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MERRY CHRISTMAS



ENCYCLICAL

The Nativity of Christ

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman....
(Galatians 4:4)

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 Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is filled with joyful proclamations of the fulfillment of His promises for redemption and new life. "Today the Virgin gives birth to Him who is above all being."

"Today God has come upon the earth, and man gone up to heaven." "Today He who knows no beginning now begins to be, and the Word is made flesh." These words from the hymns of the feast affirm the magnitude of the events in Bethlehem on that day. They also nurture within our hearts the joy, assurance and hope that are offered through the One who became incarnate.

The joy of the Feast of the Nativity is known and experienced through the revelation of God's divine plan for the salvation of humankind. This deep and fulfilling joy was expressed by the Virgin Mary when she praised God for being chosen to be the mother of Christ: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior (Luke 1:46). When the angel appeared to the shepherds announcing the birth of Jesus he proclaimed, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to

To contact the National Ministries

Archives

212.570.3517
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212.774.0244
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212.774.0233
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Youth and Young Adult Ministries

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youthoffice@goarch.org

NEXT DEADLINE

Deadline for submitting information, articles and photos for consideration in the

January 2013 issue:

Tuesday, January 8.

Photos should be sent as a large format .jpg attachment (300 dpi min.).

E-mail to: jim@goarch.org

Regular mail: Editor, Orthodox Observer, 8 E. 79th St., New York, NY 10075.



Orthodox Observer photo

Members of the 2012-14 Direct Archdiocesan District Council with Archbishop Demetrios and Bishop Andonios of Phasiane.

New Direct Archdiocesan District Council Appointed

NEW YORK – Archbishop Demetrios administered the oath of office to the new members of the Direct Archdiocesan District Council on Nov. 28 at the Chapel of St. Paul following a brief prayer service.

The ceremony was followed by the body's first meeting of the new session.

Officers of the Council are as follows: Archbishop Demetrios, president; Bishop Andonios of Phasiane, chancellor; Stephen Cherpelis, Holy Trinity Cathedral, New York, vice president; Harry Raptakis, St. Paul Cathedral, Hempstead, N.Y., treasurer; Fr. George Anastasiou, Transfiguration of Christ Church, Corona, N.Y., secretary; Emmanuel G. Demos, Holy Trinity Cathedral, New York, legal counsel.

Other Council members are: (clergy) V. Rev. Fr. Sylvester Berberis, Church of the Zoodohos Peghe, Bronx, N.Y.; Frs. Constantine Combisis, St. Gerasimos Church, New York; Evangelos Evangelidis, Annunciation

Church, Stamford, Conn.; John Lardas, Sts. Constantine and Helen Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Nicholas Petropoulakos, Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Church, Staten Island, N.Y.; John Vlahos, Church of the Holy Resurrection, Brookville, N.Y.; George Zugravu, St. George Cathedral, Hartford, Conn.; (laity) Anthony Brigis, Church of the Holy Resurrection, Brookville, N.Y.; Stella Capiris, Holy Trinity Church, Bridgeport, Conn.; Constantine Flokas, Prophet Elias Church, Yonkers, N.Y.; James Gabriel, Church of the Holy Resurrection, Brookville, N.Y.; Theodore Germanakos, Church of the Zoodohos Peghe, Bronx, N.Y.; Demos Lorentzos, Church of the Zoodohos Peghe, Bronx, N.Y.; Costas Papademetriou, Holy Trinity Church, New Rochelle, N.Y.; Peter Pappas Jr., Church of the Holy Resurrection, Brookville, N.Y. Nicholas Sialmas, Kimisis Tis Theotokou Church, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Evangelia Stamatiadis, Assumption, Port Jef-

erson, N.Y.; Diane Vernados, Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas, Staten Island, N.Y.; George Zimmar, Church of Our Saviour, Rye, N.Y.;

(Ex-Officio members) Fr. Nicholas Anttil, president of the St. John Chrysostom district Clergy Syndesmos; Maria Skiadas, president, district Philoptochos; Presbytera Alexandra Roll, district representative, National Sisterhood of Presvyteres; Anna Dounelis, president, district Federation of Greek Orthodox Musicians.

Prayer Service Held at World Trade Center Site

NEW YORK – As he has done for the last 11 years, Archbishop Demetrios led the annual prayer and memorial service in the area of the World Trade Center near the site where the small historic church of St. Nicholas stood for more than 80 years before it was destroyed in the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

The prayer service was held amid the ongoing construction, in front of the new location at the corner of Liberty and

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Change of Address

To submit a change of address:

Contact Soula Podaras

at 212.774.0235

e-mail: spodaras@goarch.org

fax: 212.774.0239.

Or regular mail to:

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Be sure to include old address, new address and name of parish.

How to Contact Archdiocesan Institutions, Metropolises and Related Agencies and Organizations

Direct Archdiocesan District

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Metropolis of Chicago

312.337.4130; www.chicago.goarch.org

Metropolis of Boston

617.277.4742; www.boston.goarch.org

Metropolis of Denver

303.333.7794; www.denver.goarch.org

Metropolis of Atlanta

404.634.9345; www.atlmetropolis.org

Metropolis of Detroit

248.823.2400; www.detroit.goarch.org

Metropolis of Pittsburgh

412.621.5529; www.pittsburgh.goarch.org

Metropolis of San Francisco

415.753.3075; www.sanfran.goarch.org

Metropolis of New Jersey

908.301.0500; www.nj.goarch.org

Archdiocesan Institutions

Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

Tel. 212.288.3215; www.thecathedralnyc.org

Hellenic College Holy Cross School of Theology

617.731.3500; www.hchc.edu

Saint Basil Academy

845.424.3500; www.stbasil.goarch.org

St. Michael's Home

914.476.3374; www.stmichaelshome.org

St. Photios National Shrine

904.829.8205; www.stphotios.com

Other key organizations and services

National Philoptochos

212.977.7770; www.philoptochos.org

Internet Ministries: www.internet.goarch.org

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• Orthodox Marketplace: www.orthodoxmarketplace.com

• Online Store for Parishes: www.goarch.org/freebookstore

• Orthodox Children's Bible Reader Online: cbr.goarch.org



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Archdiocese Awards Scholarships

The Scholarship Committee of the Archdiocese has announced the awards for the current academic year (2012-2013) from three scholarship programs.

The “George and Naouma Gioles Scholarship Fund” was established in 1997 with a generous gift from Marian Gioles in memory of her beloved parents, to honor their commitment to their Orthodox Faith, their love of their Hellenic heritage, and their desire to help youth who are orphaned or in need. Scholarships are awarded annually to Greek Orthodox students committed to serious study in degree-earning, undergraduate programs at accredited colleges or universities in the United States. Each year, one scholarship is reserved for a student pursuing studies in journalism. This year that award went to Christina Aicklen (Dunwoody, Ga.). Scholarships were also awarded to the following students: Pantelis Antoniou (Syracuse, N.Y.), Keltie Brush (Rolling Meadows, Ill.), Timothy Cremeens (Dudley, Mass.) and Jonathan Heyward (Charleston, S.C.).

The “Katina John Malta Scholarship Fund” was established in 2002 through a generous gift from the estate of Katina John Malta, in recognition of the love she had for the Church and to honor her desire to help others, especially children and youth of the Orthodox Christian Faith. As a reflection of the pan-Orthodox nature of this scholarship program, these awards are open to students from all jurisdictions of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America. This year, scholarships were granted to two non-GOA students: Benjamin Horton (Antiochian) and Ashleigh Tilley (Russian-Moscow Patriarchate).

From the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the following students received scholarships: Christina Aicklen (Dunwoody, Ga.), Margot Aicklen (Dunwoody, Ga.), William Anagnos (Lake Forest, Ill.), Pantelis Antoniou (Syracuse, N.Y.), Melpomeni Arianas (Wood Dale, Ill.), Timothy Cremeens (Dudley, Mass.), Heba Fino (Hoover, Ala.), Gabriella Gallo (Brecksville, Ohio), Jonathan Heyward (Charleston, S.C.), Apostol Hoda (Wethersfield, Conn.), Nicholas Kambouroglou (Lancaster, Pa.), Helena Kiritsy (Boylston, Mass.), Sotiri Michalatos (Elmsford, N.Y.), Angeliki Michelis (Riverwoods, Ill.), Stephanie Orfanakos (Caldwell, N.J.), Jessica Saba (Granada Hills, Calif.), and Eugenia Skapetsos (Edgewater Park, N.J.).

Finally, awards were also granted from the “Paleologos Graduate Scholarship Fund” that was established in 2007. This fund assists students enrolled in graduate studies leading to advanced degrees in academic fields other than theology. Like the Malta Scholarship, this award is open to students from all jurisdictions affiliated with the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America.

The recipients of the 2012-13 Paleologos Graduate Scholarships from the Archdiocese are: Krystal Batsoun (Garden Grove, Calif.), Gillian Davies (Chelmsford, Mass.), Sydney Freedman (Scottsdale, Ariz.), John Gazetos (Bethel, Conn.), Christina Guliadis (Fort Lee, N.J.), Eonna Harrison (Los Angeles), Nicole Keane (Pelham, N.Y.), Mary Ann Kontonikolas (Egg Harbor Township, N.J.), ArgieLafakis (Hoover, Ala.), Angelo Makris (Boston), Elitsa Nicolaou (Grand Rapids, Mich.), and Marianne Orfanos (Crown Point, Ind.). Joshua Falconer (Santa Fe, N.M.), from the Antiochian Orthodox Church and Stephan Millik (Youngstown, Ohio) from the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church were also awarded scholarships.

The scholarships will be available for 2013-14. Applications will be available by the end of January on www.goarch.org or by contacting 212.570.3500.



Dimitris Panagos photo

Honoring the preeminent dean

Archbishop Demetrios and Metropolitan Methodios of Boston, along with other clergy, held a memorial service on Nov. 18 to honor the service of Archbishop Iakovos of blessed memory as dean of Annunciation Cathedral on the 70th anniversary of his installation. (Story on page 10)



Dimitris Panagos photo

St. Michael's event

At the recent St. Michael's Home Name Day Gala, Archbishop Demetrios and Bishop Andonios of Phasiane, the director, present the Archangel Michael Award to Argyris Vassiliou, who for more than 10 years served as a trustee and treasurer of the Home.

Christos and Georgia Trakatellis Fellowship Applications Available

The Chancellor's Office of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America has announced that applications are now available to apply for a Fellowship from The Christos and Georgia Trakatellis Fellowship Fund for studies for the academic year 2013-14.

This fund was established in 2011 by Archbishop Demetrios and his brother, Professor Antonios Trakatellis, in memory of their parents, Christos and Georgia.

The fund offers Fellowships to graduates of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology who are planning to continue their studies in the Greek language, Hellenic culture and liturgical practice. This study could be part of an established Doctoral or Masters level program, or part of a free program. It should be well structured and clearly defined in view of the above stated purpose of the fund. These studies could take place here, in Greece or at the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople.

Candidates for Fellowships shall be chosen based on merit and need. The amount of the Fellowship is \$3,000 per semester for up to two semesters. One or more full, or partial, Fellowships will be awarded annually.

Instructions and applications are available on the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (www.goarch.org),

or, candidates can contact the Chancellor's Office (by email at: scholarships@goarch.org or by calling (212) 774-0513) and request an application. The application needs to be completed in full and together with all the necessary documentation, sent to the Chancellor's Office by the April 26, 2013 deadline.

Application does not automatically guarantee an award. Each application will be considered individually in conjunction with the supporting documentation provided by each candidate.

ENCYCLICAL

▷ from page 1

you this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10-11).

We also have received this revelation through the message of the Gospel, through our experience of the presence of Christ in our midst. On this glorious feast our hearts are filled with ineffable joy.

This great joy we share in celebrating the Nativity of our Lord also strengthens our faith in the promises of God. The witness of the Incarnation is that God is faithful and true. The fulfillment of His promises of redemption were affirmed by Zacharias, the father of Saint John the Baptist, when he proclaimed, “For God has visited and redeemed His people... as He spoke by the mouth of His holy Prophets (Luke 1:68, 70).

In his Gospel, Saint Matthew wrote, So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the Prophet, saying: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 7:14).

And in the hymns of this Nativity season we sing, “The revelation of Christ is now made manifest: the preachings of the Prophets have received their fulfillment. The holy sayings of the Prophets have been fulfilled in the city of Bethlehem within a cave” (Vespers and Matins of the Forefeast). On this day all that had been promised by God, all that had been foretold for our salvation, was fulfilled in the birth of Christ.

The joy and assurance that we have in our communion with God on this holy feast engenders within our hearts an enduring hope. Our joy in the fulfillment of His divine plan for our salvation and our assurance through our faith in the truth of the Gospel, gives us a firm hope in His promises of eternal life, for the complete restoration of our fellowship with Him, and for the fulfillment of all things. This is a feast of hope because through it we see all that has been accomplished, and we are given a glimpse of what is to come. This Feast of the Nativity of our Lord affirms for each one of us that we can have hope and joy in any of the circumstances and conditions of life—hope in the transformation of our lives through faith and hope in the power of God's love.

On this blessed and holy feast, I offer to each of you my best wishes for a joyful season of worship and fellowship.

May your hearts be filled with assurance, joy and hope, and may the peace and mercy of our Lord be with you in the new year.

With paternal love in Christ,

Archbishop Demetrios

† Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America

CLERGY UPDATE

Assignments

Fr. John Bociu – St. Barbara Church, Sarasota, Fla. 11/01/12
Fr. Matthew Carter – Annunciation Church, Pensacola, Fla. 11/01/12
Fr. Soterios Rousakis – St. Stefanos Church, St. Petersburg, Fla. 11/01/12
Fr. James Berends – Annunciation Church, Memphis, Tenn. 12/01/12

Offikia

Fr. Anastasios Raptis – Office of Proto-

presbyter, bestowed by Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver 10/14/12
Fr. Thomas J. Zaferes – Office of Protopresbyter, bestowed by Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco 10/28/12
Fr. Vasilios Tragus – Office of Confessor, bestowed by Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco 11/04/12

Clergy Deaths

Fr. John Liadis 11/09/12

May
Peace,
Joy
&
Happiness
be yours
this
Christmas
Season
&
throughout
the
New Year



MARY & MICHAEL JAHARIS

SUPERSTORM SANDY FOLLOW-UP

Philoptochos Emergency Fund Provides Relief

The National Philoptochos has offered \$15,000 each from its Emergency Fund for immediate assistance to the Direct Archdiocesan District and the Metropolis of New Jersey to address the temporary housing expenses and the purchasing of necessary major appliances for the Orthodox families victimized by the hurricane.

District President Maria Skiadas and Metropolis President Anastasia Michals have mobilized on the ground programs of volunteerism and support for those individuals and families in their respective areas.

National Philoptochos established a Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund to assist the victims. National President Aphrodite Skeadas asks all Philoptochos members and stewards to make every effort to send donations big or small to the National Philoptochos Society, 7 West 55th St., New York, NY 10019. Checks should be marked for the Hurricane Relief Fund. Donations also can be offered online at www.philoptochos.org.

The organization also has established steps on how to help those in need of relief whether they live in New York, New Jersey or other parts of the country.

Information is available on New York and New Jersey area churches set up as drop off/distribution centers with a list of needed items included.

Many volunteer opportunities are noted and resources with contact information for individuals, families and businesses affected by the storm. Visit www.philoptochos.org for details.

Metropolis Philoptochos, Local Chapters Offer Support

In addition to the immediate issuance of \$15,000 each for the Direct Archdiocesan District and the New Jersey Metropolis sent from the National Emergency Fund, the Direct Archdiocesan District Philoptochos President Maria Skiadas and New Jersey Metropolis Philoptochos President Anastasia Michals responded immediately to the destruction and human suffering by assisting to mobilize volunteers and designate drop-off locations in their areas.

New York parishes that have all either distributed supplies or been established as drop off locations are: St. Nicholas, Newburgh; Holy Cross, Whitestone; Zoodohos



Storm fund-raiser

Koraes Elementary School, affiliated with Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Palos Hills, Ill., sponsored "Crazy Tie Day" on Nov. 16 to raise funds for the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund. Students throughout the school donated \$2 to wear a crazy tie to school. The student council collected \$460 for the IOCC (International Orthodox Christians Charities) to aid the storm victims.

Peghe, Bronx; St. Spyridon and Holy Trinity, New York; Kimissis Tis Theotokou and Sts. Constantine and Helen, Brooklyn; St. Nicholas, West Babylon; St. Paul, Hempstead; Archangel Michael, Port Washington and St. Nicholas Flushing. Archangels, Stamford and St. Barbara, Orange Conn. have also delivered supplies.

The following examples represent the good works of all the parishes of the New Jersey Metropolis (see list of parishes at www.philoptochos.org) that rallied support in this hour of crisis: St. Demetrios, North Wildwood, N.J. led by Philoptochos and the community delivered to four community shelters in Hoboken three 18-wheeler trucks with 1,500 cartons filled with relief and emergency supplies collected from throughout New Jersey and Pennsylvania churches.

A 53-foot tractor trailer filled to the brim with more than 450 boxes of cleaning

supplies, winter coats, blankets, and more was delivered to St. George, Asbury Park from the Martin Agency in Richmond Va., with help from local churches, including the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Sts. Constantine and Helen, civic and social groups, families and friends.

The Cathedral of St. John the Theologian in Tenafly, Philoptochos and AHEPA joined together with all the church ministries to serve as a drop site for much needed relief to the New Jersey counties. St. Barbara of Toms River serves as a haven for those in Ocean County who suffered the effects of the storm while at the same time distributing relief supplies throughout the communities.

The parish held a Thanksgiving feast for the affected community and is hosting a school program. Visit www.philoptochos.org to learn more about the good works and how to help.

replaced, but Sunday services have been taking place.

Electricity and heating were recently restored.

The parish continues to accept donations to help local residents who lost their possessions in the storm.

At St. Paraskevi Church in Greenlawn,

who needed warmth and a place to stay during the day while their power was out. The Philoptochos chapter coordinated the collection of hundreds of basic items to be distributed by those affected by the storm.

The church is still accepting donations and distributing to those in need.

A tractor-trailer with a large delivery of supplies arrived from Richmond, Va., to the former church building in Asbury Park. Parishioners helped unload boxes into the gym, where the supplies were stored and distributed to local residents.

Staten Island

Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Church continues to collect food, new toys, cleaning supplies, baby items and toiletries and also accepts gift cards for distribution to any residents of the hard-hit area.

The church was without power for two days, but had no physical damage.

Long Island

At Kimissis tis Theotokou Church in Island Park, which sustained extensive damage, the entire kitchen and hall will be

Leadership 100 Gives \$100,000 for Storm Relief

Chairman of Leadership 100 Charles H. Cotros has announced that the Executive Committee of Leadership 100, at an extraordinary teleconference call Nov. 19, unanimously voted to grant \$100,000 immediately to the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund, established by the Archdiocese in the wake of the devastating storm that hit hardest in most Northeastern states, especially New York and New Jersey, as well as in the Middle Atlantic and Midwest.

Archbishop Demetrios designated Bishop Andonios, chancellor of the Archdiocese and director of Philanthropy, to coordinate all relief efforts with the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and other agencies, as well as with the clergy in the affected areas. He will also monitor the distribution of funds.

The Archbishop visited the Holy Trinity/St. Nicholas Church in Staten Island, N.Y. on Nov. 4, which was hard hit by the storm. He presided over the Divine Liturgy and offered a Trisagion prayer service for the repose of the souls of those who lost their lives. He also led the congregation in prayer for strength and comfort from God for all the people who lost their homes, their businesses and property and are suffering in the aftermath.

Cotros said: "We have been witnesses to yet another great national tragedy, but we are comforted by the response of Archbishop Demetrios and the designation of Bishop Andonios. Just as with Hurricane Katrina, for which we provided \$100,000 and the September 11 Relief Fund, for which we raised more than \$500,000, Leadership 100 always stands ready to support humanitarian efforts during national crises."

though it had no damage from the storm, collected enough supplies, including food, clothing, toiletries and other items, to fill a large truck to aid victims in areas directly affected.

Storm Recovery Efforts Continue

One Greek Orthodox Fatality Reported

The Nov. 25 issue of the Long Island daily Newsday reported that 13 fatalities resulted from the storm, including the death of Nicholas Lourikas, 66, of Centereach, N.Y., who was killed when a tree he was cutting down on Oct. 30 shifted, and fell pinning him underneath.

He was taken to a nearby medical center and pronounced dead, the newspaper said. The article noted he had been a professional soccer player in Greece and worked as a handyman for Greek diners in the area.

He was a member of Assumption Church in Port Jefferson prior to 2006 and is survived by a son.

Funeral services took place at Holy Trinity Church in Hicksville on Nov. 16.

Ocean Township, N.J.

In the week following the storm, St. George Church in Ocean Township, N.J. (once power was restored) opened its doors to the greater Ocean Township community by serving lunch and dinner to those



Goyans of St. Nicholas Church in Flushing, NY, with assistant priest Fr. Theofanis Papantonis, distribute items collected for the storm victims.

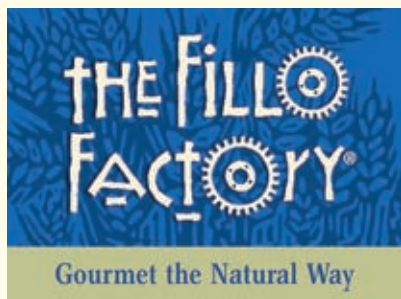
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Dimitris Panagos photos

Archbishop Demetrios prepares to place the crown upon newly ordained Bishop Gregory.

Archbishop Consecrates, Enthrones Bishop Gregory at Carpatho-Russian Diocese

JOHNSTOWN, Pa. – Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, formerly Fr. Grigorios (Tatsis), the Ierokyrix (itinerant preacher) of the Metropolis of Atlanta, was consecrated and enthroned Nov. 27, as the fourth ruling hierarch of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, at the Christ the Saviour Cathedral with more than 500 clergy and faithful in attendance.

Archbishop Demetrios, who served as Locum Tenens of the Diocese, since the falling asleep in the Lord of Metropolitan Nicholas of Amisos in March 2011, presided.

Assisting were Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta, who in previous years had ordained Bishop Gregory to the diaconate and the priesthood, Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh, and Metropolitan Antony and Bishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Bishops of other Christian Churches present included: Bishop Joseph Barchak of the Altoona-Johnstown Roman Catholic Diocese; Bishop-Emeritus Joseph Adamec of the Altoona-Johnstown Roman Catholic Diocese; Bishop Gregory Pile of the Lutheran Church, Allegheny Synod; Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla of the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh; and Bishop-Emeritus Basil Losten of the Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Stamford.

The chorus of AXIOS! AXIOS! AXIOS! (He is worthy!) thundered throughout the Church time and time again during the Hierarchical Liturgy, as Bishop Gregory was vested and enthroned. The joy of the day was complete when His Grace ascended the Episcopal Throne and delivered his enthronement address.

The festivities continued with an afternoon celebratory banquet at the Pasquerella Community Center in downtown

Johnstown. (more information and photos visit: www.acrod.org)

Biography

Bishop Gregory was nominated as successor to Metropolitan Nicholas of Amisos by a Special Assembly of Diocesan Priests of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese on Saturday July 14, 2012. On Aug. 30, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople canonically elected Bishop Gregory as Titular Bishop of Nyssa and ruling Diocesan Hierarch of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A. Then the bishop-elect traveled to Constantinople for the Mega Minima service to officially accept the call of the Church.

Bishop Gregory was born in Charlotte, N.C. Dec. 7, 1958, with the baptismal name of George, the first of two children of Peter and Antonia Tatsis.

He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill earning a BA degree in Biology (1981) and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte earning an MS degree in biology (1989). Working for more than 20 years in the field of cardiovascular research at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte he authored or co-authored over 100 articles, abstracts, and book chapters.

A true son of the Church, from his early youth he served his home parish of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Charlotte in various capacities, including altar server, Sunday School teacher for 13 years and in leadership positions that included parish council president.

He was also a founding member of St. Nektarios Church in Charlotte, where he served on the parish organizing committee,

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Bishop Gregory and Archbishop Demetrios with (from left) Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh, Metropolitan Antony of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA, Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta and Bishop Daniel (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA).

THE VOICE OF PHILOPTOCHOS

National President's Christmas President

Beloved National Board, Chapter Presidents and Stewards of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Today, the Virgin bears Him who is transcendent, and the earth presents the cave to Him who is beyond reach. Angels, along with shepherds glorify Him. The Magi make their way to Him by a star. For a new child has been born for us, the God before all ages. (Kontakion in the Third Tone)

On behalf of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, I extend joyful greetings to you and your loved ones during this Christmas celebration of gladness.

With hearts that lovingly beat for all others, the Philoptochos women express in this Holy Season thankfulness for blessings as we venerate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We are not just members of an organization; we are one sisterhood, one family united in a very precious way.

The narrative of the Birth of Christ from the sacred scriptures reminds us that the Lord was born in a cave. The Lord was born in a place that was cold, damp and dark, fit only for the animals. It was in this austere, bleak and lonely place that the Savior of the World chose to be born.

As you are aware, New York, New Jersey and other states were terribly impacted by the wrath of Hurricane Sandy. A storm that people could barely imagine ravaged the entire eastern seaboard and left a path of destruction that went far inland assaulting everyone and everything in its way. Because of the storm, millions lost electricity and heat for weeks. Others lost everything they possessed. Within minutes, so many went from living in warm, cozy and safe homes, to the harsh reality of living in cold, damp and darkness. This same cold and darkness greeted Christ when He was born.

Witnessing in person the severe hardships, and not through the lens of a camera, brings the suffering to a brutal realism that makes one pause to truly feel the depth of loss and sadness.

I believe in my heart that the Lord chose to be born and come into the world the way He did, in order to give hope to all those who suffer and face similar adversities. By looking at Christ who shivers in the coldness of the night, we know that God is with us, understands us and gives us strength. The glory of the birth of Christ does not come from the gold, frankincense and myrrh, but rather from its intimacy, tenderness and simplicity.

As Philoptochos stewards, you have authority to take this message and with sensitivity, respect and agape, warm all those with whom you come into contact. You give understanding and compassion to a world that trembles and you offer hope through your gifts of love, mercy and charity. As your friend and sister in Christ, I ask that this Christmas we take special note of the gifts with which the Lord has blessed us, and in thanksgiving offer comfort, take action and perform good deeds for those in need living near and far. In this way, His birth is honored. It is a singular blessing that we are stewards of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, thankful to our Lord for His grace that pours forth upon the world from the humble cave of the Nativity. It is my prayer that your hearts are filled with love for your brothers and sisters in need and that you experience the wonder and beauty of Christmas throughout the New Year.

With admiration in the Newborn King,
Aphrodite Skeadas



Participants in the Nov. 27 contract closing at the offices of the Newman-Ferrara law firm. Bishop Sevastianos and Aphrodite Skeadas hold the keys to the building presented to them by Hans Muellers, the building owner and seller (standing, far left).

Closing Contract Signed for Permanent Headquarters

In 2009 the Philoptochos Society embarked on a dream and a quest to acquire a permanent home to be the command center for the ministries of the ladies' national organization. That dream was realized and the quest successfully concluded on Nov. 27 with the signing of the closing contract documents to purchase a permanent home.

Several members of the National Philoptochos Executive Board met at the Newman-Ferrara law firm and along with Wells Fargo representatives and the seller to finalize the purchase of the 4,200-square-foot, five-story brownstone so that they may complete the process that began on Sept. 13 with the signing of a the contract to purchase the building.

The new headquarters is modest and functional and is located at 126 E. 37th Street, in the historic Murray Hill neighborhood of Manhattan between Park and Lexington avenues that is home to many diplomats and employees of the United Nations, which is located about five blocks away. It is also in within walking distance of Grand Central Station, and to hotels and the subway station.

The Murray Hill area also is home to several non-profit organizations, universities, medical centers and libraries.

National President Aphrodite Skeadas expressed her appreciation to the more than 27,000 members of Philoptochos throughout the Archdiocese for their support in making the purchase of the building possible and that the headquarters will serve "to expand and fulfill the mission of Philoptochos." She continued by saying, "We're not doing this for ourselves, we have the responsibility for our as the philanthropic arm of the Church." "The grassroots support we received showed the trust and the love of the mission of Philoptochos. We've demonstrated we are responsible," the national president continued, "we thank each and everyone who supported this effort with their gift, large or small and we are grateful for that."

Mrs. Skeadas said most of the money for the purchase of the building has been raised and she anticipates the remaining mortgage would be paid in very shortly. The Philoptochos offices will move to the building in June, when the current lease with the Presbyterian Church rental property will end.

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The new Philoptochos national headquarters building at 126 E. 37th Street, as it appeared in late September.



Denver Metropolis Presents Grant

Metropolis of Denver Philoptochos President Marian Catechis was joined by national board members to present a \$5,000 check from the National Philoptochos Autism Assistance Fund to Barbara Boyett, CEO of the Avondale House in Houston.

Avondale House provides services to children and families affected by autism and pervasive developmental disabilities and the grant will support students in a therapeutic horseback riding program which promotes

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Denver Metropolis Grant presentation participants (from left) Cindy Demeris, Marian Catechis, Barbara Boyett, and Martha Stefanidakis.

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HCHC NEWS



Members of the Interparliamentary Assembly with Archbishop Demetrios.

HCHC Hosts Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy

BROOKLINE, Mass. – The Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO) held a colloquium titled “Civil Society and Orthodoxy” on Nov. 16–17 on the campus of Hellenic College Holy Cross. Various levels of political leaders including senators, members of parliament, and local and regional authorities participated in the conference and addressed major themes to the witness of Orthodoxy in the modern world. Representatives of the Orthodox and ancient Near Eastern churches, theological schools, and other scholars also participated in the conference.

The Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy is based in the Hellenic Parliament.

It has members from inside aforementioned parliament, as well as teams of

Orthodox members of parliament and ancient Eastern churches from 26 parliaments around the world (www.eiao.org). Those participating in the conference included: the president of the General Assembly of the IAO, Russian Member of Parliament (MP) Sergei Popov, The Greek Secretary General MP Anastasios Nerantzis, and MPs, members of the International Secretariat of the IAO from Cyprus, Serbia, Sudan, Ukraine, Belarus and Armenia.

The Interparliamentary Commission aspires to forge closer ties with the representatives of the Orthodox and ancient Eastern Churches, as well as with government officials in the United States. The IAO particularly addresses Orthodox members of government and invites them to take an active role in its activities.

75th Anniversary Album Deadline Extended

BROOKLINE, Mass. – Due in large part to the dedicated leadership of Ms. Helen A. Carlos, a member of the Hellenic College Holy Cross Executive Board and Chairperson of the 75th Anniversary Celebration, the Hellenic College Holy Cross 75th Anniversary commemorative Album is meeting with resounding success. To date, hundreds of individuals, parishes and Philoptochos chapters from throughout the Archdiocese have submitted generous sponsorship gifts, along with their encouraging messages of support, magnificent photographs, and moving memorial tributes, which will be featured in the album along with a history of Hellenic College Holy Cross.

At the same time, many more people and parishes have asked for more time to submit their sponsorships and tributes and to sign up to receive their very own copy of the album.

For these reasons, the 75th Anniversary Album Committee has extended the deadline for sponsorship submissions, tributes and artwork/photographs until March 1, 2013. The album will now be able to include more photographs of 75th events taking place throughout the country, documenting this important milestone.

The album is intended to generate greater awareness and financial support of Hellenic College Holy Cross across America. For a gift of \$75, a donor will receive their very own copy of this beautiful album and through it, can gain a greater appreciation of both the history and the importance of our one and only Greek Orthodox college, graduate school of theology, and seminary. A large part of the support has come

from the National Philoptochos and local Philoptochos chapters that asked members and fellow parishioners to support the album.

Anyone who would like to help sponsor the HCHC 75th Anniversary Album and/or submit a memorial tribute, can visit the following web address www.hchc.edu/75years/commemorative_album.html or call/email John Papson at 617-850-1377 jpapson@hchc.edu or Stephanie Skedros at 617-850-1268 sskedros@hchc.edu. Also, to view the beautiful 15-minute 75th Anniversary Video, visit enter the following web address: www.hchc.edu/holycross/about/video.html

WTC SERVICE

➤ from page 2

Greenwich streets, where St. Nicholas will be resurrected as an Orthodox witness of faith and a prominent and permanent part of the new World Trade Center.

Archbishop Demetrios prayed for the repose of the souls of those who perished that tragic day in 2001 and asked for the intercessions of Saint Nicholas to God for continued strength and guidance as the Church in America takes on the task of rebuilding the historic church. His Eminence spoke of the long road of faith and persistence through the years that led to the agreement to secure the new plot and rebuild. He also outlined the high visibility the Church will have in a site where tens of thousands of people will be visiting the area every day.



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CHURCH HISTORY

Fr. Demetrios Rangos (1853–1923) ministered to Churches in the early 1900s

by William H. Samonides, Ph.D

Fr. Demetrios Rangos was 56 years old when he arrived in New York on August 25, 1909. Although he had come to the priesthood relatively late in his life, he was a veteran priest with the ecclesiastical rank of Ekonomos and 20 years experience serving as a parish priest and administrator in his native Arta and elsewhere in Epirus.

Fr. Rangos would serve the American church for the remaining 14 years of his life. His correspondence preserved in the Archdiocese Archives provides insights into his career. He brought to the many parishes he served an important ingredient: the authority and stability of a seasoned priest. As his obituary stated: "He was pastor of these different churches for short periods, until he was satisfied they were on their feet."

Fr. Rangos was one of approximately 50 ordained Greek Orthodox priests who arrived in North America during the first decade of the 20th century. His services were desperately needed. Immigration from Greece and Turkey was surging: nearly 330,000 arrived from 1900-1910, up from less than 40,000 the previous decade. The number of new parishes reflected these higher numbers, increasing ten-fold from 1900-1910. The early Greek Orthodox Church in America was an immigrant church attracting few converts from the non-Greek population. In contrast to the church today, which is a more diverse church with urban, suburban, and exurban parishes attracting a growing number of converts, the early church in America was primarily an urban church. Although most Greek immigrants were from rural areas, they settled in ports and industrial cities in the northeast where America's population -- and jobs -- were concentrated. This was where most of the early parishes were established. By 1910, all the 20 largest metropolitan areas in the United States except Cleveland boasted Greek Orthodox parishes.

While almost all of America's largest cities had Greek Orthodox parishes, not all the early parishes were established in big cities. Parishes also emerged in communities where mining and railroad jobs attracted immigrants, such as McGill, Nev., Pocatello, Idaho; and Pueblo, Colo.

In 1909, Father Rangos became the fourth priest to serve the small-community parish of St. Spyridon in Sheboygan, Wis. The bustling tanneries and flour and saw mills of Sheboygan were in need of immigrant labor. Cheap rail fares induced immigrants to leave coastal cities and settle inland. As early as 1846, Wisconsin made itself more attractive to immigrants by granting voting rights after only one year of residence. Although somewhat remote, St. Spyridon had much to offer the new arrival to America. Religious services were held there as early as 1902, and their first resident priest arrived in 1905. While most parishes had rented or purchased spaces, the Sheboygan community had already built its own church by 1906, one that -- remarkably -- is still in use. Fr. Rangos remained

there over two years, and the parish is said to have "prospered in every way under his guidance."

In 1911, he was assigned to Annunciation in Kansas City, Mo. Both of his early assignments were made by the Holy Synod in Athens, Greece. This reflected a major change in jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox parishes in America, which took place on March 8, 1908. In response to the uncertainty of Ottoman and international politics, Patriarch Ioakim III (Patriarch 1878-1884, 1901-1912) issued a tome transferring jurisdiction of parishes in the Western Hemisphere from the Patriarchate in Constantinople to the Holy Synod of Greece. Thus when the Head of the Holy Synod, Metropolitan Meletios Metaxakis (1871-1935) arrived in New York on Aug. 22, 1918, Fr. Rangos contacted him by telegram. Three weeks later, he submitted a resume detailing his credentials.

The following year, while in Kansas City, Fr. Rangos applied to the U.S. Railroad Administration for a Clergy Certificate, which would allow him to travel at half-price fare. He would need it. After Kansas City he would serve nine parishes across the country: Annunciation in Cleveland; Sts. Constantine and Helen in South Chicago; Assumption in Chicago Heights; Annunciation in Milwaukee; Assumption in Racine, Wis.; Sts. Constantine and Helen in Gary, Ind.; Assumption in Pocatello, Idaho; Holy Trinity in Canton, Ohio; and St. Demetrios in Warren, Ohio.

The assignments were brief. This was not uncommon before the establishment of the Archdiocese in 1922, when in spite of the formal authority of the Holy Synod in Athens, priests were often hired and dismissed by unilateral decisions of parish councils. By September 1923, Fr. Rangos was serving again at St. Spyridon in Sheboygan. He was, however, approaching 70. After serving two years, poor health forced his resignation. He sought treatment from doctors and hospitals throughout the region, including the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. On November 23, 1923, shortly after his arrival in Rochester, he was walking down a street, collapsed from a stroke, and passed away.

Presiding at the funeral at St. Spyridon was his successor Fr. Dorotheos Papacostas (1877–1949), who had arrived in America only two months earlier. Fr. Rangos is buried at Wildwood Cemetery.

According to his obituary in the Sheboygan Press, "During the many years that he was in Sheboygan, Reverend Rangos was a picturesque character. He was known by many residents of this city by the flowing beard and the high silk hat that he wore." Sheboygan, his first home in America, is his final resting place.

The author thanks Fr. Peter N. Papademetriou of St. Spyridon and Nikie Calles, director of Archdiocese Archives, for their assistance in the preparation of this article. He invites readers to share their thoughts and learn more about Father Rangos by contacting him at htgochhistorian@aol.com

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METROPOLIS NEWS



Dimitris Panagos photo

Annunciation Cathedral's current dean, Fr. Cleopas Strongylis, discusses his newly published 600-page book on Rev. Coucouzes' ministry, "A Testimony and a Legacy,"

Boston Cathedral Remembers Archbishop Iakovos' Parish Ministry

BOSTON – Annunciation Cathedral commemorated the 70th anniversary of the assignment of Archimandrite James A. Coucouzes (Archbishop Iakovos) as its dean on Sunday, Nov. 18, with a memorial service following the Divine Liturgy.

Archbishop Demetrios presided, with Metropolitan Methodios of Boston and the following clergy concelebrating: Archdeacon Pandeimon Papadopoulos, Frs. Theodore Barbas, George Papademetriou, George Anastasiou and Cleopas Strongylis, the cathedral dean.

"Archbishop Iakovos offered a tremendous work to the Greek American Community and on the Pan-Orthodox level as well. He performed a terrific ministry during his twelve-year service as dean of the Annunciation Cathedral," Archbishop Demetrios remarked during his sermon at the Cathedral prior to the memorial service.

"The Annunciation family chose this day to honor the memory of its former spiritual leader and dean, Rev. James Coucouzes, who dedicated 12 years of his prolific ministry (1942–54) to turn the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Boston into a model Greek Orthodox community," said Fr. Strongylis. "Today's Divine Liturgy and celebrations serve as a small token of our profound admiration for this historical figure and as an act of commemoration and heartfelt gratitude for our former spiritual leader."

After church, the Cathedral hosted a fellowship hour at the Cathedral lower hall by the Philoptochos Ladies president Carol Travayiakis and its members, and then a luncheon and a book presentation ceremony at its community center in Brookline, Mass.

In his first official visit to the Boston Cathedral since its centennial in 2003, Archbishop Demetrios commended the Cathedral family and Fr. Cleopas Strongylis for their months of preparation and hard work in preparing this event. "I shall always remember this day, just like I remember my first ever Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral in the fall of 1965," he noted.

Archbishop Demetrios compared Archbishop Iakovos to an ocean, noting that no matter what one chooses to say, it would be hard to accurately describe a man of his proportions. He also pointed out that Archbishop Iakovos was as much at ease conversing with the president of the United States as he was with local parishioners and that he typified what it

means to be "completely American and totally Greek at the same time." He also referred to Rev. Coucouzes' "unusual combination" of sternness and tenderness. He hailed the day's event as "a celebration of the specific" – Archbishop Iakovos' service as a parish priest, while he called the newly published 600-page book written by Fr. Strongylis on Rev. Coucouzes' ministry "a testimony and a legacy," reminding the audience that the greater the praise given to one's history, the greater the responsibility of posterity to live up to this history and repeat it.

Many of the persons attending the luncheon were members of the Cathedral youth during Fr. Coucouzes' ministry and relived many fond memories from the old photos displayed on the large screen and the recollections shared by the speakers. During the luncheon, Dr. Lewis Patsavos, professor of canon law at Holy Cross School of Theology, who served as an altar boy during Rev. Coucouzes' time at the Cathedral recalled the "awe" that he felt for his former priest. "He was stern, but tender, and he always challenged us to excel." Dr. Patsavos shared some anecdotes from his experiences with Fr. Coucouzes and stressed how important it was for his parishioners to not disappoint their spiritual leader. "Making him proud is what inspired us to excel."

In his address, Metropolitan Methodios noted that "Archbishop Iakovos never allowed himself to be average" and thanked the visitors who came from far distances to join the Cathedral for this event. He also noted that Archbishop Iakovos' legacy is in good hands and that his work is being continued by another great prelate, his successor Archbishop Demetrios.

Fr. Coucouzes officially assumed duties as Dean of the Boston Cathedral on Sept. 1, 1942, three-and-a-half years after his arrival to the United States, at the age of 31. By the mid-point of his tenure in Boston, he helped build up the Cathedral into one of the most dynamic parish communities in America, as the statistics illustrate: In 1951, Annunciation had 1,540 members, operated 10 Greek afternoon schools, had over 700 children enrolled in Sunday School, featured 3 choirs under development, 4 boy and girl scout groups, 3 basketball teams, 2 baseball teams, and 1 swimming

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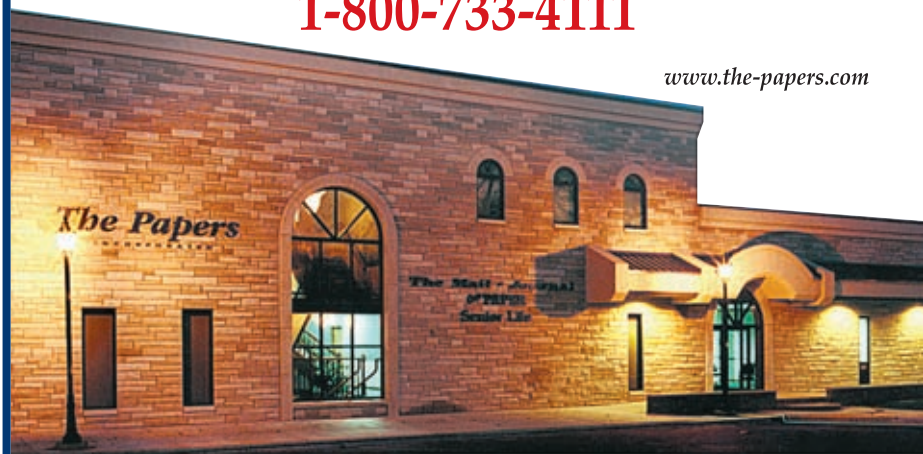
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Bishop Gregory Enthroned

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as Sunday school teacher for four years, as a choir member and as its first parish council president. After taking part in a mission trip to Alaska sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Mission Center, Bishop Gregory felt the calling to pursue his life-long dream of studying for the priesthood.

Leaving his secular job in early 2003, he entered Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Mass. in the fall and graduated in May 2006 with a Masters of Divinity degree.

Bishop Gregory was ordained a deacon at St. Nektarios Church in Charlotte on Nov. 4, 2006 by Metropolitan Alexios. He was tonsured a monk at Agia Lavra Monastery in Kalavryta, Greece on Jan. 17, 2007, receiving the name Grigorios with St. Gregory Palamas as his patron saint.

He was ordained a priest at Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta on Jan. 28, 2007, also by Metropolitan Alexios, and was

elevated to the rank of Archimandrite on the same day. On Feb. 1, 2007, he was appointed as the Ierokyrix (itinerant preacher) of the Metropolis. On Sept. 14, 2007, he received the offikion (rank) of Confessor at the Archangel Michael Chapel in Atlanta.

Serving in his role as itinerant preacher and confessor, Bishop Gregory traveled extensively throughout the Metropolis of Atlanta, where he led parish retreats, heard confessions and provided spiritual direction to countless numbers of clergy and faithful. Recognizing his affinity for youth ministry and his administrative skills, he was given the responsibility of overseeing all youth programs in the metropolis.

He also served as the parish priest of Holy Trinity Church in Raleigh, N.C. from Dec. 20, 2010 to May 31, 2011. He also was dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Orleans and as vicar of the Metropolis' Western Conference from Oct. 1, 2011, until Sept. 30, 2012.

Remembering Archbishop Iakovos

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team. There were over 600 Philoptochos members and 500 P.T.A. members. Meanwhile, the Cathedral's \$5 membership dues were the most affordable dues in existence at the time.

In recognition of his successful ministry, he was named vicar general of the Third Diocesan District in 1954. Fr. Coucouzes was elected Bishop of Melita on Dec. 17, 1954 by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and assigned as patriarchal delegate to the World Council of Churches in Geneva. He returned to lead the Church of America as Archbishop Iakovos in 1959.

Event chairman Eve Condakes

shared her memories of Archbishop Iakovos, looking back on the man that the Cathedral faithful would affectionately call "pater."

Parish Council President Constantine Kechris and the steering committee members, Mr. and Mrs. James Kaselis and Dr. Marica Arvanites thanked all those who contributed to the success of the event.

Cathedral Greek School student, Ellie Karneadakis read one of Fr. Coucouzes' favorite prayers, which he would recite at the start of his weekly radio program.

In addition to the Cathedral parishioners, hundreds of guests attended the event.

Closing Contract Signed for Permanent Headquarters

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Anita Kartalopoulos, the Philoptochos legal advisor, added that "People here moved mountains to get where we are today.

The charge of Archbishop Demetrios and his vision has come to fruition. This is where it brought us. Every single member of Philoptochos and the presidents of the Metropolises worked tirelessly and diligently."

The building's owners, Hans and Veronica Muellers, described the condition of the building as excellent, with steel girders reinforcing the entire structure and no damage was sustained during recent Super storm Sandy. "We never had a problem," he said. "It has a clean record and is extremely sound."

The building, which dates from 1868 and was refurbished in the early 1990s, received "the highest inspection rating after two recent inspections," Mrs. Skeadas noted.

"We are just so pleased; added Mrs. Kartalopoulos. "Nothing happened during the storm and we did an inspection again and it was pristine."

Bishop Sevastianos of Zela, Philoptochos' spiritual advisor, thanked the Muellers and praised their consideration of for their tenant, and their professionalism during negotiations. His Grace also thanked the President of Philoptochos Mrs Skeadas and

all those present and absent for their

tireless efforts in promoting the mission of Philanthropy and for making possible the permanent home of Philanthropy. He Grace added that the services of Philoptochos will benefit people in need not only nationally but internationally.

In addition to Bishop Sevastianos, Mrs. Skeadas and Mrs. Kartalopoulos, those present at the signing included: Arlene Siavelis, first vice president (Chicago); Maria Stavropoulos, second vice president (Detroit); Elaine Cladis, secretary (Denver); Joanne Kakoyiannis, treasurer, Maria Skiadas, Direct Archdiocesan District president; Anastasia Michals, Metropolis of New Jersey president; Helen Lavorata, director, Vivian Siempos, communications manager; and Mona Lao, attorney.

SAVE THE DATE

2013 Children's Medical Fund Luncheon

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos will host the National Philoptochos 14th Children's Medical Fund Luncheon on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2013. The Fairmont Pittsburgh is the venue for this important event that raises funds for children's hospitals, research, education and therapeutic children's program. Mark your calendars!



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METROPOLIS NEWS

Illinois Parish Honors Its Veterans With Special Celebration

PALOS HILLS, Ill. -- Sts. Constantine and Helen Church honored its veterans at its second annual Veterans Day Observance with a special service on Nov. 11. Fr. Nicholas Jonas, pastor, together with a committee of dedicated individuals under the chairmanship of Angie Kladis, planned the event to honor members of the parish community who served the nation in all branches of service.

On the day of the event, approximately 50 veterans accompanied by family members were greeted in the Church Narthex by committee members and were presented with a red carnation and a U.S. flag pin. They were then escorted by the young ladies of the parish St. Tatiana's Handmaidens to designated seats of honor within the sanctuary.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, Fr. Nick, along with Fr. Byron Papanikolaou and Fr. Tom De Medeiros, led a procession through the sanctuary with altar boys carrying the flags and processional items. The veterans followed in solemn procession. The veterans stood surrounding the solea.

Fr. Nick, Fr. Byron and Fr. Tom offered a memorial service reading the names of deceased family members of the parish who were veterans, praying for the repose of their souls and remembering them for their service to America. Solemn church bells tolled as each name was read. This was followed by the artoclasia service (Blessing of the five Loaves) offered for the health and salvation of all the veterans.

After everyone was seated, the veterans were then called by name to the front



Parish veterans honored at the Palos Hills Church's annual celebration.

of the Altar where they were presented with an Icon prayer card of St. Victor the Martyr, a Roman soldier, along with a serviceman's Bible offered by Metropolitan Iakovos and the Metropolis of Chicago.

Katherine Katsivalis, a talented, young soloist and member of the parish, entertained the veterans and the entire congregation with the singing of two patriotic songs, as the congregation quietly sang along reflecting on the sacrifices of these brave men and women and remembering those who perished.

The congregation and veterans stood together with tearful eyes and pride for our country and for those who defended and continue to defend freedom all over the world.

Sts. Constantine and Helen parish honored and thanked all veterans who served the United States armed forces. After the Divine Liturgy, the veterans were treated to a beautiful patriotic reception in the community's East Room.

We were graced with a special treat, a bagpipe performance by two members of

the Chicago Stockyard Kilty Band.

The parish has pledged to continue this celebration annually event. In the near future the Veterans Day Committee with the parish council will designate an area in the community center where the names of all parish veterans will be engraved on a large plaque as a permanent tribute to these special individuals.

For more information about this and other parish events, call the church office at 708-974-3400 or visit www.stconstantinehelen.org

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Happy Holidays
from the
National Hellenic Society

Church Marks 90th Anniversary, Consecration of Icons



Archbishop Demetrios anoints two of the icons at the church during the consecration service. Construction of the new church building (below left) was completed in 1969.



ALBANY, N.Y. – St. Sophia Church held a double celebration Nov. 24-25 weekend, observing its 90th anniversary and the consecration of its iconography by Archbishop Demetrios.

Nearly 500 faithful attended the events, Fr. Patric Legato noted. Among those in attendance was a retired Albanian Orthodox priest, Fr. Dennis Nagi, a native of Albany who was a college professor until age 55 when he became a priest.

Since Archbishop Demetrios visit eight years ago, when the church had only four icons, the parish embarked on an iconography project over the past three years and 22 large icons were created depicting the life and major events of Christ and the

Virgin Mary.

Fr. Legato said the addition of the new icons “has made a big difference in the life of the parish.”

The iconographer, Efthimios Stoja, is an Albanian immigrant sponsored by the parish for his citizenship application. He is one of several Albanians who have immigrated to the Albany area. Fr. Legato said he was recently asked by so many Albanians have settled in Albany and he replied that, in Albanian, Albany translates to “Albania.”

The iconographer also created a special gift to present to Archbishop Demetrios, an icon depicting both St. Demetrios and St. George on horseback.

***Wishing You
Peace & Joy
this Christmas!***

**Nicholas J. Bouras
Summit, NJ**

ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Χριστούγεννα 2012

Ότε δέ ήλθεν τό πλήρωμα του χρόνου, εξαπέστειλεν ο Θεός τον Υιόν Αυτού, γενόμενον εκ γυναικός.

(πρός Γαλάτας 4:4)

**Προσφιλείς Άδελφοί
καί Άδελφές εν Χριστώ,**

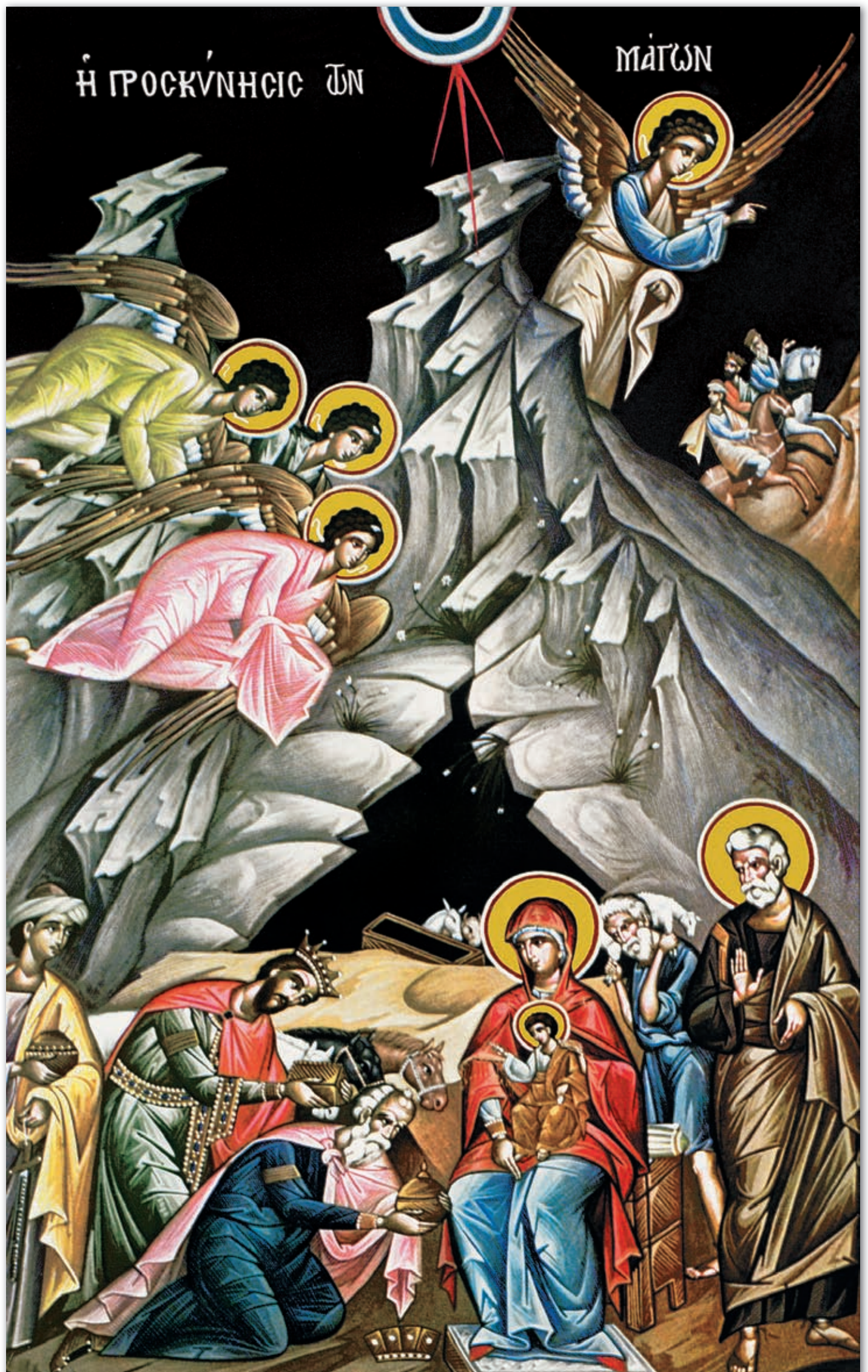
Ο έορτασμός των Χριστουγέννων είναι γεμάτος με χαριμόδυνες διακηρύξεις της εκπλήρωσης των υποσχέσεων του Σαρκαθέντος Κυρίου για λύτρωση και καινή ζωή: «Σήμερον ή Παρθένος γεννά τον υπεράνω παντός όντος». «Σήμερον ο Θεός έρχεται επί γής και ο άνθρωπος άνέρχεται εις ουρανόν». «Σήμερον ο άναρχος άρχεται και ο Λόγος σαρκούται».

Αυτοί οι λόγοι των ύμνων της έορτής των Χριστουγέννων έπιβεβαιώνουν τό μέγεθος των γεγονότων τά όποια εκτυλίχθηκαν στην Βηθλεέμ την ήμέρα αυτή. Καλλιεργούν επίσης μέσα στην καρδιά μας την χαρά, την βεβαιότητα και την έλπίδα που προσφέρονται από τον Ένα ο Όποιος σαρκώθηκε.

Η χαρά της Έορτής της Γεννήσεως είναι γνωστή και βιώνεται μέσα από την αποκάλυψη του θείου σχεδίου του Θεού για την σωτηρία της ανθρωπότητας. Αυτή ή βαθειά και πλήρης χαρά εκφράσθηκε από την Παρθένο Μαρία όταν έδόξασε τον Θεό για την έπιλογή της να γίνη ή μητέρα του Χριστού: Μεγαλύνει ή ψυχή μου τον Κύριον, και ήγαλλίασεν τό πνεύμα μου επί τώ Θεώ τώ Σωτήρι μου (Λουκ. 1:16). Όταν ο άγγελος παρουσιάσθηκε στους ποιμένες ανακοινώνοντας την γέννηση του Χριστού, διεκήρυξε, Ίδού γάρ ευαγγελίζομαι υμίν χαράν μεγάλην ήτις έσται παντί τώ λαώ, ότι έτέχθη υμίν σήμερον Σωτήρ ός έστιν Χριστός Κύριος εν πόλει Δαβίδ (Λουκ. 2:10-11). Έχουμε λάβει, επίσης, αυτή την αποκάλυψη μέσα από τό μήνυμα του Ευαγγελίου, μέσα από την έμπειρία μας της παρουσίας του Χριστού ανάμεσα μας. Σ' αυτή την ένδοξη έορτή οι καρδιές μας γεμίζουν με ανείπωτη χαρά.

Αυτή ή μεγάλη χαρά που μοιραζόμεθα στον έορτασμό της Γεννήσεως του Κυρίου μας δυναμώνει επίσης την πίστη μας στις υποσχέσεις του Θεού. Η μαρτυρία της Σαρκώσεως είναι ότι ο Θεός είναι πιστός και άληθινός. Η εκπλήρωση των υποσχέσεων Του για λύτρωση έπιβεβαιώθηκαν από τον Ζαχαρία, πατέρα του Αγίου Ιωάννου του Βαπτιστού, όταν ειπέ: ο Θεός έπεσκέφατο και έποίησεν λύτρωσιν τώ λαώ Αυτού... καθώς έλάλησεν διά στόματος των άγιων άπ' αιώνας προφητών Αυτού (Λουκ. 1:68, 70). Στο Ευαγγέλιό του, ο Ευαγγελιστής Ματθαίος έγραψε, τούτο δέ όλον γεγονός ίνα πληρωθή τό ρηθέν υπό του Κυρίου διά του προφήτου λέγοντος: Ίδού ή Παρθένος εν γαστρί ξεει και τέξεται Υιόν, και καλέσουσιν τό όνομα Αυτού Έμμανουήλ (Ματθ. 1:22-23, Ησαΐου 7:14).

Και στους ύμνους της Χριστουγεννιατικής περιόδου ψάλλουμε, «Η αποκάλυψη του Χριστού έφανερώθη, τό κήρυγμα των προφητών έξεπληρώθη εν πόλει Βηθλεέμ» (Εσπερινός και Όρθρος πρό της Έορτής). Αυτή την ήμέρα, όλες οι υποσχέσεις του Θεού όλες οι προφησεις





Με τάξη και μεγαλοπρέπεια η θρονική εορτή της πρωτόθρονης Εκκλησίας

του ΝΙΚΟΥ ΜΑΪΤΙΝΑ

Κωνσταντινούπολη. – Με εκκλησιαστική τάξη και μεγαλοπρέπεια εορτάζεται σήμερα στο Φανάρι η μνήμη του Αποστόλου Ανδρέα του Πρωτοκλήτου, ιδρυτή της Εκκλησίας της Κωνσταντινούπολης. Ιεράρχες, κληρικοί και μοναχοί από κάθε γωνιά του πλανήτη, Αντιπροσωπεία της Εκκλησίας της Ρώμης, εκπρόσωποι Ορθοδόξων Εκκλησιών, Κυβερνήσεων και Διπλωμάτες καθώς και πλήθος πιστών έχουν συρρεύσει στις Αυλές τις Μητρώς Εκκλησίας για την Θρονική Εορτή του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου.

ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΣΥΜΜΕΤΟΧΗ

Στην πανηγυρική θεία λειτουργία που τελέστηκε στον Πάνοσητο Πατριαρχικό Ναό του Αγίου Γεωργίου προεξήρχε ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαίος και συμμετείχαν οι Μητροπολίτες Γέρων Χαλκηδόνος Αθανάσιος, Γέρων Δέρκων Απόστολος, Ιταλίας Γεννάδιος, Σύμης Χρυσόστομος, Μιλήτου Απόστολος,

Προικοννήσου Ιωσήφ, Πίτσμπουργκ Σάββας, Κισάμου και Σελίνου Αμφιλόχιος, Κιλκισίου Εμμανουήλ και Ζακύνθου Διονύσιος. Παρέστησαν συμπροσευχόμενοι Ιεράρχες του Θρόνου και άλλων Ορθοδόξων Εκκλησιών.

Επίσης παρευρέθησαν μεταξύ άλλων, ο Υφυπουργός Εξωτερικών της Ελλάδος Κωνσταντίνος Τσιάρας, ο Αρχων Μέγας Λογοθέτης της ΜτΧΕ Θεόδωρος Αγγελόπουλος, ο Γενικός Πρόξενος της Ελλάδος στην Κωνσταντινούπολη Νικόλαος Μαθιουδάκης και Άρχοντες της ΜτΧΕ. Όπως έχει καθιερωθεί στον εορτασμό της Θρονικής Εορτής παρίσταται Αντιπροσωπεία της Εκκλησίας της Ρώμης υπό τον Καρδινάλιο Κοχ, Συμπρόεδρο της Μικτής Επιτροπής για τον διάλογο ανάμεσα στην Ρωμαιοκαθολική με την Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία.

ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΟΥ ΧΟΝΓΚ-ΚΟΝΓΚ

Κατά την πατριαρχική Θεία λειτουργία της θρονικής εορτής του Πατριαρχείου Κωνσταντινούπολης μίλησε για το έργο και τη

σημασία του Αγίου Ανδρέου του Πρωτόκλητου, ο Μητροπολίτης Χονγκ-Κονγκ κ. Νεκτάριος, ο οποίος ανέφερε μεταξύ άλλων τα εξής: «*Τόν κήρυκα τής πίστεως, και ύπηρετην τοῦ Λόγου, Ἀνδρέαν εὐφημήσωμεν ὅτιος γάρ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἐκ τοῦ βυθοῦ ἀλιεύει, ἀντὶ καλάμου τόν σταυρόν, ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ διακρατῶν, καὶ ὡς σπαρτίον χαλῶν τὴν δύναμιν, ἐπαναγεὶ τὰς ψυχὰς, ἀπὸ τῆς πλάνης τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, καὶ προσκομίζει τῷ Θεῷ δῶρον εὐπρόσδεκτον. Αἰεὶ τοῦτον πιστοί, σὺν τῇ χορείᾳ τῶν Μαθητῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ εὐφημήσωμεν, ἵνα πρεσβεύῃ αὐτῷ, ὅπως ἴλεως γένηται ἡμῖν, ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως.*

(*Δοξασιτικὸν Ὅρθρου Ἀ' Νοεμβρίου*)

“Με πνευματική εὐφροσύνη συναχθήκαμε κατὰ τὴν εὐσημον ταύτην ἡμέραν εἰς τὸ ἱερόν καὶ σεπτὸν Κέντρον τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας, διὰ νὰ τιμῶμε κατὰ τρόπον θεοφιλῆ, «τόν μέγα κήρυκα τῆς πίστεως καὶ ὑπηρετην τοῦ Λόγου», «τόν τῆς ἀνδρείας ἐπάνωμον θεηγόρον καὶ Μαθητῶν τόν πρωτόκλητον τοῦ Σωτῆρος». Συναχθήκαμε διὰ νὰ εὐφημήσωμε τόν σύναμον τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ τόν ιδρυτὴν καὶ κραταῖον

προστάτην τῆς Πρωτοθρόνου Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Κωνσταντινούπολης. Ἔθεσα ὡς προοίμιον τῆς παρουσίας ὁμιλίας τὸ Δοξασιτικὸν τοῦ Ὅρθρου τῆς 30^{ης} Νοεμβρίου. Εἰς τὸν ὑπέροχον αὐτόν ἕμνο, ὁ ἱερός ὑμνογράφος περιγράφει μὲ περισσὴ δεξιότητι τὴν δράσιν καὶ τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Πρωτοκλήτου. Ὁ Ἀνδρέας ἦταν ἀλιεύς. Ὡς Ἀπόστολος, ὁμῶς, ἀντὶ διὰ τὸ ἀλιευτικὸν καλὰμ κρατᾷ εἰς τὰς χεῖρας του τόν Σταυρόν καὶ μὲ αὐτόν «τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐκ τοῦ βυθοῦ ἀλιεύει...καὶ ἐπαναγεὶ τὰς ψυχὰς, ἀπὸ τῆς πλάνης τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, καὶ προσκομίζει τῷ Θεῷ δῶρον εὐπρόσδεκτον». Ὁ Σταυρός τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶναι τὸ θεμέλιον τῆς ἀγίας βιοτῆς ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ γιγαντιαίου ἀποστολικοῦ ἔργου τοῦ Ἀνδρέου. Διὰ νὰ κατανοήσωμε τὸ σταυρικὸν ἦθος πού μᾶς διδάσκει ὁ μέγας Ἀπόστολος, πρέπει νὰ μελετήσωμε μὲ προσοχὴ τὰ ὅσα ἡ Ἁγία Γραφή καὶ ἡ ἱερά Παράδοσις διασώζουσι διὰ τὸ σεπτὸν πρόσωπόν του. Διὰ τὴν πνευματικὴν μας ὠφέλεια ἐπέλεξα τρεῖς σημαντικὰ στιγμὰς τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ Ἀποστόλου

► Σελίδα 17

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✠ Β Α Ρ Θ Ο Λ Ο Μ Α Ι Ο Σ

ΕΛΕΩ ΘΕΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΕΩΣ, ΝΕΑΣ ΡΩΜΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΗΣ

ΠΑΝΤΙ ΤΩ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΙ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΧΑΡΙΝ, ΕΛΕΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΡΗΝΗΝ ΠΑΡΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΒΗΘΛΕΕΜ ΓΕΝΝΗΘΕΝΤΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ

“Χριστός γεννᾶται· δοξάσατε.

Χριστός ἐπί γῆς· ὑψώθητε.”

Ἄς πανηγυρίσωμεν χαρμοσύνης τὴν ἄφατον Θεοῦ συγκατάβασιν. Οἱ Ἄγγελοι προηγούνται ψάλλοντες “δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνῃ, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία”.

Ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὅμως βλέπομεν καὶ βιοῦμεν πολέμους καὶ ἀπειλάς πολέμων. Καὶ ὅμως δὲν ἀναιρεῖται ἐκ τούτου ἡ χαρμοσύνη ἀγγελία. Ἡ εἰρήνη, πράγματι ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς διὰ τῆς καταλλαγῆς, ἐν τῷ προσώπῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Ἀλλά, ἀτυχῶς, δὲν καταλλάγημεν, παρά τὸ ἅγιον θέλημά Του, οἱ ἄνθρωποι μεταξύ μας. Διακείμεθα ἐχθρικῶς πρὸς ἀλλήλους. Διακρινόμεθα διὰ φανατισμούς ὡς πρὸς τὰς θρησκευτικὰς καὶ πολιτικὰς μας πεποιθήσεις, διὰ πλεονεξίαν ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἀπόκτησιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, διὰ ἐπεκτατισμὸν ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἀσκῆσιν τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐξουσίας. Καὶ οὕτω συγκρουόμεθα πρὸς τοὺς συνανθρώπους μας.

Ὁ περῶσιμὸς αὐτοκράτωρ τῶν Ρωμαίων Ἅγιος Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ Μέγας, διὰ τοῦ Διατάγματος τῶν Μεδιολάνων, τοῦ ἐκδοθέντος ἐν ἔτει 313 μετὰ Χριστόν, ἐθέσπισε τὴν ἐλευθέραν ἀσκῆσιν τῆς χριστιανικῆς πίστεως, παραλλήλως καὶ τὴν ἐλευθέραν ἀσκῆσιν πάσης ἄλλης θρησκείας. Δυστυχῶς, μετὰ τὴν πάροδον, ἔκτοτε, χιλίων ἐπτακοσίων ἀκριβῶς ἐτῶν, ἐξακολουθοῦν ἀσκούμενοι κατὰ τόπους θρησκευτικοὶ διωγμοὶ κατὰ χριστιανῶν ἢ ἄλλων χριστιανικῶν μειονοτήτων.

Παραλλήλως, οἱ οἰκονομικοὶ ἀνταγωνισμοὶ ἐντείνονται παγκοσμίως καὶ ἡ ἐπιδίωξις τοῦ προσκαίρου κέρδους προωθεῖται ὡς κεφαλαιώδης σκοπός. Αἱ θλιβεραὶ συνέπειαι τῆς ὑπερσυγκεντρώσεως τοῦ πλούτου εἰς χεῖρας ὀλίγων καὶ τῆς οἰκονομικῆς ἐξαθλίωσεως μεγάλων ἀνθρωπίνων μαζῶν παραβλέπονται. Ἡ δυσαναλογία αὕτη, ἡ ὁποία χαρακτηρίζεται παγκοσμίως ὡς οἰκονομικὴ κρίσις, εἶναι κατ’ οὐσίαν ἀπότοκος τῆς ἠθικῆς κρίσεως. Εἰς τὴν ἠθικὴν ταύτην κρίσιν, ἀτυχῶς ἡ ἀνθρωπότης δὲν δίδει τὴν πρέπουσαν σημασίαν. Πρὸς δικαιολόγησιν τῆς στάσεώς της ἐπικαλεῖται τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῶν συναλλαγῶν. Ἡ ἐλευθερία ὅμως τῶν συναλλαγῶν δὲν ἐπιτρέπει τὸ ἔγκλημα. Καὶ ἐγκληματικὴ συμπεριφορὰ δὲν εἶναι μόνον ἡ περιγραφομένη εἰς τοὺς ποινικοὺς κώδικας. Εἶναι καὶ ἐκείνη ἡ ὁποία, ἂν καὶ δὲν προβλέπεται ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπιταγῶν τῶν ποινικῶν νόμων, ὑφαρπάζει τὸν πλοῦτον τῶν ἄλλων διὰ καταλλήλων μεθοδεύσεων. Ἐφ’ ὅσον ὁ νόμος δὲν ἐπιβάλλεται, αἱ ἀντιδράσεις τῶν θιγομένων πολιτῶν ἐκδηλοῦνται πολλακῶς ἀνεξελέγκτως καὶ προκαλοῦν διασάλευσιν τῆς κοινωνικῆς εἰρήνης.

Παρακολουθοῦντες, λοιπόν, ἀπὸ τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ ἡμῶν Πατριαρχείου, τὰ “σημεῖα τῶν καιρῶν”, κατὰ τὰ ὁποῖα “ἀκούονται” πανταχόθεν καὶ βιοῦνται “πόλεμοι καὶ ἀκαταστασία” καὶ ἐγείρεται ἔθνος ἐπὶ ἔθνος καὶ βασιλεία ἐπὶ βασιλείαν, σεισμοὶ τε μεγάλοι κατὰ τόπους καὶ λιμοὶ καὶ λοιμοὶ, φόβητρά τε καὶ σημεῖα ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ μεγάλα παρουσιάζονται (πρβλ. Λουκ. κα', 10-12), βιοῦντες δὲ ἐμπραγματῶς τὸ Βασιλειανόν, ὅτι “τῆς ἀγάπης ἐξάρετα δύο ταῦτα· τὸ λυπεῖσθαι μὲν καὶ ἀγωνιᾶν ἐφ’ οἷς βλάπτεται ὁ ἀγαπώμενος, χαίρειν δὲ καὶ ἀγωνίζεσθαι ὑπὲρ τῆς ωφελείας αὐτοῦ... ὁ δὲ μὴ οὕτω συνδιατιθέμενος φανερός ἐστὶ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφόν” (Μ. Βασιλείου, Ὅροι κατ’ ἐπιτομήν, Ρ.Γ. 31, 1200Α), κηρύττομεν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἱερᾶς ταύτης Καθέδρας τοῦ Κέντρου τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας, τὸ ἐπὶ θύρας νέον Ἔτος ὡς Ἔτος Πανανθρωπίνης Ἀλληλεγγύης.

Ἐλπίζομεν ὅτι οὕτω θὰ εὐαισθητοποιήσωμεν ἀρκετὰς καρδίας τῶν μελῶν τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος ἐπὶ τοῦ προβλήματος τῆς μεγάλης καὶ ἐκτεταμένης πτωχείας καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνάγκης λήψεως μέτρων, πρὸς ἀνακούφισιν τῶν πεινῶντων καὶ δυστυχούντων.

Ζητοῦμεν, ὡς πνευματικὸς ἐκκλησιαστικὸς ἡγέτης, τὴν συμπραξιν ὄλων τῶν καλῆς θελήσεως προσώπων καὶ Κυβερνήσεων διὰ τὴν πραγματοποιήσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τῆς Κυρίου εἰρήνης. Τῆς εἰρήνης, τὴν ὁποῖαν ἐπηγγέλθησαν οἱ Ἄγγελοι καὶ ἔφερε τὸ βρέφος Ἰησοῦς. Ἐπιθυμοῦντες τὴν ἀληθῆ εἰρήνην ταύτην, τὴν πάντα νοῦν ὑπερέχουσαν, ὀφειλομεν νὰ τὴν ἐπιδιώκωμεν ἐμπράκτως, μὴ ἀδιαφοροῦντες διὰ τὰς ἀδυναμίας, πνευματικὰς καὶ ὑλικὰς, τοῦ συνανθρώπου, ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὁποῖου Χριστὸς κατήλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

Ἡ ἀγάπη καὶ ἡ εἰρήνη εἶναι γνωρίσματα τῶν Μαθητῶν καὶ Ἀποστόλων τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ παντός Χριστιανοῦ. Ὅθεν, προτρεπόμεθα ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀλλήλους, ὅπως κατὰ τὸ Ἔτος τοῦτο τῆς Πανανθρωπίνης Ἀλληλεγγύης καταβάλλωμεν ὡς ἄτομα καὶ ὡς λαοί, συνειδητὰς προσπαθείας διὰ τὴν ἄμβλυσιν τῶν ἀπανθρώπων συνεπειῶν τῶν μεγάλων ἀνισοτήτων καὶ διὰ τὴν ἀναγνώρισιν ὑπὸ πάντων τοῦ δικαίωματος τῶν ἀσθενεστέρων πρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν τῶν ἀπαραιτήτων διὰ τὴν ζωὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀγαθῶν.

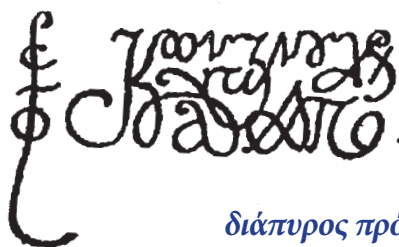
Τοιοῦτοτρόπως θὰ ἴδωμεν πραγματοποιουμένην ἐν τῷ μέτρῳ τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνως ἐφικτοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὴν εἰρήνην.

Προσκυνοῦντες μεθ’ ἀπάσης τῆς αἰσθητῆς καὶ τῆς νοητῆς κτίσεως τὴν ἐκ Παρθένου ἐπὶ γῆς ἐνημίαν τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ Λόγου τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ κλίνοντες γόνυ ἐνώπιον τοῦ Βρέφους Ἰησοῦς, τοῦ φωτισμοῦ καὶ σωτήρος μας, τοῦ ὑπερασπιστοῦ τῆς ζωῆς μας, διερωτώμεθα ἀληθῶς μετὰ τοῦ Ψαλμοῦ τίνα φοβηθήσομεθα ἢ ἀπὸ τίνος δειλιάσωμεν (πρβλ. Ψαλμ. 26) οἱ χριστιανοὶ, ἐφ’ ὅσον “ἐτέθη ἡμῖν σήμερον Σωτήρ” (πρβλ. Λουκ. β' 11), “ὁ Κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων καὶ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης” (πρβλ. Ψαλμ. 23);

Εὐχόμεθα καὶ προσευχόμεθα ἐκτενῶς καὶ ὀλοκαρδίως ὅπως τὸ ἀνατέλλον ἔτος 2013 καταστή διὰ πάντας ἔτος πανανθρωπίνης ἀλληλεγγύης, ἐλευθερίας, καταλλαγῆς, εὐδοκίας, εἰρήνης καὶ εὐφροσύνης καὶ ὅπως ὁ ἐν Σηλαίῳ τεχθεὶς προαιώνιος Λόγος τοῦ Πατρὸς, ὁ ἐνώσας τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν ἐνὶ τάγματι καὶ ποιήσας εἰρήνην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, χαρίζῃ εἰς πάντας ὑπομονήν, ἐλπίδα καὶ δύναμιν καὶ εὐλογίᾳ τὸν κόσμον διὰ τῶν θείων δωρεῶν τῆς ἀγάπης Αὐτοῦ.

Ἀμήν.

Φανάριον, Χριστούγεννα, βιβ’



✠ Ὁ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως
Βαρθολομαῖος

διάπυρος πρὸς Θεὸν εὐχέτης πάντων ὑμῶν

Ομιλία Μητροπολίτου Χονγκ-Κονγκ για τη Θρονική Εορτή του Πατριαρχείου

► Σελίδα 16

Ἀνδρέου, τρεῖς μεγαλειώδεις σταθμούς.

Ὁ πρῶτος σταθμὸς εἶναι τὰ ρεῖθρα τοῦ Ἰορδάνου. Ὁ ἀλιεὺς ἀπὸ τὴν Βηθσαϊδᾶ, ἀφήνει τὴν λίμνη τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τὴν ἕρημον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου. Ὁ Ἀνδρέας ἦταν ὀλιγογράμματος ἀλλὰ εὐσεβῆς καὶ πιστὸς καὶ ἡ καρδιά του φλεγόταν ἀπὸ ἀγάπη πρὸς τὸν Θεό. Διὰ τοῦτο ἐλκύεται ἀπὸ τὸ κήρυγμα μετανόιας τοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Προδρόμου καὶ Βαπτιστοῦ καὶ ἐντάσσεται μετὰ προθυμία εἰς τὸν κύκλον τῶν στενότερων μαθητῶν του. Μαθητεύει πλησίον τοῦ ἀσκητοῦ Προφήτου καὶ διδάσκειται οὐχὶ μόνον διὰ τῶν λόγων ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τοῦ παραδείγματος ὅτι ἡ μετάνοια καὶ ἡ θεογνωσία εἶναι καρποὶ τῆς ἀσκήσεως καὶ τῆς ταπεινώσεως. Ὅταν ὁ τίμιος Πρόδρομος κατόπιν θεϊκῆς ἀποκαλύψεως ἀναγνωρίζει εἰς τὸ Πρόσωπον τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τὸν ἀναμενόμενον Μεσσία καὶ Λυτρωτῆ, δὲν διστάζει νὰ προτρέψῃ τὸς μαθητὰς του νὰ ἀφήσουν αὐτὸν καὶ νὰ ἀκολουθήσουν Ἐκεῖνον: «Ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου» (Ἰωάν. α' 36), «Ἐκεῖνος δεῖ αὐξάνειν, ἐμὲ δὲ ἑλαττοῦσθαι» (Ἰωάν. γ' 30).

“Οἱ λόγοι τοῦ Προδρόμου δὲν παρέμειναν ἀκατανόητοι διὰ τὸν Ἀνδρέα. Ἡ καρδιά του ζυμωμένη ἀπὸ τὴν θεοποίησιν ταπεινῶσιν ἦταν πλέον ἔτοιμη νὰ θυσιάσῃ τὰ πάντα καὶ νὰ ἀκολουθήσῃ τὸν Σωτῆρα Χριστό. Αὕτη εἶναι ἡ θαυμαστὴ ἐνέργεια τῆς ἀληθοῦς ταπεινώσεως. Ὅλος ὁ πνευματικὸς ἀγῶνας καὶ ἡ ἀσκήσις γίνεται οὐχὶ διὰ νὰ ἀνεβῆ πνευματικὰ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, νὰ φτάσῃ εἰς κάποια κορυφήν, ἀλλὰ διὰ νὰ κατεβῆ, νὰ ταπεινωθῆ. Νὰ θραυθῆ ὅλες τὲς παράλογες καὶ παρὰ φύσιν καταστάσεις τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης

φύσεως, τὴν κενοδοξία, τὴν ἀνθρωπαρέσκεια, τὴν ὑποκρισία καὶ τὴν ὑπερηφάνεια, τὰ πάθη ποῦ παραμορφώνουν τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ καταστρέφουν τὸν προορισμὸν του. Νὰ θραυθῆ ἰδιαιτέρως τὴν ἑσωφρονικὴ ὑπερηφάνεια ποῦ εἶναι «θείας καὶ ἀνθρωπίνης γνώσεως στήριξις», καὶ «νὰ κάμῃ τὴν ταπεινώσιν μία ἀκλόνητον βᾶσιν τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου πνεύματος, νὰ ἀφήσωμε τὸν ἑαυτὸν μας νὰ ἀλεσθῆ ἀνάμεσα ἀπὸ τὰς μυλόπετρας τῆς ταπεινώσεως διὰ νὰ γίνῃ τὸ γλυκὸ καὶ εὐάρεστο ψωμί εἰς τὸν Κύριόν του»...

“Ὁ δεῦτερος σημαντικὸς σταθμὸς εἰς τὴν ζωὴν τοῦ Ἀνδρέου εἶναι τὰ παραλία τῆς λίμνης Γεννησαρέτ. Ἐκεῖ εἶναι ὁ τόπος ὅπου ἐγεννήθη. Ὁ τόπος ὅπου ἐξασκή τὸ ἐπάγγελμα τοῦ ἀλιεῦς ὁμοῦ μετὰ τὸν ἀδελφόν του Πέτρον, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους δύο ἀδελφούς, τὸν Ἰωάννην καὶ τὸν Ἰάκωβον. Ἐκεῖ κάπου πλησίον τῆς Καπερναοῦμ, ὁ Κύριος «περιπατῶν περὶ τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας», εἶδε τὸν Ἀνδρέαν καὶ τὸν Σίμωνα Πέτρον νὰ ριπίζου τὸ δικτυὸν των εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν. Καὶ τοὺς προσκαλεῖ νὰ καταταγοῦν εἰς τὸν κύκλον τῶν μονίμων μαθητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων Του: «Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων». Χωρὶς δευτέρη σκέψη ἀφήκαν ἀμέσως τὰ πάντα καὶ τὸν ἠκολούθησαν. Ὁ Ἀνδρέας ὁμοῦ μετὰ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀποστόλους μαθητεύει πληθύνον τῶν Ἰησοῦ. Μαθητεύει εἰς τὸ Μυστήριον τῆς Σταυρώσεως καὶ τῆς Ἀναστάσεως. Καὶ μετὰ τὴν Πεντηκοστήν, πλήρης Πνεύματος Ἁγίου, δὲν βραδύνει ἀλλὰ σπεύδει καὶ πάλιν μετὰ χαρὰ καὶ ἱερὸν ἐνθουσιασμὸν νὰ κηρύξῃ Χριστόν, νὰ ἰδρῶσῃ Ἐκκλησίαν, νὰ καταστήσῃ Ἐπισκόπου, Πρεσβυτέρους καὶ Διακόνους, νὰ θέσῃ κανόνας καὶ ὅρους ἐκκλησιαστικῆς εὐταξίας καὶ γνησίας

χριστιανικῆς ζωῆς. Ἡ παράδοσις φέρει τὸν Ἀπόστολον Ἀνδρέα νὰ κηρύττῃ εἰς τὰ παράλια τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου καὶ τῆς Προποντίδος, τὴν Νίκαια, τὴν Νικομήδεια, τὴν Βιθυνία, τὴ Γοθθία, τὴ Σκυθία, τὴν Ἰβηρία, τὴν Ἀμισό, τὴν Τραπεζοῦντα, τὴν Ἡράκλεια, τὴν Ἀμόστριδα, τὴν Σινώπη, τὸ Βυζάντιο, τὴν Θράκη, τὴν Μακεδονία, τὴν Θεσσαλία καὶ τέλος εἰς τὴν Ἀχαΐα. Παρὰ τὰς κακουχίας καὶ τοὺς διωγμούς δὲν κάμπτεται ἀλλὰ συνεχίζει τὰς περιοδείας του καὶ προσπαθεῖ νὰ στηρίξῃ τὰς νέας Ἐκκλησίας, ἀνέφερε. Καὶ πρόσθεσε: «Ἐκάστη Ἐκκλησία ποῦ ἰδρῦει δὲν εἶναι ἕνας ἀνθρώπινος κοσμικὸς ὀργανισμὸς ἀλλὰ εἶναι αὐτὸ τὸ ἴδιο τὸ θεανθρώπινον σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ποῦ οἰκοδομεῖ καὶ αὐξάνει τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. Εἶναι ὁ νέος Παράδεισος, ὅπου εἰς τὸ ἐξῆς φυτεύεται, ἐργάζεται καὶ τελειώνεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἡ «κατὰ Θεὸν πατρίδα» τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία χωρεῖ τὰ πάντα ἐνὸς δὲν χωρεῖται ἀπὸ τίποτα.

“Ὁ τρίτος σταθμὸς τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ Πρωτοκλήτου Ἀποστόλου εἶναι τὰ παράλια τῶν Παλαιῶν Πατρῶν εἰς τὴν Ἀχαΐα. Ἡ ἐπίγειος ζωὴ τοῦ Ἀνδρέου φθάνει εἰς τὸ τέλος τῆς. Ὁ Ρωμαῖος Ἀνθύπατος Αἰγεάτης διατάσσει τὴν καταδίκη του εἰς θάνατον καὶ μετὰ περιστῆ περιφρόνησιν καὶ εἰρωνεία πρὸς τὸ σεπτὸν πρόσωπον τοῦ ἀλιεῦς μαθητοῦ τοῦ ἐσταυρωμένου Χριστοῦ, προστάζει νὰ θανατωθῆ διὰ σταυροῦ καὶ τὸ ξύλον τοῦ μαρτυρίου νὰ στηθῆ «πρὸς τὸ χεῖλος τῆς θαλάσσης ψάμμου».

Ὁ Ἀνδρέας, κυρτωμένος ἀπὸ τὸ βάρος τῶν χρόνων, τῶν κόπων, καὶ τῶν κακουχιῶν, στέκεται ἐνώπιον τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ μαρτυρίου του ἀγέρωχος. Ὅσθεν τοῦ σταυροῦ ἀπλώνεται ἡ θάλασσα μετὰ τὴν κρυφὴ φωνὴ τοῦ κματός

της καὶ τὸ τρυφερὸ τραγούδι τῆς ἀρμύρας της. Τόσο γνώριμα εἰς τὸν γέροντα ἀλιεῖα. Μὰ ἡ καρδιά τοῦ Ἀνδρέου δὲν περιπλανᾶται εἰς στεῖρους συναισθηματισμούς. Τὸ καθάριο βλέμμα του δὲν χάνεται εἰς τὴν ἀπεραντοσύνη τῆς θάλασσας, εἰς ἀλλοτινὲς μνημῆς καὶ θυμῆς. Ἀπὸ τότε, ἐκεῖ εἰς τὰ ρεῖθρα τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, ποῦ συνήνητσε τὸν Χριστόν, τὸ βλέμμα του μένει προσηλωμένον εἰς τὸν Κύριόν του. Καὶ τώρα μετὰ τὸν ἴδιο ἐνθουσιασμὸν, μετὰ τὸν ὁποῖον τότε ἔτρεχε νὰ συναντήσῃ τὸν Χριστόν, πλησιάζει τὸν σταυρὸν καὶ ἀπευθύνεται εἰς αὐτὸν μετὰ φωνῆς ἰσχυρᾶς: «Ὡ ἀγαθὲ σταυρῆ, ὁ ἐπὶ ἑστέας καὶ ὠραιότητα ἐκ τῶν μελῶν τοῦ Κυρίου δεξάμενος, ἐπὶ πολὺ ἐπιπόθητε καὶ σπουδαίως ἐπιθυμητὴ καὶ ἐκτενῶς ἐπιζητούμενη, λάβε με ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἀπόδος με τῷ διδασκάλῳ μου».

Ἐπὶ τρία ὀλόκληρα ἡμερονύκτια παρέμεινε ὁ θεῖος ἀπόστολος κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ χωρὶς νὰ παύσῃ νὰ νουθετῆ τὰ συρρέοντα πρὸς αὐτὸν πλήθη. Μάλιστα δὲν ἐδίστασε νὰ ἐπιπλήξῃ τὸν Ἐπίσκοπο Στρατοκλῆ, τὸν ὁποῖον εἶχε χειροτονήσῃ πρό ὀλίγων ἡμερῶν ἐντὸς τῆς φυλακῆς, καὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς χριστιανούς οἱ ὁποῖοι ἤθελαν νὰ τὸν ἐλευθερώσουν: «Ἐως τίνος, ἔλεγε, τοῖς κοσμικοῖς καὶ προσκαιροῖς προσανέχετε; Ἐως πότε οὐ κατανοεῖτε τὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς; Ἀφετέ με» νὰ ἀποθάνω ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ καὶ ἄς μὴ με λύσει κανεὶς, διότι μοῦ ἔχει δωθεῖ ἤδη ὡς κληρὸς νὰ ἐκδημῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος καὶ νὰ ἐνδημῶ πρὸς τὸν Κύριον, μετὰ τοῦ ὁποῖου ἔχω συσταυρωθῆ. Τὰ τελευταῖα λόγια καὶ ἡ δυναμικὴ ἐγκαρτερῆσις εἰς τὸν μαρτυρικὸν θάνατον τοῦ Πρωτοκλήτου Ἀποστόλου καταδεικνύουν τὸ σταυρικὸν ἦθος του, τόνισε ὁ κ. Νεκτάριος.

ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

► Σελίδα 15

των προφητών περί τής σωτηρίας μας
εξεπληρώθησαν στη Γέννηση του Χριστού.

Ἡ χαρά καί ἡ βεβαιότητα πού βιώνουμε
στήν κοινωνία μας μέ τόν Θεό σ' αὐτή τήν
ἀγία Ἐορτή προκαλεῖ μέσα στίς καρδιές
μας διαρκή ἐλπίδα. Ἡ χαρά μας στήν
ἐκπλήρωση τοῦ θελήματος τοῦ Θεοῦ γιά
τήν λύτρωσή μας καί ἡ βεβαιότητά μας
βασισμένη στήν πίστη μας στήν ἀλήθεια
τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, μᾶς δίδει σταθερή ἐλπίδα
στίς ὑποσχέσεις Του γιά αἰώνια ζωή, γιά τήν
πλήρη ἀποκατάσταση τής σχέσώς μας μ'
Ἐκεῖνον, καί γιά τήν ὀλοκλήρωση ὅλων τῶν
πραγμάτων. Αὐτή εἶναι ἐορτή ἐλπίδος διότι
δι' αὐτῆς βλέπουμε ὅλα αὐτά πού ἔχουν
ἐπιτευχθεῖ, καί παίρνουμε μιά ἰδέα γιά
αὐτό πού ἀκολουθεῖ. Αὐτή ἡ Ἐορτή τῆς
Γεννήσεως τοῦ Κυρίου μας ἐπιβεβαιώνει
στόν καθένα μας ὅτι μπορούμε νά ἔχουμε
ἐλπίδα καί χαρά σέ ὅλες τίς συνθήκες
καί καταστάσεις τής ζωῆς, ἐλπίδα στή
μεταμόρφωση τής ζωῆς μας διά τῆς
πίστεως, καί ἐλπίδα στήν δύναμη τῆς
ἀγάπης τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Σ' αὐτή τήν εὐλογημένη καί ἀγία
Ἐορτή, εὐχόμαι στόν καθένα σας τίς
καλύτερες εὐχές μου γιά μιά χαρμόσυνη
περίοδο λατρείας καί ἀδελφοσύνης.
Εἶθε οἱ καρδιές σας νά εἶναι γεμάτες
βεβαιότητα, χαρά καί ἐλπίδα, καί εἶθε ἡ
εἰρήνη καί τό ἔλεος τοῦ Κυρίου μας νά
σᾶς συντροφεύουν στό νέο ἔτος.

Μετά πατρικῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπης,

✠ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀμερικής Δημήτριος

✠ Ὁ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀμερικής Δημήτριος



Αρχιερατικό Συλλείτουργο στα Μύρα της Λυκίας

Τελέστηκε καί φέτος στα Μύρα της Λυκίας, στον τόπο που ἐξήσε καί εποίμανε ο Ἅγιος Νικόλαος, ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία ἀνήμερα τῆς εορτῆς του. Ο οικεῖος Μητροπολίτης Μύρων Χρυσόστομος προεξήρχε τῆς Θ. Λειτουργίας, συλλειτουργούντων τῶν Μητροπολιτῶν Προικονήσου Ἰωσήφ καί ο Πισιδίας Σωτηρίου, λειτούργησαν, ιερέων ἀπό τήν Πόλη, τὸ Ἅγιο Ὄρος, τήν Ελλάδα, τήν Ρωσία. Πλήθος κόσμου, ἀπό τήν Πόλη, τήν Ρόδο, τήν Αθήνα καί ἄλλες περιοχές ἐκκλησιάστηκαν στίς 6 Δεκεμβρίου στα Μύρα. Ἐπίσης, Ὀρθόδοξοι ἀπό τήν Ρωσία, τήν Ουκρανία καί τήν Γεωργία που ζουν μόνιμα στήν περιοχή τῆς ευρύτερης Αττάλειας ἐσπευσαν στον τόπο τοῦ Ἁγίου. Ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία τήν ἡμέρα τῆς μνήμης τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου στα Μύρα, καθιερώθηκε τὸ 1983, ἐπὶ τοῦ μακαριστοῦ Μητροπολίτου Μύρων (μετέπειτα Γέροντος Εφέσου) Χρυσόστομου. Στήν εορτή τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου, τὸ 1992, τῆς Θείας Λειτουργίας προεξήρχε ὁ Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαῖος καί συμμετείχαν ἱεράρχες τοῦ Πατριαρχείου. Τὸ 2003, προεξάρχοντας τοῦ Οικουμενικοῦ Πατριάρχου Βαρθολομαίου εορτάστηκαν τὰ εἴκοσι χρόνια ἀπὸ τήν πανηγυρική Λειτουργία που ἀρχισε νὰ τελεῖται κάθε χρόνο ἀνήμερα τῆς εορτῆς τοῦ Ἁγίου προστάτου τῶν Ναυτικῶν στήν ἱστορική Βασιλική ὅπου, μέχρι τὸν 11ο αἰώνα, ἦταν ἐνταφιασμένο τὸ σκῆνωμα του. Τὸ ἱερό σκῆνωμα μεταφέρθηκε στο Μπάρι τῆς Ἰταλίας τὸ 1087 μ.Χ. ὅπου μέχρι σήμερα φυλάσσεται.

“ΟΧΙ ΣΤΗ ΒΙΑ, ΝΑΙ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΓΑΠΗ” ΤΟ ΜΗΝΥΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ΒΑΡΘΟΛΟΜΑΙΟΥ ΣΤΗ ΒΙΕΝΝΗ

Ὁ Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Βαρθολομαῖος, μίλησε ὁ βράδυ τῆς 26^{ης} Νοεμβρίου παρουσία τοῦ Γενικοῦ Γραμματέα τοῦ Ὄργανισμοῦ τῶν Ἠνωμένων Ἐθνῶν Μπαν Κι Μουν καί πολιτικῶν καί θρησκευτικῶν ηγετῶν ἀπ' ὅλο τὸν κόσμο, στήν επίσημη τελετὴ ἐναρξῆς τῆς λειτουργίας τοῦ Διεθνούς Κέντρου «Βασιλιάς Ἀμπντουλάχ Μπιν Ἀμπντουλασίζ γιά τὸν Διαθρησκευτικό Διάλογο» (KAICIID). Ὁ Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης στήν ομιλία του υπογράμμισε ὅτι ποτὲ ἡ βία δὲν μας φέρνει πιο κοντὰ στὸν Θεό, ἀλλὰ μας ἀπομακρύνει ἀπὸ Αὐτόν καί τόνισε τὴ δέσμευσή του γιά τὴν ἀγάπη τῶν ἄλλων καί γιά τὸ σταμάτημα τῆς βίας ἐξαιτίας τῶν διαφορετικῶν θρησκευτικῶν, πολιτιστικῶν, κοινωνικῶν ἢ πολιτικῶν πεποιθήσεων. Στὴ σημαντικὴ αὐτὴ ἐπίσκεψη καί τὴς επαφῆς που εἶχε ὁ Προκαθήμενος τῆς Ὀρθοδοξίας στὴ Βιέννη συνοδευόταν ἀπὸ τὸν Μητροπολίτη Γαλλίας Ἐμμανουήλ, ὁ ὁποῖος μετέχει στο ἐννεαμελές Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο τοῦ ἐν λόγω Διεθνούς Κέντρου καί ἔχει τὴν εὐθύνη συντονισμοῦ τῶν διαθρησκευτικῶν διαλόγων ἐκ μέρους τοῦ Οικουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου, τὸν Μητροπολίτη Μύρων Χρυσόστομο, τὸν Μητροπολίτη Αυστρίας Ἀρσένιο, τὸν Πρωτοπρεσβύτερο τοῦ Οικουμενικοῦ Θρόνου Δοσίθεο Ἀναγνωστόπουλο, Διευθυντὴ τοῦ Γραφείου Τύπου τοῦ Πατριαρχείου καί τὸν Παντελεήμονα Βίγκα, Ἄρχοντα Μ. Χαρτοφύλακα τῆς Μ.τ.Χ.Ε. καί Ἐκπρόσωπο τῶν Μειονοτήτων στο Συμβούλιο τῆς Γενικῆς Διευθύνσεως Βακουφίων στήν Ἀγκυρα.

Τὸ «Διεθνὲς Κέντρο Βασιλιάς Ἀμπντουλάχ Μπιν Ἀμπντουλασίζ γιά Διαθρησκευτικό καί Διαπολιτιστικό Διάλογο» (KAICIID), θὰ ἔχει τὸ καθεστῶς ἐνός διεθνούς ὀργανισμοῦ καί θὰ ἀποτελεῖ ἐνὰ παγκόσμιο φόρουμ διαλόγου ἀνάμεσα στίς θρησκείες τοῦ κόσμου.

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METROPOLITAN ISAIAH
AND THE CLERGY AND LAITY
OF THE METROPOLIS OF DENVER
EXTEND TO ALL THE CLERGY AND LAITY
OF OUR HOLY ARCHDIOCESE
AND TO ALL PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL
OUR BEST WISHES
FOR A BLESSED CHRISTMAS
AND A PEACEFUL AND JOYOUS
NEW YEAR!



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ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ
ΚΙ ΕΥΤΥΧΙΣΜΕΝΟΣ
Ο ΚΑΙΝΟΥΡΓΙΟΣ
ΧΡΟΝΟΣ

ΟΙΚΟΓΕΝΕΙΑ ΚΟΥΤΣΟΜΗΤΗ

*May the Joy
and Peace
of the
Infant Christ Child
dwell in your hearts
now and evermore*



From the hand of Fr. Luke Dingman

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IOCC

\$1.3 Million in Medical Aid Sent to Greece's Ailing Hospitals

BALTIMORE, Md. – As shortages of medical supplies and medicine continue to threaten healthcare delivery at Greece's ailing hospitals, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) has responded to the country's escalating healthcare crisis with the delivery of more than \$1.3 million in medical supplies and walking aids to pediatric hospitals in Athens and public general hospitals on the island of Crete.

With generous support from the Pancretan Association, IOCC distributed more than \$675,000 in medical and surgical supplies to the hospitals throughout Crete. The Pancretan Association and the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) together also supported the distribution of more than \$650,000 worth of medical supplies, wheelchairs and walking aids to three Athens-area public children's hospitals. The medical facilities included

Agia Sophia Children's Hospital, the largest children's hospital in Greece with 700 beds, the General Children's Hospital Aglaia Kyriakou with 160 beds and the Pentelis General Children's Hospital with 380 beds.

As the economic crisis escalated and fear of not being reimbursed by the government grew, hospital suppliers began demanding payment in advance for purchases of supplies. Manolis Pappas, administrator of the three Children's Hospitals in Athens, explained that without the medical supplies provided by IOCC, public hospitals like Agia Sophia faced critical shortages of healthcare necessities. The Archdiocese recently announced its support of IOCC humanitarian efforts in Greece with a \$150,000 grant to assist the elderly, children and large families with basic living necessities as the economic situation deteriorates and winter approaches.

OCMC

Newly Added for 2013: Albania Family Mission Team

Families with children, couples, and individuals who have experience with children are invited to help lead a family retreat program in Albania. The focus is to offer a "family witness" while sharing the Orthodox faith and growing in Christ together.

Workshops, activities, and ministry outreach will be offered to Albanian church leaders and their families. Sports, arts & crafts, singing, and music will also be part of the fun. There will be opportunities to experience several ministries of the Church of Albania and go on pilgrimages to some of Albania's holiest sites. This team will be a collaboration between OCMC and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Center for Family Care. Families with children are encouraged to participate.

In the 20th century under a Communist regime, the Orthodox Church in Albania suffered an extremely severe religious persecution in the world; by 1991, no Church infrastructure existed. Under the guidance of Archbishop Anastasios,

Archbishop of Tirana, Durres, and All Albania, along with the help of Orthodox missionaries, the Church has been resur-

rected and continues to flourish.

In 2011, we sent our first-ever Family Mission Team to Albania and humbly helped lay the foundation for family ministry of the Orthodox Church of Albania. The 2013 Family Mission Team will work side by side with OCMC missionaries and Church leaders to continue building and strengthening this ministry. Adults and children alike will actively participate in roles of leadership: adults will lead camp programs, while children will be involved in preparations with adult supervision. All participants are called to be exemplary role models as they minister to other families, share their life experience, and offer a visible witness of the Orthodox faith.

Be a part of this OCMC and Center for Family Care mission witness! Strong family values, teaching experience, and training and/or experience in helping couples and families are needed; team is limited to 20 participants from North America. The dates are July 19- Aug. 1. The participant cost is \$1,410; additional family member, \$1,065; children (under 12 years of age), \$695; airfare is not included.



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"Behold, the virgin shall be with child,
and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel"

Isaiah 7:14

We wish
His All-Holiness
Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
His Eminence
Archbishop Demetrios of America
the Hierarchs of the Holy Eparchial Synod
and the Clergy and Laity of the
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
a joy-filled celebration of the Lord's Nativity
and a New Year 2013
that is abundant in divine blessings.

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CHURCH MUSICIANS



Demetrios Pappas, recipient of the Archdiocesan Medal of St. Paul, with Federation President Anna Dounelis, Bishop Sevastianos, Fr. Luke Uhl and Deacon Peter Zougras.

Choir Federation Holds Conference at Long Island Parish

by **Georgeann Mavrovitis**

The Direct Archdiocesan District Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians held its 28th annual conference the weekend of Oct. 20-21. It was hosted by the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Hempstead, N.Y., and included choir directors, psaltis, organists and over 75 senior and youth choir members from 12 Direct Archdiocesan District parishes. Federation President Anna Dounelis, together with the executive board and assisted by St. Paul's parishioners, coordinated the conference.

In attendance was Dr. Vicki Pappas, outgoing chairman of the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians and newly elected Chairman Maria Keritsis. Dr. Pappas gave the keynote address that encompassed the conference theme "Sing Praises With Understanding."

Five workshops were offered – two for the senior choir members and three for the youth. A senior workshop on vocal techniques was presented by Gus Chrysson, minister of Music at the Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral in New York, a vocal teacher and a performing singer.

Angelo Lampousis, president of the Axion Estin Foundation, psalti at Holy Trinity Church in New Rochelle, N.Y. and the DAD Federation chant liaison, offered a senior workshop on chant.

Spyro Kalas, music teacher, organist and choir director, conducted a youth workshop on sight singing, and Deacon Mathew Kakis of St. Paul's led a youth discussion on the meaning of our hymns. Eleni Pitzel, an artist and St. Paul's choir member, held a youth craft workshop. A discussion group for directors and organists, led by Ms. Dounelis, considered the need for good music and good choirs.

Bishop Sevastianos of Zela led the Sunday Liturgy along with St. Paul's clergy, Frs. Luke Melackrinis and Panagiotis Zougras.

Dr. Efstratios Demertzis served as both psalti and conference choir director. The St. Paul's Byzantine Chant Group participated in the Orthros as well. Georgia Kaufman, Youth choir director of Archangel Michael in Port Washington and the Federation youth liaison, directed the 30-voice youth choir.

Following the service, a series of awards were presented and the oath of of-

fice was administered to the newly elected executive board by Bishop Sevastianos who presented, on behalf of Archbishop Demetrios, the Archdiocesan Medal of St. Paul to Demetrios Pappas, composer/arranger, conductor, teacher and founder of the GOYA Chorale, for his life's dedication to the music of the Greek Orthodox Church. Mr. Pappas was also a former teacher of music at Holy Cross Seminary in Brookline, Mass.

Nicholas Pappas was awarded a Federation Lifetime Achievement Award for his over 50 years of service as a choir director who developed choirs throughout the District including Zoodohos Peghe in the Bronx, NY, St. Nicholas in Flushing, NY and Archangel Michael, now in Port Washington,

The 2012 Federation Scholarship was presented to Ariana Warren of the Saint Paraskevi Shrine Church in Greenlawn, NY. She is currently studying vocal performance and Music Education at Ithaca College. Stella Thymius of the Cathedral of St. Paul was awarded the DAD Federation Choir Member of the Year Medal.

The first of three Patriarch Athenagoras I Medallions was presented posthumously to James Talas, choir director and organist for 43 years at the Transfiguration of Christ Church in Mattituck, NY. The award was accepted by his widow Parie Talas.

The second Medallion was presented posthumously to Fr. Emmanuel Gratsias who served for 30 years at the Holy Resurrection Church in Brookville, NY. In her acceptance letter, Presbyteria Alexandra Gratsias spoke of Father Manny's great love of the arts, especially music and how he believed that music enhances one's connection with God. He also believed in mixed choral groups because males and females are both integral parts of the community...this being true for our men and women and for our youth as well.

The third Medallion will be presented to Fr. Dennis Strouzas at his Archangel Michael parish in Port Washington.

Fr. Strouzas has been a staunch supporter of the DAD Federation and has manifested that support in many ways.

The final award, the Archbishop Iakovos Distinguished Service Award was presented to Dr. Efstratios Demertzis for his 50 years as psalti and 46 years as choir director at the Cathedral of St. Paul.

Indiana Parish Thrives in 'One of the Best Places to Live'

PARISH profile

Name: St. George

Greek Orthodox Church

Location: Schererville, Ind.

Metropolis of Chicago

Size: about 300 families

Founded: 1929

Clergy: Fr. Constantine Aliferakis (Holy Cross '81;

E-mail: pastorstgeorgehoc@gmail.com

Web: www.stgeorge.in.goarch.org

Noteworthy: Parish offers many programs.



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SCHERERVILLE, Ind. – About 30 miles from downtown Chicago and four miles east of the Illinois border is St. George Church, a typical mid-size parish of the Archdiocese. It is one of four nearby parishes clustered in northwestern Indiana that include Hammond, Merrillville and Valparaiso.

Schererville, a city of about 30,000 residents founded by a German immigrant in 1846, has as its main claim to fame that it was named one of the "100 Best Places to Live" by *Money* magazine in 2007.

The parish of St. George, which relocated here in the early 1990s from the suburb of East Chicago, Ind., about 10 miles to the north, offers several ministries and programs, Fr. Aliferakis said.

Its highly active Philoptochos chapter participates in feeding the hungry in downtown Chicago and meal preparations for a nearby Ronald McDonald House. They send baskets to college-age students from the parish and sponsor a Grandparents Sunday in September.

Other activities include organizing pilgrimages to a monastery in the Metropolis of Chicago and the Breakfast with Santa program that brings in about 200 inner city children that are fed, receive presents and have their picture taken with Santa.

Among the parish ministries are the Sunday school with 125 students. Every November the school prepares a "Saints Alive" theatrical production that consists of performances depicting the lives, miracles and martyrdom of the saints.

Fr. Aliferakis conducts an "Inclusion Awareness Sunday" service for people

with special needs, Bible studies in English and Greek each week and adult religious education classes.

The parish offers seasonal retreats, a youth vacation church school, summer camp and other youth activities.

The Greek school meets once a week and has an enrollment of 35 in grades 1-6.

Since the arrival of Fr. Aliferakis in October 1989 (the second-longest serving priest), the parish built its new church and held the thyranoxia (door-opening) service, completed an iconography project, renovated the banquet facility and paid off the mortgage.

The church complex sits on a 12-acre site with ample parking. A colonnade connects the church with the community center that includes meeting rooms, offices and an educational wing.

The main income sources are the stewardship program and the annual summer Greek festival.

Fr. Aliferakis also noted that the complex is located next to a community park containing soccer fields, playgrounds and tennis courts. Because of my longevity; I know everybody, they know me."

The parish currently consists of mostly second and third generation faithful, though there is a large portion of immigrants, the priest said. Many came from the area of Tripoli, in the Peloponnesus, especially the village of Nestani, and Central Greece and some islands. There also are a number of Pontians.

Early history

According to a parish history by Fr. Anthony Kanavos, who was the church's longest-serving priest (1948-89), the first recorded Greek immigrants arriving in East Chicago were Nicholas Mavronicholas in 1904 and his brother, Elias, in 1905.

Tony Rozzos came in 1906 and his brother George and James Antoniadis arrived in 1907. Others soon followed and, for the first 15 years they attended services at nearby churches in Chicago and Gary, Ind.

In 1916, they formed the first Greek organization in East Chicago, the "Saint George Greek Society" which functioned until 1921. The members rented a room at a hotel where a priest from Chicago would conduct the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and during various religious holidays, the parish history noted.

The local AHEPA chapter was organized in 1927 and founded the Plato School in 1928. It was an evening

parochial school for the teaching of Greek language and culture. A Ladies Philoeducational Society was founded in 1929 to support the school and these two organizations served as the impetus to incorporate the St. George Greek Orthodox community in October 1929. The ladies organization evolved into the Philoptochos chapter of the parish. The first permanent priest, Fr. Thales Demetriades, was appointed and services took place in a rented building until 1937, when the community built its own church.

The cornerstone was laid and construction was completed in December. Bishop Callistos of Chicago and the parish's new priest, Fr. Leontios Kyriakakos, consecrated the church in June 1938. The Aristotle Bachelors Club donated the fence that surrounded the building.

Years later, the same cornerstone was included in the foundation of the new church built in Schererville.

In addition to the Bachelors' Club, several other organizations were active in the early years of the parish. They included the Arcadia chapter of the Pan-Arcadian Federation, the Greek War Veteran's "Phlangitai", the Greek Independent Political Club, the "Aristides Phourides" Pan-Icarian Federation and the "Thermopylae" chapter of the Federation of Sterea Ellas.

Fr. Kyriakakos served the community through the 1940s until the arrival of Fr. Kanavos in 1948, who promptly established the Sunday school. His presbytera, Diane, organized the first classes and taught for several years.

The parish flourished and its ministries and programs came into being during Fr. Kanavos' 42-year tenure. A substantial increase in membership was experienced in the 1970s as many Greek Orthodox left the inner city of Chicago.

In 1971, the community honored the long-serving Greek language teacher, Martha Pappalos for her more than 43 years of service. Fr. Kanavos was honored in 1973 for his service.

The parish purchased the site of its future relocation in the late 1970s and fund-raising efforts began to eventually build a new church.

There currently are several active organizations, include the AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope chapters, Sons of Pericles and Maids of Athena, GOYA and others.

Most recently, in January 2012, the parish hosted the metropolis Vasilopita celebration; the first time it was held outside Chicago, Fr. Aliferakis noted.

— Compiled by Jim Golding

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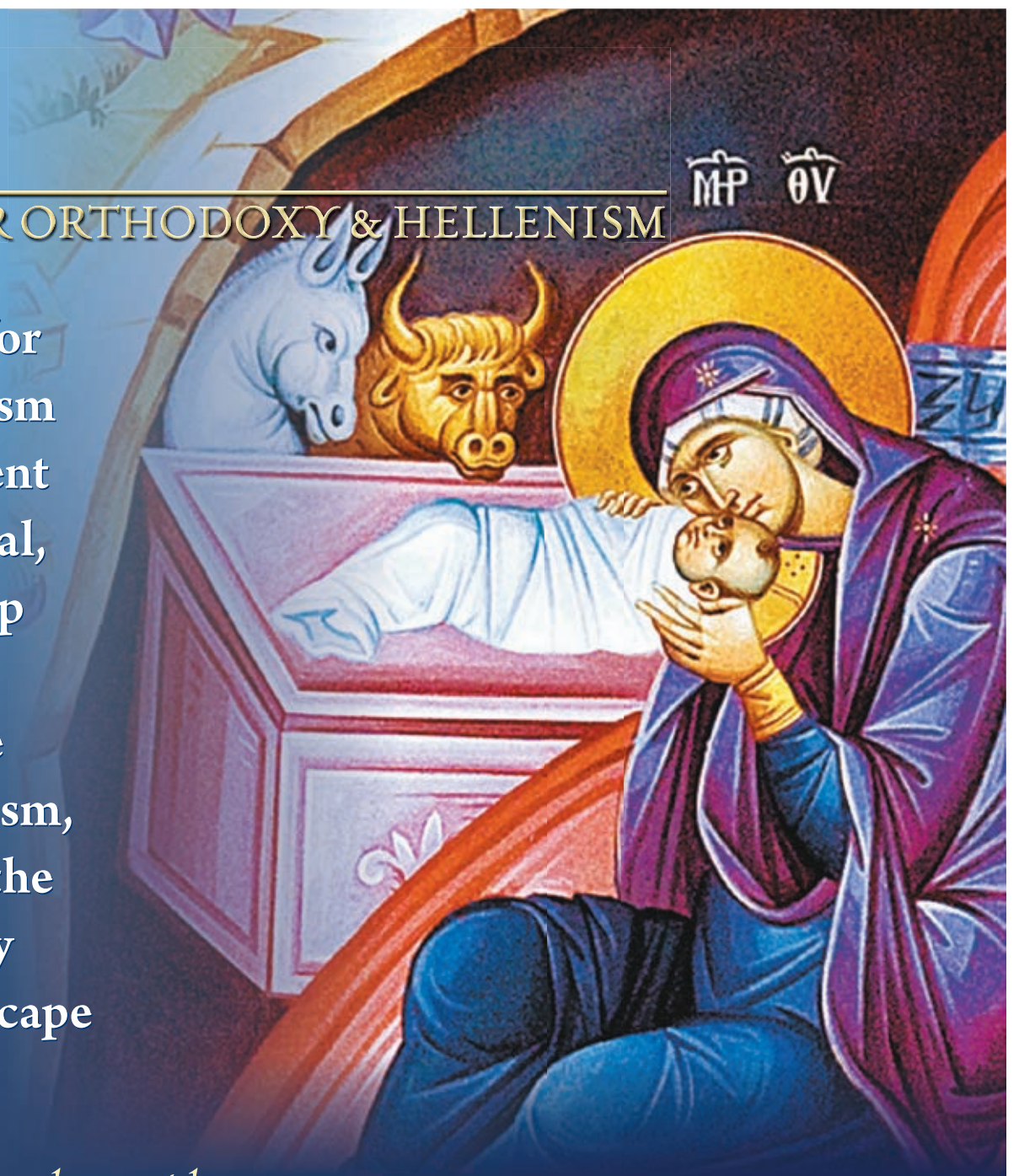
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METROPOLIS NEWS



Koraes Students' Thanksgiving Day Feast

Koraes Elementary School students took part in a Thanksgiving Day Feast, which also included faculty and clergy. The meal was prepared by the Koraes Parent Teacher Association (KPTA). The lower grades made and wore pilgrim hats and American Indian headdresses. (top photo from left) first grade students Maria Vavaroutsos, Demetria Psarros, Angelina Panos, and Anastasia Manasses Nicoletta (below) Second grade students Drakes, Isabella Sides, Gabriela Iliev, and Johnny Davenport.



Christmas Concerts Held at Many Venues

by Vicki Pappas

A host of concerts have been scheduled for the Christmas holidays.

They include the following: Ascension Liturgical Choir of Oakland, Calif., presented its 43rd annual concert "An International Christmas" at the Ascension Cathedral on Nov. 30. The event featured chorus, orchestra, soloists, hymns, Messiah excerpts, and a sing-along.

On Dec. 1, the Greater Boston Committee of the IOCC hosted its 25th annual Christmas Concert at the Church of St. John of Damascus. Christmas Carols were sung by the by the chanters and choir members of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of Worcester and New England, under the direction of Charles Marge. They performed selections from traditional Byzantine Chant to four-part Slavic music.

In New York on Dec. 8, The Metropolitan Chorale, under the direction of Marina Alexander presented "Magi and Shepherds" at Annunciation Church.

The concert featured Vivaldi's "Gloria" along with Byzantine works by Tavener, Renaissance works, contemporary carols, and a traditional sing-along. Also on Dec. 8, at St. Spyridon Church in Washington Heights, N.Y. the church offered a Holiday Benefit Concert of carols and sacred songs, including the best selections of G.F. Handel's "Messiah." The concert featured the Hellenic Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under the direction of Maestro Dimitrios Fousteris, the Coro Lirico Choral of New Brunswick, NJ, and the Ballet Arts, Westchester Youth Chorus directed by Helen Fousteris.

On Dec. 9 in Los Angeles St. Sophia Cathedral presented its 15th Annual Christmas Musicfest under the Byzantine Dome, this year titled "Rejoice!" The concert included Orthodox Christmas hymns and chants, several selections from the oratorio Messiah by George F. Handel, and traditional carols of the holiday season. T

he concert featured three chanters: Carole Choucair Oueijan, Dimitri Liogris, and Michael Kontaxis along with Nicole French, Suzanne Gilman, Eleni Pantages, Michele Patzakis Prappas, Dalia Rodriguez, Karen Sarames, Estelle Skouras, Kathy Spilos and Christopher Yokas as soloists. The St. Sophia Cathedral Choir and Chamber Ensemble was under the direction of Jim H. Kollias, and the Harmonies of St. Thomas all Girls' Choir, under the direction of Antonio Espinal.

The Zoodochos Peghe Choir in the Bronx, in conjunction with the members of the Direct Archdiocesan District Federation of Church Musicians, will offer a Christmas Concert on Dec. 15 at the Zoodochos Peghe Church. Eleni Traganas serves as music director.

On Dec. 16 at Carnegie Hall, the Archdiocesan Byzantine and Youth Choirs will perform a benefit concert at Carnegie Hall for the ancient church of the Holy Archangels. The concert program will feature a selection of ecclesiastical hymns from the Christmas period performed by the Archdiocesan Byzantine Choir in Greek.

The Archdiocesan Youth Choir will perform a number of American Christmas songs and Greek traditional Kalanda to usher in the holiday season. The concert will begin at 6 p.m.



Junior GOYA Champions – St. Nicholas Juniors – San Jose.

West Coast Tournament Draws 350

SAN JOSE, Calif. – The 8th annual St. Nicholas Volleyball Tournament on Oct. 12-14, drew more than 350 participants from eight Greek Orthodox parishes in northern California.

The tournament included teams in the following divisions: Jr. GOYA (11–13 years old); GOYA (14–18 years old); Young Adults (18–35); and Adults (35 and older).

The first round of games was played in the parish gymnasium following dinner on Oct. 12, kicking off an enthusiastic evening. The tournament continued all day on Saturday with games being played at San Jose City College. After a full day of competition, the players attended a dinner and Glendi at the St. Nicholas Church Fellowship Hall.

After the Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Church, championship games were played in front of supportive parishioners, friends and family.

Parishes at the tournament were Holy Cross, Belmont; Resurrection, Castro Valley; Ascension Cathedral, Oakland; Annunciation, Sacramento; St. Nicholas, San Jose; St. Basil, Stockton; Annunciation Cathedral and Holy Trinity, San Francisco.

There were 31 teams in all. The tournament chairman was Mr. George Spilios, a long-time parishioner from Saint Nicholas Church in San Jose, who has been enthusiastically leading this effort for several years.

The teams which took home top honors were: Jr. GOYA: St. Nicholas Juniors, St. Nicholas, San Jose; GOYA: Bumblers Black, Annunciation, Sacramento; Young Adult: Lucky 7, Saint Nicholas, San Jose; Adult: 27 Blue, Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco. Four people also received Most Valuable Player awards in their respective divisions: Junior GOYA – Panayiota Good, St. Nicholas Juniors, St. Nicholas, San Jose; GOYA – Austin Vail, Bumblers Black, Annunciation, Sacramento; Young Adult: Roger Panayiotopoulos, Lucky 7, St. Nicholas, San Jose; and Adult: Andy Salis, 27 Blue, Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco.



GOYA Champions – Bumblers Black, Annunciation Church – Sacramento.



Young Adult Champions – Lucky 7, St. Nicholas Church – San Jose.



“She will bear a son, *and you shall* call his name
Jesus,
 for he will *save* his people from their sins.”
Matthew 1:21

Wishing you a Blessed Nativity, and
 a Happy and Joyous New Year!



DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES
 WWW.YOUTH.GOARCH.ORG

CHALLENGE

THE PULSE OF ORTHODOX YOUTH

GIFTS OF THE INCARNATION

by Aalin Bellinger

As Christmas rolls towards America this year, we begin to experience the inevitable deluge of media showering us with images of flashy and luxurious gift-items that we and our loved ones 'deserve'. While there is nothing wrong with the custom of gift-giving as such, in this season we as God's people concern ourselves more with a different level of gift, the gift to mankind of Christ's incarnation and birth at Bethlehem.

So what are the gifts given to man by Christ's incarnation? To ponder this, we first remember the old story of man's creation and fall. On the sixth day, after making heaven, the earth, and all other creatures, "God said, 'Let us make man in Our Image, according to Our likeness'" (Gen. 1:26). This is the true and original nature of man: God's Image, a share in His love, power, and rational nature, which includes free choice and a vocation for eternal communion that mirrors the fellowship of the trinity.

The story goes on, however, to the great tragedy of man's fall. In order to shield Adam and Eve from their dangerously powerful freedom before maturity, God set them one commandment: "from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat; for in whatever day you eat from it, you shall die" (Gen. 2:17). However, our first parents disobeyed and ate, bringing them, their posterity, and all creation under the law of sin and death. From here on man's history descends from bad to worse, from fratricide, to war, sexual immorality, idolatry, materialism, demon-worship—the law of sin and death reigning in the world and the original, Divine Image soiled and all but obliterated in men's hearts.

In what St. Athanasius calls this 'divine dilemma,' what is the good and loving God to do? He cannot simply repeal the law of death while remaining consistent with Himself, Who is Truth; and yet in love for

man, He would not see His creatures and His Image in them perish. The wondrous solution is the incarnation. As St. Athanasius explains,

"For this purpose, then, the...Word of God entered our world...taking a body like our own, because all our bodies were liable to the corruption of death, He surrendered His body to death instead of all, and offered it to the Father. This He did out of sheer love for us, so that in His death all might die, and the law of death thereby be abolished because, having fulfilled in His body that for which it was appointed, it was thereafter voided of its power for man." (Athanasius, II.11).

So this is the first gift of the incarnation, the release of tortured mankind from the law of sin and death through the crucifixion of Christ's body which He took up for this purpose.

But this is not all, for beyond freeing men from the law of sin and death which prevented them from doing what is right; He also renews in us the Divine Image and power for right actions and communion. St. Athanasius uses this analogy:

"You know what happens when a portrait that has been painted on a panel becomes obliterated through external stains. The artist does not throw away the panel, but the subject of the portrait has to come and sit for it again, and then the likeness is redrawn on the same material. Even so was it with the All-Holy Son of God. He, the Image of the Father, came and dwelt in our midst, in order that He might renew mankind made after Himself," (Athanasius, III.18).

By taking up a human body and nature and joining it to His Divine Nature, the Word of God restores and sanctifies mankind, joining him and through him all of creation to God with an even more profound and intimate connection than before.

Finally, as well as abolishing death and

recreating man's Divine Image, through taking flesh Jesus is able to teach and solicit the faith of confused men who had become entangled in the fleshly things of the world. As St. Athanasius says, "He became Himself an object for the senses, so that those who were seeking God in sensible things might apprehend the Father through the works which He, the Word of God, did in the body" (Athanasius, III.19). For worshippers of creation, He walked on water and calmed tempests. For those concerned with food, He multiplied loaves in the wilderness. For spirit-worshippers, He cast out spirits and demons. Not content with restoring our bare ability to follow God, through His human body the eternal Word preached, taught, and worked miracles, that man might be given every possible help toward accepting the salvation God wills to give.

What great gifts! What undeserved and overwhelming generosity. In this season of gift-giving, let us not forget to partake of the greatest of gifts: our deliverance from sin and death, the restored Divine Image in our hearts, and the guidance of Christ's teachings and His church to bring us into these. In our preparation and celebration of the Nativity this year, may each of us be born into greater communion with the God who was born among us. Amen.

(All Bible quotes from The Orthodox Study Bible, 2008 Ed. All St. Athanasius quotes from his work On the Incarnation, from Readaclassic.com, Layout and Cover Copy 2008)

Helen (Aalin) Bellinger is currently a paraprofessional at Tobin Montessori School in Cambridge, Mass.. She lives in Watertown, Mass.. and attends Holy Resurrection Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Allston. She received a B.A. in Liberal Arts from St. John's College, Annapolis, Md., in 2012. She has served at the Metropolis of Boston Camp Staff 2010-2011.

CHRISTMAS PARTIES WITH A PURPOSE

Naturally, Christmas is a time where we gather with family and friends to celebrate and enjoy each other's company. We gather to eat, we sing a few carols, and we exchange gifts. But the purpose of Christmas is much more than a retail holiday or vacation time. In this beautiful season, we are given the ultimate gift of Jesus Christ. We are also blessed to have our communities, families, friends, and our youth groups. With all of these blessings, why not share in the joy?

FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH WORKERS

- Did you know that we have resources for Christmas and New Year's Day? Visit the Youth Department website for sessions and retreats: www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/youth/youthworkers/sessions/sessions
- Don't forget to sign up for the YOUTH WORKER PULSE! This is the weekly listserv of the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Subscribers will receive valuable tips, tools, and resources for creating a successful and transformative youth ministry experience. Sign up today at www.youth.goarch.org.

CHRIST IS BORN,
GLORIFY HIM!!

Why not make your youth group Christmas celebrations serve a greater purpose?

Here are a few ideas for Parties with a Purpose.

FEED OTHERS FIRST

Before you sit down to have a Christmas party meal, make dinner and take it to a local shelter or halfway house. Or take your youth group to prepare meals at the local soup kitchen. You can also bake Christmas cookies, package them up in nice cookie tins, and deliver them to shut-ins and elderly people in nursing homes. After feeding others, then sit down to enjoy a meal together as a family.

GIVE TO OTHERS FIRST

Instead of having a gift exchange, contact the local shelter or children's hospital to see if there are families with wish lists. Then, as a youth group, go shopping to fulfill the needs of some of the families. Bring items back to wrap or prepare for delivery. Then after delivering the gifts, go grab a bite to eat as a group and discuss how you can contribute throughout the year.

BE WITH OTHERS FIRST

There are those who do not have family or friends to join at a Christmas party. So take the Christmas joy and fellowship out into your community. Have a Traveling Party... Ask your parish priests about families and individuals who could use a

friendly face, a warm greeting, and a few Christmas carols.

Other ways to have a Christmas Party with Purpose

- 1) Ask everyone to bring a bag of canned goods to take to the local food pantry.
- 2) Connect with your parish Philoptochos or other local philanthropic organizations to organize a Christmas fundraising event. Funds can go to any charity or cause you can imagine... IOCC, OCMC, Feeding America, Make-A-Wish Foundation, etc.
- 3) Gather together and make cards/icons to send to those who serve in the Military OR to send to missionaries throughout the world.

WEBSITE OF CHARITIES AND PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS

- Feeding America Website – www.feedingamerica.org
- IOCC Website – www.iocc.org
- Make-a-Wish Foundation Website – www.wish.org
- National Ladies Philoptochos Society – www.philoptochos.org
- Nothing-But-Nets Foundation Website www.nothingbutnets.net/nets-save-lives
- OCMC Website – www.ocmc.org
- Red Cross "Holiday Mail for Heroes" Website – www.redcross.org/holidaymail
- Soles4Souls Shoe Recycling Charity Website – www.soles4souls.org

Registration Open for Youth Worker, Camp Conference

The 11th Annual Orthodox Christian Camp & Youth Worker Conference provides an arena for Orthodox youth workers from different jurisdictions to share and provide resources. The conference will include keynote and guest speakers, educational presentations, break out sessions and fellowship. All Orthodox parish and diocese youth workers, camp directors and staff, and OCF chaplains are invited to attend. Location: Austin, Texas Conference Dates: January 24-26, 2013 This year's conference is being hosted by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America National Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Events will be held at the Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, visit one of the two links below:

- Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries website www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/youth/camping/2013
 - Orthodox Christian Camp Association website www.orthodoxcamps.org/conference.html
- Early Bird Registration Ends Jan. 1

OCF – Orthodox Christian Fellowship

The Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is the official collegiate campus ministry program under the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America. The mission is to support fellowships on college campuses, whose members experience and witness to the Orthodox Christian Church through community life, prayer, service to others and study of the Faith. Here are two opportunities for students to join in fellowship, service, and faith:

2012 OCF College Conference

Each year during Christmas Break OCF College Conferences host hundreds of college students from across North America for four days of fellowship, prayer, and some of the best Orthodox Speakers around. Conferences are currently held at the Antiochian Village in Pennsylvania and St. Nicholas Ranch in California. For more information or to register, visit: www.ocf.net/wikis/programs/college-conference.aspx

2013 OCF Real Break

The Real Break program provides an alternative to the "traditional" Spring Break. It exists to provide the most authentic experience possible, modeled as a full Christian lifestyle, which includes fellowship, prayer within community, witness and service. OCF organizes both domestic and international trips to give College students the opportunity to serve those less fortunate and to do something "real" for themselves and for God. OCF's Real Break has been running since 2000 with over a thousand students participating in these life-changing trips. Past trips have included: Mexico, Guatemala, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Raphael House, Saint Basil Academy, Greece, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Romania, Buenos Aires, Alaska, and more.

OBITUARIES



METROPOLIS
OF CHICAGO

HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN
IAKOVOS OF CHICAGO
AND HIS GRACE, BISHOP
DEMETRIOS OF MOKISSOS
TOGETHER WITH THE CLERGY &
FAITHFUL OF THE
HOLY METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

PRAY THAT THE JOY, PEACE & LOVE
OF THE INCARNATE CHRIST BE WITH
YOU AND YOURS THIS CHRISTMAS AND
THROUGHOUT THE NEW YEAR 2013.

Bishop John of Amorion

Bishop John Christodoulos Kallos, 84, the first American-born ordained bishop, died Dec. 1.

Funeral services took place Dec. 7 at the Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta.

He was born March 29, 1928 in Chicago and completed his public education in Somerville, Mass.

He was ordained as a bishop on Jan. 17, 1971, at the Annunciation Cathedral in Houston by Archbishop Iakovos, with Bishop Silas of Amphipolis and Bishop Iakovos of Apameia as co-consecrators, Bishop John became the first American-born bishop in the Greek Orthodox Church. He was the first Bishop of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Atlanta (1981-1988), and the first president of St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine, St. Augustine, Fla. (1989-1999). He also served as auxiliary bishop in Houston (1971-1973), and Denver (1974-1977), as diocesan bishop in Charlotte (1978-1980), and Atlanta (1981-1989). On Jan. 1, 1989, for reasons of health, he resigned as bishop of Atlanta.

Bishop John was bestowed the title Bishop of Amorion by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy Synod of Constantinople on Oct. 15, 1992. He received honors from his Alma Maters, Church of Finland and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Bishop John was born on March 29, 1928, in Chicago to James and Kaliope Kallos. His parents were from Alatsata, Asia Minor, located near the island of Chios. Bishop John had no siblings but had many first cousins in the U.S. and in Greece. He grew up and was educated in the Boston area. He was a graduate of Boston College (Chestnut Hill, Mass.), Holy Cross Theological School (Brookline, Mass.) and the Divinity School, University of Athens (Greece). He also pursued graduate studies at the Ecumenical Institute (Geneva, Switzerland), Huntingdon College (Montgomery, Ala.), Harvard Divinity School and Episcopal Theological School (Cambridge, Mass.).

He was ordained a deacon on Aug. 15, 1955, by Bishop Athenagoras of Elaia at the Dormition Church, Somerville, Mass., and a priest on Oct. 21, 1956, by Bishop Athenagoras at the Holy Cross Seminary Chapel, Brookline. At Holy Cross, he served as archdeacon, assistant librarian, assistant dean, dean of students, registrar and instructor.

He also was a priest at St. Demetrios Church, Fall River, Mass., Annunciation Church, Montgomery, Ala., Holy Trinity Cathedral, Charlotte, N.C. and at the Dormition Church, Somerville, Mass. Bishop John also served as at Holy Cross.

He also served as a supply priest to several other churches and established the American Greek Orthodox Community at the U.S. Air Base in Athens, Greece, where he served as auxiliary civilian chaplain. He also held board positions with several ecumenical and Orthodox Christian organizations and was a prolific author, writing numerous articles, pamphlets and 10 books about the Greek Orthodox faith, including "What about the Holy Mandylin and the Turin Shroud," "St. Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople," "An Analysis and Critique of the Photian Schism," "Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis," and "St. Photios Shrine." He wrote 200 articles which have appeared in various journals and newspapers. In 1984 he authored the article "Greek Orthodox Church in the South" which appeared in the "Encyclopedia of Religion in the South," and was a contributing writer to the weekly "The Hellenic Voice" (Boston).

In 2005, he authored the five volume series "Glory to God." In 2006 he established the Bishop John Kallos Scholarship

Fund in memory of his parents, James and Kaliope Kallos, at the Holy Cross Theological School.

As a long time resident in Tucker, Georgia, Bishop John enjoyed reading, writing, gardening, walking and traveling in his active retirement. He made pilgrimages to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Turkey), Patriarchate of Alexandria (Egypt), Patriarchate of Jerusalem (Israel), Mount Athos (Greece), and St. Katherine's Monastery (Mt. Sinai), as well as, at the Diocese's Cathedrals of St. Nicholas (Myra, Turkey) and of the Theotokos (Amorion, Turkey) and various shrines and monasteries throughout Greece.

Fr. Constantine Dombalis

RICHMOND, Va. -- The Rev. Dr. Constantine Nicholas Dombalis, for more than 40 years the spiritual leader of Sts. Constantine and Helen Cathedral and a leading ecumenical voice in the state and region, died Nov. 16 at his winter home in Vero Beach, Fla. He was 87.

A native of Norfolk who grew up in Raleigh, N.C., Fr. Dombalis guided his congregation for 42 years until his retirement in 1996 and saw the church become a cathedral as it grew in stature from modest beginnings downtown to its establishment at 30 Malvern Avenue, where a new parish hall was recently named in honor of the dean emeritus. His list of national, regional and local honors stretched from service as ambassador representative to the United Nations 38th General Session in 1983 and as a member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission to leadership of the Virginia Council of Churches and the Richmond Area Ministers Association. He was proud to have established an interfaith chapel at Richmond International Airport and took his turn ministering to travelers.

Fr. Dombalis was known as a bridge builder among denominations in the Richmond area, and won praise for his dedication to racial and community harmony. Among his many honors for those efforts was the Brotherhood Award by the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Fr. Dombalis was born July 29, 1925, the son of Nick and Helen Dombalis.

He graduated with a bachelor of theology degree from Hellenic College in Brookline, Mass., where also received a master of theological study degree from Holy Cross Theological Seminary. He also held degrees from the Harvard Divinity School and Columbia University. He married Mary Fourgis of Mount Pleasant, Pa., in June 1954. They became parents of two sons, Nicholas and Christopher. He was ordained as a deacon in 1954 at Holy Trinity Church in Raleigh, N.C., and as a priest at Sts. Constantine and Helen in July 1954 by Archbishop Michael.

Fr. Dombalis served as the archdiocesan vicar of the Greek Orthodox churches in Virginia during his tenure at the cathedral.

Among many state appointments, he served as chairman of the board of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services and was on the board of visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University. He served on boards ranging from the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Committee to a gubernatorial panel on electricity costs. In addition to his service at the United Nations, Fr. Dombalis was a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council and the U.S. Commission for UNESCO.

Fr. Dombalis is survived by his wife of 57 years, Mary Christine Fourgis Dombalis; and two sons and their families: Nicholas and Monica Dombalis of Houston and their

Merry Christmas
and
a Happy New Year

Warmest
Regards
to All

Peter J. Pappas

PHILOPTOCHOS

Adopt-a-Family-Project

President Skeadas stated, "Our work as Philoptochos is not complete, as the crisis is far from over. Let us think about the faithful who have lost their homes, their livelihood, their laughter and their dreams. It is our duty as stewards of Philoptochos to provide the hope, the trust and the confidence that their lives will be improved with our support and assistance. Give a family a new start by helping to rebuild their lives. The rebuilding of this hope, this trust, and this confidence can be accomplished through the National Philoptochos Society Adopt-a-Family Project."

This voluntary project addresses the immediate and long-term needs of primarily the Orthodox victims of the tragedy. National Philoptochos will partner with each Philoptochos chapter to help one family in need. Donations of gift cards are most helpful so families may purchase what they need.

Philoptochos chapters or stewards who wish to participate should contact National Philoptochos Disaster Relief Chairman Dee Nicolaou at 813.991.9026 or cnicolaou@tampabay.rr.com for further information.

Denver Metropolis Presents Grant

▷ from page 7

motor skills and strengthens them mentally and physically. These activities respond to the Avondale House mission to provide children and young adults with autism the education and training to develop to their fullest potential.

The Metropolis of Denver also received a \$10,000 National Philoptochos grant from

the Children's Medical Fund to be presented to the Texas Children's Hospital Heart Center in Houston Texas for the purchase of a Transesophageal Echo (TEE) probe for use in cardiac cauterization, diagnostic procedures and cardiovascular surgeries; and a \$2,000 grant from the Autism Assistance Fund for the Child Study Center in Fort Worth, Texas to provide treatment services with individualized instructors providing skill building.

OBITUARIES

▷ from previous page

children, Ashley and Nicholas; and Christopher and Jennifer Dombalis of Westfield, N.J., and their children, Taylor and Alexis; and his sister, Pauline Chakeres of Springfield, Ohio. He was preceded in death by his parents, Nick and Helen Dombalis of Raleigh.

The funeral took place at the Cathedral Nov. 21 with burial in Westhampton Memorial Gardens. The family requests that donations be made to the Dombalis Scholarship Fund at the Cathedral.

Fr. Angelo Gavalas

NEW YORK – Fr. Angelo Harry Gavalas, 86 a retired priest who had served the Church in many capacities over more than six decades, died Nov. 24.

He was born Aug. 10, 1926 in Nashua, N.H., and moved with his family to Seattle at a young age. He graduated from high school in Seattle and enrolled for a year at Carbon College in Price, Utah, then studied at Holy Cross School of Theology. He had also studied Portland State University in Oregon for a year and at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary in Crestwood, N.Y., where he received a bachelor's degree in divinity in 1969. He married Ismene Vozeolas of Lowell, Mass., in August 1950, and was ordained as a deacon in Boston in October 1950, and as a priest in Salt Lake City by Archbishop Michael in December 1950.

He served at Holy Trinity Church in Salt Lake City for a year in 1950-51, and at Assumption in Price, Utah, from September 1951 to November 1953.

He served at Holy Trinity in Portland, Oregon from November 1953 to August 1961 and at Three Hierarchs in Brooklyn, N.Y., until September 1983.

He then served as director of the Department of Youth and as spiritual advisor and pastor at Saint Basil Academy from June 1982 until his retirement on Oct. 1, 1990.

As Archdiocesan Youth Director he helped nurture the YAL movement in the 1980s. The funeral took place Nov. 29 at Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral with Bishop Andonios of Phasiane representing

Archbishop Demetrios.

Survivors include his wife, Ismene; four children, Harry, Elaine, George and Catherine; and other relatives.

The family requested that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Ronald McDonald House of New York.

Presbytera Athena Theodore

BLUE POINT, N.Y. – Presbytera Athena Theodore died on Nov. 11. She was the spouse of the late Fr. Constantine Theodore, the first ordained priest (June 1942) of the first graduating class of Holy Cross Seminary, then located in Pomfret, Conn.

She served alongside Fr. Constantine at St. Spyridon Church in Newport, R.I., and at St. John the Baptist Church in Blue Point.

A trisagion was celebrated in her memory by Fr. Mark Leondis of St. Mark's Church in Boca Raton, Fla., and Fr. Chris Metropulos of St. Demetrios Church, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. While growing up on Long Island, Fr. Chris was an altar boy of Fr. Constantine.

Fr. Mark read a letter of condolence from Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta.

Funeral services took place Nov. 19, officiated by Fr. Andrew Cadieux, current pastor of St. John the Baptist Church, assisted by Fr. Elias Nicholas (assistant priest) at St. Paraskevi, Greenlawn, N.Y.

Presbytera Marilyn Magoulias, widow of the late Fr. Nicholas Magoulias of St. Paul, Hempstead, N.Y., also attended. Presbytera Athena is survived by two sons, Christ and Anthony; a daughter-in-law, Mary; grandchildren, Dean and spouse Patty, and Leontia; a sister, Genevieve Scaltsas of Boynton Beach, Fla.; a brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Harry and Maria Theodore of Jamaica Plain, Mass., and other relatives. She was predeceased by two brothers-in-law, Michael and Pan Theodore; by her brother, William A. Scaltsas.

Donations in her memory should be directed to St. Mark Greek Orthodox Church, 2100 NW 51st St., Boca Raton, Fla. 33431, or to St. John Greek Orthodox Church, 77 Montauk Highway, Blue Point, N.Y. 11715.

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CENTER FOR FAMILY CARE - FAMILY CONNECTIONS

by Vasie-Leigh Andriotis

As a person in the Facebook era, I am showered by daily "status" updates and photographs of my friends' children. There is such a great joy and anticipation when a child comes into the world or just your world. Family and friends are so happy to see those new little faces that they have been anticipating. It is hard to contain the excitement.

It must have been unimaginable for Mary and Joseph, preparing to give birth to the Son of God. There were however, no baby showers, decorating nurseries or registering for gifts, just a long donkey ride to Bethlehem to register for King Herod's census. This mother and father were not greeted by numerous Tweets or Facebook messages within seconds of His birth. They were alone in that cave in Bethlehem, except for a few simple animals and the far away star to tell of His birth. We are only told of three gifts offered to the new baby. Sometimes God's greatest gifts come initially with relative silence and little fanfare.

About five years ago, my husband and I decided to become foster parents. We both just kept being drawn to the idea, but had many concerns running through our heads. We hoped we would meet expectations to be accepted by our agency. We wondered how we would feel if a child or children placed with us would then have to be eventually returned to their birth family. We hoped for a younger child or children, how long would we wait to get our wish? We did our training, passed the background checks, completed the home inspection and then we waited to get approved.

In the process of being approved, I did feel a bit like Mary getting bounced around on the donkey during that long journey, taking one step at a time, never knowing when we would get counted in. It was about a year and a half after we started training that we got our first placement, a sibling group of two girls. With just 3 hours notice of the placement from our case worker, two became four. My husband and I, were in our house, with the two kids, with no clothes for them to wear, no idea of what they ate, what they were allergic to or what their life was like, however, we had totally fallen in love. Any of the worries we had during that process, were over shadowed by the awesome joy of parenthood. It was one of the greatest gifts that we had had up to that point as a married couple and no one we love knew, just my husband, and I and God.

There are so many gifts that the Lord brings us that come quietly and go without little notice. Last year, my oldest friend came from across the country for a visit. Lisa and I grew up together and we have been like sisters. There was not a stage in our lives that we did not trudge through together. Like girlfriends do, we chatted till late in the night by ourselves, reflecting on our three decades of friendship. We confessed our thoughts to each other as if we would not see each other again. We told each other how much we loved and cared for each other. Telling someone what you mean to them is such a simple act, but is one of the most precious gifts you can give.

At this time of the Christmas, we often reflect on the best or biggest Christmas gift we have given or received. We



Gifts in Silence

think about a special Christmas we had as a child and want to do that for our own children. What if we also took a moment during all of the excitement that is this season to thank God for our best or biggest non-gift? This is the kind of gift that has no packaging, no receipt, no one may even know about it and it may have come in relative silence. Maybe this gift was your first confession at summer camp in when you felt the Grace of God? Perhaps it was the day you found out you were expecting and only you and God knew, if just for a few hours. There may have been someone who noticed you had a financial or physical need and stepped in to help as if they were an angel sent by God. God brings us gifts in silence, so that we can hear Him and know He is present. The Grace of God does not have wrapping or ribbons, but is covered in love.

While you are in traffic coming back from the mall, on your way to church or coming back from a holiday event, this would be a great time to share with your children some of these gifts. Tell them about the people who did kind things for you in silence.

Share with them a special moment when you felt our Lord in your life. You may have felt that star shine down and you knew God was with you, just like He was on that first Christmas. Take the opportunity while children are on break from school to encourage them to emulate St. Nicholas and Saint Basil, who showed their generosity to others

in secrecy. Challenge your children to give gifts in silence. They could draw a picture and put it on the doorstep of an elderly neighbor. Ask Yiayia and Papou to spend time with them, rake leaves or shovel snow for someone in need or they can pray about it and just let God be their guide. Sometimes these moments just present themselves.

So why does God proceed quietly sometimes? Why did he bring the King of Man into the world in a manger? We learn later in the story of the Nativity, that Herod did not have honorable intentions for the baby Jesus. The Magi were warned of this in a dream. Christ was born under simple circumstances, because the gift of the Messiah would be a threat to power of people like King Herod. You may have asked yourself, what ever happened to the children we fostered. They were returned home and our hearts were broken. We couldn't understand it at the time, but before too long, our daughter was born. She is the love of our lives and our most precious gift. Lastly, why did I mention my friend Lisa? Six weeks after her visit, she unexpectedly passed away. Out of nowhere, she was gone. I believe that God prepared me for losing her, by giving us that time together and those three simple words, "I love you". Her friendship is one of most priceless gifts in my life.

God's silent gifts often prepare us for what is to come. These gifts are not presents, but the Grace of the Holy Spirit. His Grace brings us comfort,

strength and guidance. God quietly brought his Son into the world to prepare us for His greatest gift, forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. What silent gift has He brought you and your family this year that is the most cherished?

Did you acknowledge it? What silent gift can you offer in return that will bring His presence and grace to someone in preparation of Christmas, or in the coming year?

Vasie-Leigh Andriotis completed her M.Div at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in 1997. She is the former director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the Metropolis of Pittsburgh. Her current role is as mom, wife and volunteer.

FAMILY QUOTES

The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night [...] But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-5:10

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

2 Timothy 2:3-7

We need to employ a very delicate manner so that people accept what we are offering, whether it be words, books or whatever, without reacting negatively. And something else: use few words. Words often provoke irritation. Prayer and living example find resonance. Living faith moves people, regenerates them and changes them, whereas words alone remain fruitless. The best form of mission is through our good example, our love and our meekness.

Elder Porphyrios, Wounded by Love

Family Connections is a ministry of the Center for Family Care of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

For more information about the center's ministries please contact the center at:
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The Center for Family Care was established with a major grant from the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund, Inc.

We are grateful for its support.

Direct Archdiocesan District Revisited

Featured Ministry

The District's Youth Ministry

Under the spiritual guidance of Archbishop Demetrios of America, the Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries ministers to the thousands of young people within its borders.

The office is led by Fr. Evagoras Constantinides, director and Vincent Minucci, associate director who oversee the plentiful events, activities and rapid expansion of Youth Ministries for the Direct Archdiocesan District. Over the past several years, the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries has witnessed exponential growth; an increase in athletic ministries, a record high participation in the GOYA Olympics, a revitalization of Young Adult Ministries and the District's Camp Saint Paul growing to four weeks and selling out each one are just a few examples of how the District Youth Ministry is thriving.

The Direct Archdiocesan District's Athletic Ministries include the Metropolitan Greek Orthodox Basketball League (MGOBL) which consists of 496 participants, the JOY (NY) basketball league which consists of 776 participants, the Connecticut Eastern Orthodox Basketball League consisting of 490 participants, the New York Soccer League with 700 participants, the Nassau/Suffolk InterGOYA Volleyball League with 220 participants and finally, the District Olympics with over 2,000 participants! Athletic Ministries are about more than competition, as they provide an opportunity for the youngest members of our parishes to work together with their peers towards a common goal in a Christian atmosphere.

For over 30 years, the young people of our District have been afforded the opportunity to participate in various sporting events across the region. These Athletic Ministries have become an integral part of our children's fellowship with each other and the Church, and provide a unique opportunity for those participating in the youth ministries of our Church.

In 2011, Archbishop Demetrios asked the District Youth Office to create an opportunity for youth of the Direct Archdiocesan District to come together to celebrate our Hellenic Culture.

PARATHOSI was established and focuses on showcasing Hellenic song and dance through exhibition. PARATHOSI's mission is to celebrate our rich cultural and ethnic tradition, to perform the songs and dances and, most importantly, to educate and inspire our youth about our Hellenic culture.

PARATHOSI 2013 will be held November 8-10 and promises to be an exciting event for all who participate.

In 2012, the Youth Office made the attendance of their Advent and Lenten retreats a requirement in order to participate in any Athletic Ministries. This initiative has successfully brought together over 650 GOYAnS to learn more about the Orthodox faith and how to apply it to their lives.

The retreats are coordinated by the Youth Office and put into action with seminarians and students from Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.

Camp Saint Paul is the crown jewel of Youth Ministry in our District. Camp Saint Paul's program is a perfect balance of education of our faith, service to those in need, a sharing of the Hellenic culture,



Orthodox Observer photo

Meet the staff – Part of the Archdiocese of America staff also deals extensively or exclusively with the Direct Archdiocesan District. Shown with Archbishop Demetrios, the presiding hierarch; and Bishop Andonios of Phasiane, chancellor: (from left), Maria Makedon, director of the Direct Archdiocesan Office of Education and Special Projects; Eirini Pitidou, Office of Education intern; Vincent Minucci, assistant DAD youth director; Fr. Elias Villis, director of Camp St. Paul; Stephen Cherpelis, District Council vice president; Bishop Sevastianos of Zela, chief secretary of the Synod, and spiritual advisor of the National Philoptochos who also at times represents the Archbishop at various communities and events; Fr. Evagoras Constantinides, District Youth Office director; Deacon Chrysostomos Gilbert, assistant youth director; Athena Kotsinos, Chancellor's office administrative assistant; George Giavris, support staff; and Ely Papadeas, administrative assistant.

a whole lot of fun and, most importantly, a fellowship centered and focused on Jesus Christ.

Fr. Elias Villis, the director, has guided the camp over the past eight years and has aided in the growth of this camp from one week and a handful of kids to four weeks and five hundred kids.

Camp Saint Paul is located in Litchfield, Conn., and will take place the month of July.

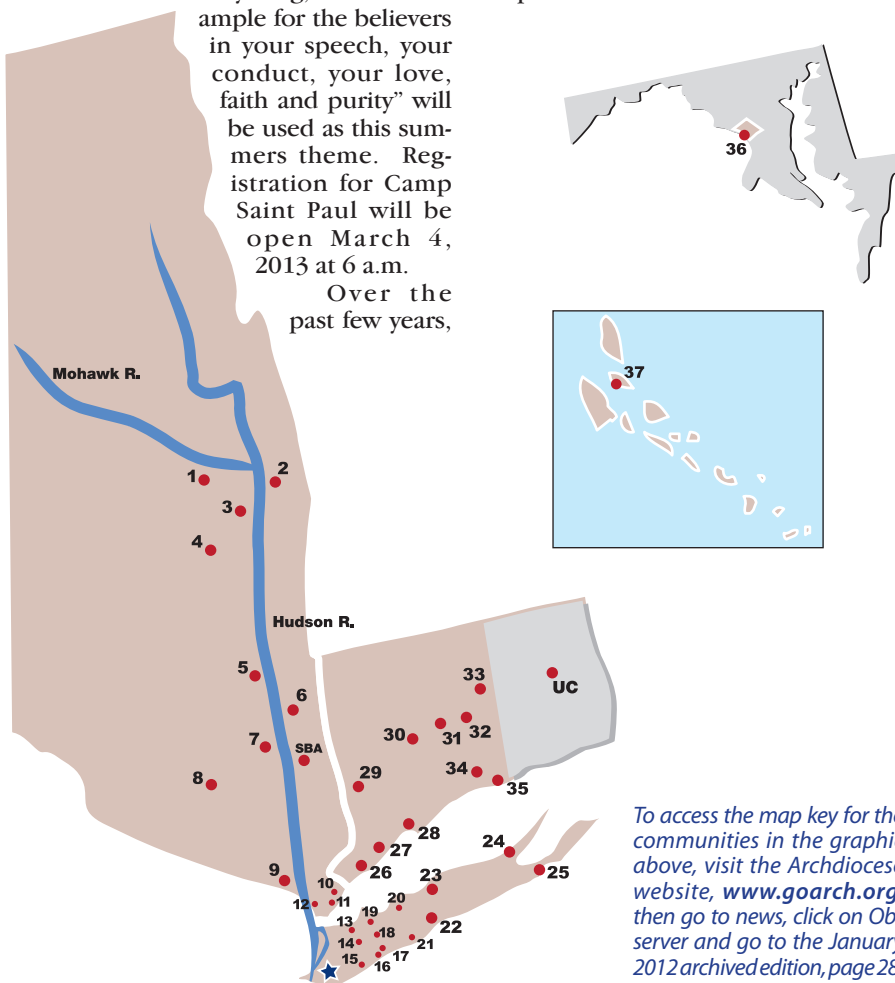
For more information please visit www.campsaintpaul.org. The District Youth Office is looking forward to a full and lively summer at Camp Saint Paul 2013 where, I Timothy 4:12, "Do not let anyone look down upon you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith and purity" will be used as this summer's theme. Registration for Camp Saint Paul will be open March 4, 2013 at 6 a.m.

Over the past few years,

the District Youth Office has witnessed a, "grass roots" movement to reboot Young Adult Ministries within our parishes. The Youth Office expects to see more growth on a parish level in the next year and is currently working on a plan to reengage our Young Adult Ministry on a District level. This past October, a Young Adult retreat was offered at St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, CT. The theme of the retreat was, "Integrating life with the LIFE" and focused on living a life centered on Christ and how to do that in an ever-changing world. Young Adults from all over the country came to be a part of this event.

The Youth Office is always expanding its presence on the District website with

resources for our youth, as well as a full schedule of all events.. For more information, please visit the District Youth Office online at www.ny.goarch.org/youth



To access the map key for the communities in the graphic above, visit the Archdiocese website, www.goarch.org, then go to news, click on Observer and go to the January 2012 archived edition, page 28.

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