kimisis Tis Theotokou in Southampton, New York where she is involved with the GOYA.

Challenge is the Youth & Young Adult Ministries supplement to the Orthodox Observer.

Articles reflect the opinion of the writers.
Write to: Youth & Young Adult Ministries,
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METROPOLITAN ANTHONY'S LAST ENCYCLICAL

THE MANTLE OF ELIJAH

Editor's note: As the least possible tribute to Metropolitan Anthony who was called by the Lord this past Christmas Day to be with Him, we publish in its entirety the Metropolitan's last encyclical released on December 22, 2004, just two days before his passing.

To the Reverend Clergy, Monastics, Archons, Archdiocese and Metropolis Council Members, Parish Councils, Philoptochos Societies, Ministries, Choirs, Youth Organizations, and All the Faithful of the Metropolis of San Francisco:

When they had crossed the River Jordan, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double portion of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over. (1 Kings 2:8-14)

My Dearly Beloved Children in the Lord,

AS YOUR BISHOP for more than twenty-five years, I am writing to you this final encyclical of my ministry, not knowing how much longer the Lord may grant me to remain upon this earth. For some time now, I have desired to prepare my apologia, an accounting of my ministry and service to the Church, an attempt to define the trajectory which I together with many others have sought to establish, in order that those who come after may have a clear understanding of what we set out to accomplish. Whether I succeeded in the tasks I was given, I do not know; God knows. But at the very least, it seems fitting to describe these tasks as I saw them, so that others may have some criteria by which to judge my humble efforts in the future.

Recently, the account of Elijah's ascent into heaven has come frequently to my mind, and without the usual constraints of my hectic schedule, I have had time to contemplate the meaning of this story, at once mysterious yet familiar. It is a story about departure, and about what is left behind when we are gone. The mantle of Elijah was all that remained after he ascended from this earth. The mantle represents his ministry, his prophetic witness, the cumulative effect of his service in Israel. It represents the "double portion" of his spirit for which Elisha so earnestly yearned, the continuation and extension of his presence among the people. In a sense, this encyclical is my attempt to identify the mantle that I am leaving behind, in the hopes that my spiritual children will take up this mantle, not only carrying on the work that I have begun, but expanding and amplifying it, thus proving themselves true recipients of a "double portion" of my spirit and vision.

THE WORD MADE FLESH

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

Since the very beginning of my ministry, I have never been content to allow theology to remain at the level of the abstract "word," of ideas and propositions requiring merely mental acquiescence. Perhaps this is a vestige of my humble beginnings among simple people, for whom God was not an intellectual or philosophical construct, but a reality ever-present in the rhythm of seedtime and harvest, in the changing of the seasons, in birth and death. True theology must be enfleshed, must become incarnate in time and space, in order to remain faithful to its ultimate task. As my compatriot Nikos Kazantzakis has written, "Within me, even the most metaphysical problem takes on a warm physical body which smells of sea, soil, and human sweat. The Word, in order to touch me, must become flesh. Only then do I understand: when I can smell, see, and touch." It is for this reason that I have always insisted on an incarnational way of doing theology that reflects this constant movement from "word" to "flesh," from the abstract to the concrete, from the intangible to the human touch.

I have been known at times to be impatient with visionaries and idealists. When people come to me and want to share their ideas, I have often said, "Show me your good ideas by putting them into action." Yet this is really not so different from the words of St. Iakovos, "I will show you my faith by what I do" (Jas. 2:18), or for that matter St. Maximos the Confessor, who writes, "Spiritual knowledge not put into practice does not differ in any way from illusion, lacking such practice to give it real substance." Our faith is incarnated and acquires real substance in programs that elevate and inspire our people, in ministries that carry on the work of the Church, in concrete actions that demonstrate our love for others and our commitment to carrying out the work of the Gospel. For in the final analysis, it is not our words, but our deeds that constitute the ultimate criterion of our faith, as Christ Himself taught us: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, lord,' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father" (Matt. 7:21).

A great deal of my ministry has been identified with building and construction projects. For over twenty-five years I have been the "building bishop," constantly urging our communities to acquire land, to develop plans, to break ground and to build. Since I came to this Metropolis in 1979, we have constructed and consecrated no less than twenty-five new churches, essentially one new church every year, and nearly every community has taken on some major building or renovation project during my tenure. The soaring lines of a Byzantine church are a mode of expression of the theology of the Church, as are the simpler elements of a well-designed parish hall or a well-furnished kitchen (where I am often to be found before a meal is served, stirring and sampling and making suggestions). All are places of philoxenia, sacred spaces where the hospitality by which God becomes present in our midst is offered, as the icon of the "Hospitality of Abraham" reminds us.

TREASURES NEW AND OLD

Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.

(Matt. 13:52)

When I was enthroned as the Bishop of San Francisco on June 7, 1979, I stated in my enthronement speech, "The chal-

lenge of serving our Holy Church in the western United States awakens in me the call of the frontier, where development and expansion are possible, where the human resources are limitless, and where spiritual and intellectual growth are not only possible, but attainable." From the very beginning, I have felt my episcopal ministry to be a calling to stand at the frontier of faith, refusing to retreat into the well-trodden paths of religious convention and formalism. In a certain sense, one might be so bold as to say that I and this Metropolis were made for each other, since we both share this "spirit of the frontier." My service to the Church has been defined by a progressive contour, a willingness to encounter the surrounding culture with the same creativity and flexibility demonstrated by the great Fathers of the Church, while at the same time holding fast to what is essential and irreducible in our theological tradition.

I can think of no better image of this aspect of my ministry, no better illustration of this attempt to bring together the old and the new, than the Katholikon, the magnificent church edifice of the Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring. Anyone with even the most basic understanding of Byzantine architecture will immediately recognize the proportions and symmetry of the Byzantine heritage, the classical lineaments of the so-called "churches of Mystras." Yet upon entering, one is immediately struck by the fact that this sacred space is not defined solely in terms of bygone history. The icons, especially the breathtaking iconography of the central dome, offer a fresh vision of the meaning and scope of Christ's salvation, representing an approach that is at once firmly rooted in tradition yet not slavishly devoted to reproducing the past. Our task is not merely to imitate what was done by the saints of previous eras, but somehow to appropriate at a much deeper level the way in which they engaged their own historical environment, seeking to respond as they would have responded had they lived in our day.

For over twenty-five years, the Metropolis of San Francisco has stood at the frontier of faith, the threshold between the old and the new, with a pioneering spirit that does not shy from controversy or confrontation. We have been among the most progressive in the Archdiocese in the use of the English language in our parishes, while at the same time holding fast to the Hellenic heritage and identity through programs such as the Metropolis Folk Dance and Choral Festival. We have led the way in Church music with beautiful new compositions and boldly innovative approaches, without losing the ethos, the inward essence of our rich musical legacy. We have been among the most engaged in terms of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, culminating in the historic "Ecumenical Pilgrimage" to Canterbury, Rome, and Constantinople in 2003, while at the same time firmly retaining the distinctiveness of our Orthodox theological tradition. In short, we have endeavored always to embrace the opportunities inherent in the "new," without surrendering what is of enduring value in the "old." As Solomon the wise remarks, we must "take hold of the one, without letting go of the other, for the one who fears God will succeed in both" (Eccl. 7:18).

THE YOUTH AND THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it. (Luke 18:17)

In July of 1979, just a few weeks after my enthronement as Bishop of San Francisco, I traveled to St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in San Jose to baptize the infant son of one of our priests. I am certain that both the clergy and the laypeople who attended were watching carefully for some sign, some indication of what their new bishop was like. At the conclusion of the baptism, I lifted up the child and said, "In this child, and countless others like him, lays the hope and future of our Church. What spiritual inheritance will we leave behind for them and generations to come?" Then, while people were still smiling at me and the child, I said something that seemingly caught them off guard: "By the grace of God, I am looking for someone to give me a million dollars, or its equivalent in property, so that I can build a camp and retreat center where this child can someday go to learn about his Orthodox faith and Hellenic heritage."

That event in many ways set the tone for my future ministry. For while many undoubtedly left the baptism shaking their heads over the foibles of the new bishop, that announcement soon led to a meeting arranged by Fr. John Bakas between myself and Mr. Nicholas Kossaras, who afterward donated 185 acres of land in the Sequoia-Nevada foothills near Dunlap, California, that became St. Nicholas Ranch Conference and Retreat Center. I was never afraid to ask big, knowing that I was asking not for myself, but for the Church, and especially for the youth and the succeeding generations. St. Nicholas Ranch thus became symbolic, not only of my parrhsiva or boldness in asking, but also of my abiding commitment to the youth. Over the years, we have expanded not only the physical boundaries of the Ranch by acquiring more property (today almost 300 acres), we have expanded its mission as well. We have attained the original vision of creating a haven for our youth and a spiritual center to host our Metropolis programs and conferences. And we have recently fulfilled a long-cherished dream with the completion and dedication of the magnificent Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring. But I envision much more still to come, a "St. Nicholas Center," an integrated campus of facilities that will include a Hellenic Heritage Center housing a library with thousands of volumes containing the history of the Greek Orthodox community on the west coast, a museum, and an archival center safeguarding the archives of the Metropolis and all its parishes. One day, this complex may even become the kernel for a theological preparatory school for seminarians studying for the priesthood. It remains for my successors to "take up the mantle" and fulfill this aspect of my life's work and vision.

In my enthronement speech, I laid out two major priorities that would come to define the heart of my ministry: the youth and the Christian family. St. Nicholas Ranch was one way in which we sought to fulfill this mandate. But there were many other ways. In the early 1980s, we began a series of youth conferences, gathering thousands of young people in places like Anaheim and Santa Clara, and culminating in the great youth rally that was held in conjunction with the Clergy-Laity Congress of 1982. Those events were in many ways what energized the "youth movement" in our Archdiocese at that time. And they also gave momentum to the dozen or so folk dance groups that grew into the annual Folk Dance and Choral Festival, one of the most powerful and far-reaching ministries of our Metropolis. From the time I was a child myself, I have loved to dance, and have always regarded dance as a kind of spiritual activity. As with

METROPOLITAN ANTHONY'S LAST ENCYCLICAL

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prayer, it is also through music and dance that we seek to express the deepest yearnings and highest aspirations of the human spirit. To quote Nikos Kazantzakis once more, "Anyone who cannot sing cannot pray. Angels have mouths, but lack the power of speech; they sing to God by dancing." The Metropolis of San Francisco Folk Dance and Choral Festival has become the largest exhibition of authentic Greek folk dance, costume, and music in the world. Like St. Nicholas Ranch, the Folk Dance Festival was a means to abolishing the "myth of the distance," gathering not only the youth of our Metropolis, but the Orthodox family as well, a means to bringing people together. In fact, if I had to identify one of the primary achievements of my ministry, it would be this: I have brought people together.

THE FLOWERING OF MONASTICISM

Abba Anthony said, "Let us eat at the ninth hour, and then let us go out for a walk and explore the country." So they went out into the desert and they walked until sunset. Then Abba Anthony said, "Let us pray and plant the cross here, so that those who wish to build a new monastery may do so here." (From the Sayings of the Desert Fathers)

I gravitate to the above story of St. Anthony, my namesake, because it offers us a glimpse of a side of his personality that is not often recognized or appreciated. We are accustomed to associate St. Anthony, the "Father of Monasticism," with solitude and silence. But here we see a man with his eyes on the horizon, slightly restless, St. Anthony the explorer, the founder of monasteries. And this makes me identify all the more with my patron saint, knowing him to have been not only a man of prayer, but a man of action.

The great revival of Greek Orthodox monasticism in America may be said to have begun in the Metropolis of San Francisco with the coming of Geronta Ephraim to this Metropolis by my invitation in 1989. At that time, I shared with Fr. Ephraim my vision of a monastic center at St. Nicholas Ranch. For years, ever since the youth of our Metropolis planted the cross on a hilltop overlooking the Ranch (in an action reminiscent of St. Anthony's), we had prayed for the emergence of a monastic community on the premises, in order to enhance and deepen the spiritual foundations of the Ranch environment and experience. Fr. Ephraim subsequently arranged for the coming of two wonderful nuns from Greece, Sister Markella and Sister Fevronia, in 1993, and thus originated the Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring. From this small beginning, the monastic community has grown to fifteen nuns. In 1995, we broke ground for the Katholikon, the monastic church edifice, our "jewel of the mountains." With its exquisite marble floor, intricate woodcarving, and stunningly beautiful iconography, the Katholikon is without a doubt the most breathtaking Greek Orthodox church to be found anywhere in America. In 2000, we began work on the Kellia or monastic residences, and in 2003 we held the Thyranoxia service, dedicating both these magnificent structures to the glory of God, and officially installing Sister Markella as the first Abbess of the Monastery.

The establishment of the Monastery of the Life-Giving Spring was followed within a few years by the founding of St. Anthony Monastery in Florence, Arizona, in 1995, by Abbot Paisios and five other brothers from Mount Athos in Greece. With the explosive growth of its monastic community, which has now grown to over forty monks, and the extraordinarily rapid expansion of its facilities, St. Anthony be-

came the great "miracle in the desert," the flagship, so to speak, of all the other Greek Orthodox monasteries in America. The Monastery of St. John the Forerunner in Goldendale, Washington, also began in 1995 with a generous donation of property by Dr. Gerald Timmer, and the subsequent coming of Abbess Efraxia, Sister Parthenia, and Sister Agne from Greece. In just a few short years, this monastery has grown to sixteen sisters, becoming one of the largest women's monastic foundations in the Archdiocese. The monasteries hold fast to traditional practice, thus fulfilling their mandate to be the "conscience of the Church." And the amazing growth of these monastic communities offers a compelling witness to the tremendous vitality of monasticism in this country.

FRIENDS OF THE POOR

Let us love one another, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:18

As Orthodox Christians, we recognize the ultimate goal of the Christian life to be theosis or divinization—becoming like God as much as is possible for human beings. Yet this process of theosis is not a matter of a discarnate spirituality that retreats from human need and suffering. The journey towards theosis is rather expressed through concrete acts of love and mercy in imitation of God, who is love. As St. Gregory the Theologian writes, "Prove yourself a god to the unfortunate, imitating the mercy of God. There is nothing as godly in human beings as to do good works." And this love in action is epitomized, I believe, by the ministry of our Metropolis Philoptochos Society. When I consider the ministry of Philoptochos, I am reminded of the women who ministered to the body of our Savior after the Crucifixion. Just as these women cared for the wounded and broken body of the Lord, so also the women of Philoptochos are called to minister to the Body of Christ; that is, the Church. And just as the myrrh-bearing women who came to the tomb were sent forth by the angels to announce the Resurrection of Christ, so also the women of Philoptochos have received a commission to proclaim the Risen Lord, not with mere words, but with tangible actions of love and service that proclaim the Gospel more loudly than words could ever do. To quote St. Francis of Assisi, for whom the seat of our Metropolis is named, we are to "preach the Gospel, and if absolutely necessary, use words."

Among the greatest accomplishments of our Philoptochos in this regard is the "Kids 'n' Cancer/Camp Agape" program. This amazing ministry began at St. Nicholas Ranch, and has expanded to Portland and Seattle, with new programs under development in San Diego and Phoenix. Every year, hundreds of children with cancer, many from disadvantaged homes, have the opportunity together with their families to participate in a summer camp program free of charge, with all expenses paid by Philoptochos. The goal of the program is to provide as normative a camp experience as possible, including games, barbecues, campfires, sing-along, and the like. Yet the program is also specifically attuned to the unique physical and emotional needs of these children, as well as providing the parents with support and an opportunity for networking. Another tremendous example of this "love in action" is the "Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund," of which Philoptochos has become the champion and steward. This fund provides scholarships to students from our Metropolis attending Hellenic College or Holy Cross School of Theology. Through the annual Student Aid Endowment Holiday Luncheon, this fund has grown to over one-and-a-half million dollars. When I was a student at the

Ecclesiastical School of Chania in Crete, and at the great Theological School of Halki of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, my education was completely underwritten by the Church (except for one unfortunate period when I lost my scholarship because I did not keep my grades up, and had to work to pay my tuition—a lesson I have never forgotten!). It has always been my goal that all students from this Metropolis who are studying for the priesthood or for some other form of full-time service to the Church should have their education similarly paid for by the Church. No one should ever be denied the opportunity to study for the priesthood because of a lack of funds.

Despite all that has been accomplished, however, much more remains to be done. There is an urgent need for our parishes to acquire a heightened sense of responsibility to the local community, ministering to the needs of the hungry and the homeless, the sick and the needy, the lonely and abandoned. Years ago, we had envisioned the creation of a permanent position at the Metropolis level occupied by a trained social worker, who would coordinate parish programs of social ministry and outreach. Unfortunately, our plans did not come to fruition at that time; this initiative remains for others to carry out in the future. I am convinced that the time has come for our churches to take a more integrated and systematic approach to issues of poverty, hunger, and homelessness. The miracle of the Incarnation, of the word become flesh, is extended and perpetuated in us, who through the descent of the Holy Spirit at baptism have become "members of Christ's body, of His very flesh and bones" (Eph. 5:30). And this constitutes a sacred obligation for us to minister in Christ's name to our neighbor; that is, to every person in need whom we encounter (cf. Luke 10:25-37).

A SACRED INVITATION

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matt. 11:28)

In July of 2002, the Metropolis of San Francisco hosted the 36th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress of the Archdiocese, with the theme "Offering our Orthodox Faith to Contemporary America." The theme of the Congress was particularly appropriate in view of the fact that our Metropolis has long been at the forefront of missions and evangelism in the Archdiocese. In 1982, the Diocese Philoptochos inaugurated the "Pennies and Prayers" program in order to raise funds for home mission's projects, as well as increasing awareness of missions throughout the diocese. Soon afterwards, the "HOME Foundation" was born in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1984. The HOME Foundation was instrumental in the creation of three new "daughter" parishes in the Phoenix metropolitan area without significant diminution of the "mother" church, Holy Trinity Cathedral. This was a model that was to be repeated throughout the Metropolis, in Sacramento, Portland, Seattle, and elsewhere, by the successor to the HOME Foundation, the Committee on Orthodox Missions and Evangelism (COME). COME utilizes surveys, demographic studies, and careful planning to create and sustain viable Eucharistic communities in the areas that need them most. Taken together, HOME and COME represent the first systematic approach to church planting in our Archdiocese.

My tenure has witnessed the founding of over twenty new parishes and missions in this Metropolis, many of which have gone on to acquire land and build, establishing themselves as durable fixtures of the ecclesial landscape. These young parishes represent the newness of Orthodoxy in this land, with predominantly English worship, numerous converts,

and an abundance of young families with children, often representing the third and fourth generations from the old country. They represent the openness of our Church to embrace its true catholic identity, to become "all things to all people." But our work in missions has not been limited to activities within our Metropolis. In 1985, we raised seventy-five thousand dollars in aid for starving children in Ethiopia. And in 1992, COME sponsored the "Russia Challenge," an inter-Orthodox relief effort that sent a team of missionaries together with desperately-needed food, medicine, and other supplies to the Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia Challenge culminated in the great "Easter Airlift," in which thousands of boxes of supplies were shipped to Russia. In conjunction with this effort, I traveled to Russia together with an ecumenical delegation, where I had the opportunity to participate in the first truly free celebration of Holy Pascha in Moscow in over seventy years.

In concluding this section on missions, it seems appropriate to emphasize the pressing need for strengthened relations and more effective communication among the canonical Orthodox jurisdictions in America. At present, our many separate and uncoordinated activities not only result in much duplication of effort, but also frequently lead to a diffusion and dispersion of our energies, constituting a principle of spiritual entropy. If Orthodoxy in this country is to succeed in its missionary vocation, if it is truly to realize its catholic identity, then we must work towards a more unified presentation of the Orthodox faith in this land. The mantle that Elijah passed on to Elisha held the power to divide, to "part the waters to the one side and to the other." But perhaps it may be that the mantle that we bequeath to our successors may become an instrument of union, bringing together that which was once separated like the parted waters, so that they reunite to form a seamless and indivisible whole.

I HAVE LAID A FOUNDATION

By the grace of God given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid a foundation... (1 Cor. 3:10)

In the above-referenced passage, St. Paul writes that by his apostolic ministry among the Corinthians he has laid a firm and immovable foundation of faith and sound doctrine. And yet Paul also clearly recognizes that he did not do so alone, but with the assistance of many others, who by their labors became "fellow-workers" both with God and with himself (cf. 1 Cor. 3:9). In the same vein, I would be deeply remiss if I did not acknowledge my enormous indebtedness to those who labored with me to make possible everything that has been previously recounted. My profound appreciation is due to my co-workers and concelebrants, the priests and deacons of this Metropolis, without who even the best-laid plans would never have come to fruition. I am also deeply grateful to the many laypeople whose assistance has been vital to the realization of these endeavors. I am especially thankful to His Grace Bishop Anthimos for his longstanding friendship and invaluable assistance within the Metropolis. I thank His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and the former Archbishops of America under whom I have served, as well as my fellow Metropolitans of the Holy Eparchial Synod, for their love and support throughout my ministry. And I offer my sincere respect and deep gratitude to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who has wisely overseen the Church in both my native and adopted homelands. Finally, I give thanks to God, who saw fit in my



Students to Experience "Real" World in Life-Changing Capacities on Real Break 2005

BOSTON – Orthodox Christian Fellowship's (OCF) Real Break program has begun registration for its 2005 trips on which students will have life-changing experiences helping hundreds of those in need. In 2005, Real Break is excited to be returning to all of our 2004 locations: Hogar Rafael Ayau Orphanage in Guatemala, Project Mexico, the Aleutian Villages in Eklutna, Alaska, Raphael House in San Francisco and St. George the Martyr Monastery in Greece.

Real Break teams will also serve a Special Education Orphanage in El Salvador and a campus of Trinity Children and Family Services in Los Angeles. Each Real Break provides alternatives to "traditional" spring breaks for Orthodox college students, and gives them instead a full Christian experience of fellowship and service to others.

The program provides opportunities for spiritual growth with one-on-one interaction with a priest accompanying each group.

Each participant is asked to raise the funds for their trip, with donors becoming a part of each participant's experience as photos and stories are shared upon their return.

An anonymous student who participated on a Real Break team to Project Mexico reflected on their experience by sharing, "As we blessed the home which we built with our own hands, a deep sense of thankfulness to our Lord for allowing us this experience, trembled through me."

The dates and locations for 2005 are: February 26 - March 5 - Raphael House (San Francisco), March 5-12 - El Salvador,

Project Mexico, Alaska, March 12-19 - Greece (until 20th), Trinity Children and Family Services, Hogar Rafael Ayau (Guatemala), March 19-26 - Project Mexico, March 26 - April 2 - Guatemala.

In five years, Real Break has involved over 350 participants, serving ten different locations. Mr. Joseph J. Samra III, Program Coordinator for OCF stated, "I firmly believe there is no greater short-term experience for a student than Real Break; the smiles of the children we serve and the life-changing realizations made each year by the students is testament to God's work being accomplished."

Registration and more information can be found on the OCF website at www.ocf.net or by calling 800-919-10CF.

About OCF

Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is the official campus ministry effort of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA). It is a Pan-Orthodox effort, overseen by an Executive Committee and aided by a sixteen-person Student Advisory Board. The office is located in Boston, where a full time staff develops OCF programs and resources.

The staff is available to guide and support local OCF chapters through communication with the larger Orthodox community, national programs, and development of resources for use by Orthodox college students. SCOBA designated the 3rd Sunday in September each year as "College Student Sunday" to raise awareness of our students on campus and OCF's activities.

Missionaries needed: Youth & young adults

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. – Hierarchs from around the world have requested help from the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) for someone who works with youth and young adults to help the Church in Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America. Youth and young adult workers, leaders or coordinators, or someone with experience in this area should consider if God is calling them to use their talents and experience in the mission field on a one-to-two-year placement.

Most people called to the mission field never go. Will you be someone who

answers the call? One's impact as a missionary youth and young adult worker could be great. Young people will be leaders in the Church tomorrow; perhaps some will be missionaries themselves.

An individual's mission work will help the Church grow and reach others who have not experienced the joy of knowing Christ. Consider serving as an OCMC missionary and help make disciples of all nations!

For information contact missionaries @ocmc.org or (904) 829-5132 or toll-free at 1-877-GO-FORTH (463-6784).



unworthiness to permit me to serve Him, first as a layman, and then as a deacon, a priest, and a bishop. And I echo the words of the Gospel, "When you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have only done what was our duty'" (Luke 17:10).

As I come to the end of my ministry, I am struck more and more by this fact: that for someone who is passionately engaged in a vocation, someone who is deeply committed to a life's mission and task, there is never an interval at which to make a clean break, never a good time to make an end. Rather, the end of every endeavor becomes the beginning of a new task. I am reminded of the conclusion of one of Kazantzakis' works, in which he describes the crucifixion of Christ; at the very end, after Christ has triumphantly cried, "It is finished," the last line reads, *κι ἔτιν σα να λεγε*, «ὄλα αρχιζου»—"and it was as if to say, 'Everything is now beginning.'" Every end has within it the seed of a beginning. Elijah's departure marked the beginning of Elisha's ministry, the herald of yet greater miraculous events, the opening of a new chapter in the prophetic history of Israel. To truly complete anything is more than we can hope for in this life. All

we can do is to lay a foundation, and trust that those who come after will build upon it with the same careful consideration, the same diligent industry, and the same loving purpose. It is not for us to determine what shall be built upon this foundation. That is left to the wisdom of future generations, who will take up the mantle like Elisha, carrying on the task that we have begun in ways that we cannot possibly imagine or foresee.

And now to God ineffable, indescribable, unfathomable abyss of wisdom, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Creator of all things; to God the Only-Begotten Son, the Incarnate, Crucified, and Risen Lord, who has reconciled us in one Body by His Precious Cross; to God the All-Holy, Good, and Life-Giving Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son, Renewer and Sustainer of all things, to the All-Holy Trinity beyond all conception and being, be glory and might and dominion and thanksgiving and honor and worship, now and forever, and to the endless ages. Amen.

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

✠ Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco

December 22, 2004



The Standing Conference
of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas

SCOBA Hierarchs Name Jan. 16 "Share The Light Sunday"

FT. LAUDERDALE, Fla. – "Now it's our turn!" With those words Come Receive The Light founder and co-host Rev. Dr. Christopher Metropoulos announced that SCOBA (The Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas) has named Sunday, Jan. 16, Share The Light Sunday in all of the Orthodox Christian parishes of America. This special Sunday will help all Orthodox Christian parishes become partners with Orthodox Christian Networks (OCN) in creating a national media ministry tool for all our churches.

"With over 800 Christian programs on the air each week in the US, we now have an opportunity to add an Orthodox Christian voice to the broadcast industry. For our children's sake, we can no longer remain silent on American media", said Fr. Chris. OCN is a SCOBA agency charged with creating a national media presence for the Orthodox Christian Churches of the United States.

The hierarchs have now called for the celebration of Share The Light Sunday to increase awareness and support of this vital ministry, nurturing the use of media to share the message of Orthodoxy with America.

Just as Orthodox missionaries have done in times past, OCN is using the tools available to the Church to declare the "faith once, for all, delivered to the saints" to the world around us.

With more than 800 Christian radio programs already airing each week on

American radio stations across the country, now is the time for us to use this powerful communications tool to share the timeless wisdom and power of Orthodoxy.

In the past two years, OCN's flagship program Come Receive The Light has begun broadcasting in over 20 major communities, and world wide through the Internet. All 1,500 Orthodox Christian parishes will soon receive a Share

The Light Sunday packet in the mail that will help them celebrate this first annual Share The Light Sunday in their local parish. The mailing will include a sample sermon, inserts for parish bulletins, a video, and more.

OCN is depending on leaders within each Orthodox parish in America to step forward and champion this crucial outreach.

All the funds raised from this special Sunday will be devoted to helping OCN expand the reach of its media ministry to every part of the nation.

"Come Receive The Light" is the flagship radio program of Orthodox Christian Networks (OCN) and is dedicated to spreading joy, hope and salvation in Jesus Christ while exploring Orthodox Christianity in contemporary society.

Orthodox Christian Networks is headquartered in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and is a commissioned agency of SCOBA (The Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas) and a member of the National Religious Broadcasters. Visit us at www.receive.org.

OCMC Names New Board Officers

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. – The Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), the official international mission and evangelism agency of the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America, recently named a new slate of officers.

Clifford Argue of Mercer Island, Wash., begins his service as president; Fr. Chad Hatfield, dean of St. Herman's Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska, continues as vice president; Fr. Raymond Velencia of Columbia, Md. is treasurer; and Fr. George Liacopulos of New Jersey is secretary. The officers will serve for the next three years.

Mr. Argue has been a vital part of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center since 1978, almost 20 years before it became the pan-Orthodox organization it is today.

He was first a member of the Greek Archdiocese Missions Committee and Missions Board and then appointed to the new OCMC Board of Directors under the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishop of the Americas (SCOBA).

A member of St. Demetrios Church in Seattle, Mr. Argue has been involved in Church life in many capacities, including helping to found the new Holy Apostles Church in Kenmore, Wash.

He also is secretary of the San Francisco Metropolis Commission for Orthodox Missions and Evangelism and a member of St. Herman Seminary Board of Trustees in Kodiak, Alaska. As an officer of the U.S. Air Force he served in Korea in 1968 and attended St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Seoul. A long-time airline executive, Mr. Argue has been a vice president of Alaska Airlines from 1983 until his retirement in September of last year.

Fr. Chad Hatfield, a former Episcopa-

lian missionary to South Africa, has been an OCMC board member since the mid 1990's.

Currently, Fr. Hatfield is the dean of St. Herman Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska, which trains Native Alaskans for service in the far-flung Diocese of Alaska of the Orthodox Church in America.

This summer he will lead a unique OCMC Mission Team from Alaska to Guatemala. Prior to his role as dean, he was the pastor of All Saints Church in Salina, Kansas and St. Mary Magdalene Mission in Manhattan, Kansas in the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese. Fr. Hatfield has a D.Min. degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Fr. Raymond Velencia of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) has been a member of the OCMC Board since November 2000.

This is his first time as a member of its executive committee. Before studying for the priesthood at Holy Cross School of Theology, Fr. Velencia was a public accountant and stockbroker. He grew up in Steelton, Pa., in a large Serbian Orthodox family.

Fr. George Liacopulos, an OCMC Board member for 12 years, has a Ph.D. in Orthodox Christian Mission and Evangelism from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Lights of the Modern World – Orthodox Christian Mission and Evangelism in the United States* and is an adjunct professor of missions and evangelism at both St. Vladimir and Holy Cross Orthodox theological schools.

Fr. Liacopulos is full-time parish priest at Holy Trinity in Egg Harbor Township, N.J. This fall, he is the team leader for the first-ever OCMC Mission Team to Korea.

Parishes from Coast to Coast Bless the Waters



The annual blessing of the waters during the Epiphany Day, in Babylon, New York.



The annual blessing of the waters in Port Jefferson, New York. Fr. George Matsis flings the Cross in the waters. Stavros Spanos retrieved the Cross.



A joint celebration – Parishioners of the neighboring parishes of St. Demetrios in Merrick, N.Y., and St. Markella in Wantagh, gather at Wantagh Park along a bay on the south shore of Long Island on Jan. 6 to celebrate the Blessing of the Water service. Frs. Nikiforos Fakinos of St. Demetrios and Sarantis Loulakis of St. Markella, read the prayer service before releasing two doves and tossing a cross into the water. Three divers, Dr. Daniel Anghel and Chris Karagiannis, both of Merrick, and Andreas Gonias (center) of Wantagh, dived for the cross, which Dr. Anghel, a cardiologist, retrieved from the frigid water. It marked the first time both parishes took part in the service at the park.



The annual blessing of the waters, in Wilmington, NC.



ST. SPYRIDON Church of San Diego held its Blessing of the Waters service Jan. 9 on Coronado Island, across San Diego Bay, in rainy weather (above). The faithful of St. Spyridon, led by their parish priest, Archimandrite Panteleimon D. Costarakis, and visiting priest Fr. Peter Leventis, celebrated the service. The cross was retrieved by Chloe Leffas-Lopes, 14, who returned it to Fr. Panteleimon and received his blessings. At the luncheon that followed, each diver received a silver cross to commemorate the event. Assisting the clergy were chanter, John Kanterakis and Alexander Khalil and the St. Spyridon choir, directed by Katherine Loukatos-Meck.



Greek Orthodox Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Long Beach, California held the annual blessing of the waters (above). The young man that retrieved the cross was Kristopher Captanis age 15 from Long Beach.

St. Nicholas Church in Corpus Christi held its Epiphany celebration and Blessing of the Waters service on Jan. 9 at Corpus Christi bay with Fr. Stelios N. Sitaras officiating. (left) Six young men dived for cross, which John Piperis, son of Mr. and Mrs. George I. Piperis, successfully retrieved. Shown with Fr. Sitaras (front row, from left) Elias Abdalla, John Piperis and Vasilios Vassilaras. (back row) Nick Karagas, Elias Vassilaras and Boutros Abdalla.