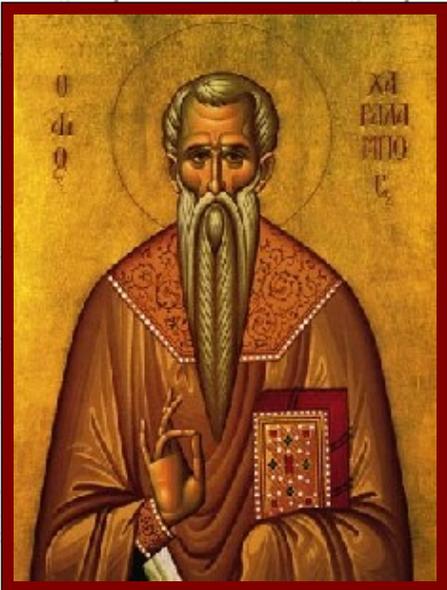


Christian Light

February 2022 — Vol. 34



Fr. Philip's February Message

“Christ is the Great Lover”

The Need for a Christianity that can Reconnect with its Forgotten Affirmation of Life

In this issue of “Christian Light,” we host part of an important interview with Chrysostom Stamoulis, Dean of the University of Thessaloniki School of Theology and Professor of Systematic Theology. The full interview is available on the April 24, 2019 issue of *Schedia*.



You have said that the Incarnation of the Word of God is the par excellence example of “immigration.” What do you mean by this?

The Incarnate Divine Word of God takes on the foreign, the other, that which is entirely different. This is a voluntary migration, through which He became a foreigner and an outcast, in order to express a love that ultimately ends up on the cross. *Christ is the great lover.* His sojourn on earth was tragic. He was considered a foreigner by his own people, to the extent that they hated him and ultimately killed him as a rejected outcast. He was not totally understood by his disciples, his mother, or even by creation as a whole. He even was a stranger to life and death itself, which he conquered forever. We are called to imitate the way of the Divine Word and to be open to relationships outside of the boundaries set by national, ethnic, racial or religious criteria. The embracing, the full acceptance of - and not merely the “tolerance” of - the foreigner and the stranger is the true realization of ascetical love. Of course, many wrongly think that the Church is made up only of ritual practices and the adherence to “religious” rules and regulations. Thus we are confronted frequently with attitudes and mentalities centered around a sort of idealistic, legalistic “purity” that

*Assumption of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church
97 Walcott Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860*

Reverend Dr. Philip Zymaris
Protopresbyter



E-mail: pzymaris@hchc.edu
(401) 725-3127 Phone (401) 725-9270 Fax
(857) 204-9021 Emergencies
Web Site: www.assumptionri.org

SUNDAY SERVICES

Orthros 8am and Divine Liturgy 9:30am

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 8:30am to 1:30pm
Elizabeth Lazouras
secretary@assumptionri.org

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

President	George Foussekis
Vice President	Dr. Nicholas Nikolopoulos
Treasurer	Angelo C. Limnios
Asst. Treasurer	Donna Gerace
Secretary	Brian Gerace
	Peter Papavasiliou
	Nickolas Vellopoulos
	Triantafillio Foussekis
	Vasileios Papavasileiou
	George Karalis
	Eleni Katsios

ORGANIZATIONS

AHEPA:	Ioannis Apostolakis
Cantors:	John Lyssikatos
	Nick Vellopoulos
	Dr. Vasili Amfilo
Choir:	Marion Manickas, Director
Cultural Society:	John Lyssikatos
Greek Pride:	Andrea Vastis
	Nancy Georgitsis
	George Microulis
Greek School:	Panagiota Vastis, Principal
	Sophia Augoustakis
	Stavroula Papavasiliou
Sunday School:	Elizabeth Lazouras, Director
	Stavroula Papavasiliou
	Stephanie Dokos
	Charikleia Campos
	Sophia Augoustakis
	Seminarian Alexandros Douvres
GOYA:	Sharon Turk, Gail Manickas,
	Anna Dafulas, Helena Lambrakis
Over 50 Club:	Ursula Michalopoulos
Philoptochos:	Patricia Panichas, President
PTO:	Stephanie Dokos, President
Visitation:	Tina Demopulos
	Sophia Balamas
Seminarian:	Alexandros Douvres

morphs into an "Orthodox idolatry" and "spirituality," where God and spirituality are so distant that they are unable to relate to human beings and the world. This ultimately is the ailment of an ideological Christianity that ignores the true human being. This leads to a sterile activism that randomly identifies with anything that satisfies a sort of psychological autism where the other is actually entirely absent and not seen as the meeting point of the individual self with the many. Rather, it becomes an opportunity for an inward-looking savior syndrome.

You have said that when she forgets her nature the Church has a problem with love. What do you mean by this?

The quality of a civilization can only be measured by its stance on love and death. These are ultimate realities, and when they are damaged the sum total of life is mortally traumatized and true life is alienated. The stance of Orthodox theology and the Church on the foundational subjects of love, sexuality, desire and pleasure has sometimes in the past, and even to this day, become the Achilles heel of Orthodoxy. Sexuality often was incriminated and demonized. These positions come straight from ancient Greek thought (Plato and Stoicism), Hellenistic Judaism, gnosticism and Syrian monasticism; the great tragedy is that modern Orthodoxy often baptizes such positions as "tradition." The result of all this is a violation of the very essence of the Gospel and this distorts the ecclesial event into a closed system, a desert place inhabited by loveless, confused beings who can only project guilt regarding their created identity.

Why has the theologically problematic notion that Christianity sees the body and matter as corrupt gotten so much traction?

The greatest sin is that in the history of the Church we have often been tempted to "spiritualize" and "soul-ize" the human being to the detriment of his physical reality, and this is something that is contrary to the Gospel. Actually, it would be accurate to say that there is no greater materialism than true Christianity precisely because it bestows eternity upon the flesh through the resurrection. Any other kind of materialism that ends up in the grave is lacking and faulty. Unfortunately, under the influence of a later bizarre form of gnosticism, Christianity sometimes tended not to accept the human being as is. There has been a proclivity to assume that the human

being is really the human being minus his nature; an estranged body and soul imprisoned within the ideology of "original sin". That's why we see this attitude toil to create another kind of human being, which certainly has nothing to do with the mystery of the Incarnation and the real human being created by the love and philanthropy of God. One of the best examples of this is the case of women, which during the time after they give birth and during their menstrual cycle are wrongly barred from communion, isolated and considered unclean in body and soul.

The Mystery of Life

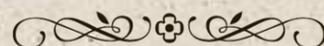
You have stressed that the "exile of death" is a prevalent ailment of our society. What do you mean by this?

We have a tendency to shove death under the rug and to build a life without death, so much so that we are unable even to articulate the denial of death that we strive for. Today it is well known that the illegitimate child, the "elephant in the room," of our technological civilization is death. It has become the object of social denial, a subject matter prohibited by good manners. A tangible example of this exile of death evident in the horizon of people's lives today is the distancing of the dead from domestic space such as the home immediately after their death, their storage in specially fabricated places up to the moment of their burial, as well as the geographical exile of the cemetery from the center of cities and villages (i.e., the centrally located church graveyard of the olden days has all but disappeared). The excuse that this is for health or hygienic reasons is often cited, but today we know that the real issue is the denial of the sacramental character of death. The result of this inability of contemporary man to accept death is, without doubt, connected directly to his inability to accept life! The alienation of death together with all ailments and illnesses is really the alienation of life. Indeed, this denial of life, which presupposes and is not only the result of the denial of death, is always done in the name of life! It's done in the name of

a sick earthly "immortality," which boils down to the absolutization of the moment and the studious dismissal of all vistas that point to the eschaton.

Don't we often hear the opposite in Christianity, i.e., an overemphasis of death?

If the first way we commit a disservice to death is by denying it, the second way is by "naturalizing" it and accepting it as normal in the context of an extremist morbid "asceticism" and a "denial of the flesh." Death in this case prevails depressingly over life, which it, in the end, snuffs out. What is claimed in this distortion is that the only things that are of value are connected with the "other life" and that our historical life in the here and now is an illusionary sinful dream that has to be overcome so the idolized "life beyond" can prevail. According to this view the only meaning of life is to prepare for death. This attitude can't grasp that the healthy "memory of death" and death itself are crucial for participation in the mystery of life. The permanent concern of this distorted view is if there is life after death, but it never considers if there is life *before* death! It's as if there are two totally unrelated lives: one here now and one somewhere else over there later. For Christianity, however, life is one and a continuum. Therefore, the extent to which one lives his life here as dynamically as possible, so much so will he live in the age to come. The human being is made for incorruptibility and life. Death cannot be accepted by anyone, and especially by a Christian, because it is a defeated entity. The great poet Kiki Demoula once told me: "I don't think I'm a Christian because I can't accept death." "But that's exactly why you *are* a Christian!" I responded. Death certainly is ferocious because it splatters to smithereens the unity of life. Who can accept within himself that the relations he had with people during his life have an expiration date? As my father was ailing with cancer I asked him: "Do you fear death?" He thought about it a little and answered: "No, the only thing I am concerned with is if we will be together."



«Ο Χριστός είναι ὁ μέγας ἔρωτικός»

Τὴν ἀνάγκη γιὰ ἕναν χριστιανισμό πού θά ἐπανασυνδεθεῖ μὲ τὴ χαμένη του ἔρωτικότητα καὶ τὴν ἐπιθυμία γιὰ ζωὴ, ἐπισημαίνει ἕνας καταξιωμένος θεολόγος.

Στὸ τρέχον τεύχος τοῦ *Χριστιανικοῦ Φωτός* φιλοξενοῦμε μέρος μίας πολὺ σημαντικῆς συνεντεύξεως τοῦ Χρυσόστομου Σταμούλη, καθηγητοῦ Συστηματικῆς Θεολογίας καὶ Κοσμήτορα τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Ἀριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης. Ἡ πλήρης συνέντευξη πρωτοδημοσιεύθηκε στὸ περιοδιὸ *Σχεδιά* στίς 24 Ἀπριλίου τοῦ 2019.

Ἔχετε σημειώσει ὅτι ἡ ἐνανθρώπηση τοῦ Λόγου τοῦ Θεοῦ Πατέρα εἶναι ἡ κατεξοχὴν μετανάστευση. Πῶς ἐρμηνεύετε αὐτὴ τὴ θεολογικὴ ἀνάγνωση τῆς μετανάστευσης;

Ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος σαρκούμενος προσέλαβε τὸ ξένο, τὸ ἄλλο, τὸ ἐντελῶς διαφορετικὸ. Πρόκειται γιὰ μίαν ἐθελοντικὴ μετανάστευση, ὅπου ἔγινε ὁ ἴδιος ξένος καὶ ἀλήτης, ἔτσι ὥστε νὰ φανερώσει τὸ μυστήριό τῆς ἀγάπης πού φτάνει μέχρι τὸ Σταυρό. Ὁ Χριστὸς εἶναι ὁ μέγας ἔρωτικός. Ἡ ἐπὶ γῆς πορεία τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ὑπῆρξε τραγικὴ. Ξένος γιὰ τοὺς ὁμόφυλους ξένους, πού τὸν μίσησαν καὶ τὸν θανάτωσαν σὰν ξένο. Ξένος γιὰ τοὺς δικούς του μαθητές, τὴν ἴδια του τὴ μητέρα, γιὰ τὴν κτίση ὀλάκερη, γιὰ τὴ ζωὴ μὰ καὶ τὸ θάνατο, τὸν ὁποῖο νίκησε μίαν γιὰ πάντα. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος καλεῖται νὰ μιμηθεῖ τὸν τρόπο τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου καὶ νὰ ἀνοίξει τίς σχέσεις του πέρα ἀπὸ τὰ ὅρια πού θέτουν κριτήρια ἔθνους, φυλῆς, φύλων ἢ θρησκείας. Τὸ ἀγκάλιασμα, ἡ ὀλοκληρωτικὴ πρόσληψη καὶ ὄχι ἀπλὰ ἡ ἀνοχὴ τοῦ ξένου καὶ τοῦ ἀγνωστου φανερώνει τὴν ἀληθινὴ διακονία τῆς ἀσκητικῆς ἀγάπης. Βέβαια, γιὰ κάποιους, ἡ Ἐκκλησία περιορίζεται σὲ πράξεις τελετουργικῆς, σὲ μίαν κάποια διεκπεραίωση. Βρισκόμαστε, ἔτσι, συχνὰ ἐνώπιον ἀντιλήψεων καὶ νοοτροπιῶν καθαρότητος πού εἰσάγουν μίαν κάποια «ὀρθόδοξη εἰδωλολατρία» καὶ «πνευματικότητα», ἐκεῖ ὅπου ὁ

Θεὸς ἀδυνατεῖ νὰ σχετιστεῖ μὲ τὸν κόσμον καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπο. Καὶ ἂν αὐτὴ εἶναι ἡ ἀσθένεια ἑνός, ἐντέλει, ἰδεολογικοῦ χριστιανισμοῦ, πού ἀγνοεῖ τὸν ἴδιο τὸν ἄνθρωπο, συναντοῦμε συχνὰ τὴν ἀσθένεια ἑνός στείρου ἀκτιβισμοῦ, πού ταυτίζεται ἀδιάκριτα μὲ ὅτιδήποτε ἰκανοποιεῖ τὸν ψυχολογικὸ του καθωσπρεπισμό, καὶ ὅπου ὁ ἄλλος εἶναι πάλι ὀλοκληρωτικὰ ἀπῶν, καθὼς δὲν ἀποτελεῖ τὸ σημεῖο συνάντησης τοῦ ἐγὼ στὸ ἐμεῖς, ἀλλὰ τὸν τόπο φανέρωσης τῶν ἰδιοτελῶν συνδρόμων τοῦ εὐεργέτη καὶ τοῦ σωτῆρα.

Ἔχετε ἐπισημάνει ὅτι «ὁ ἔρωτας βάζει δύσκολα στὴν Ἐκκλησία. Ἐβαζε στὸ παρελθόν;... τὸ κάνει καὶ Σήμερα;». Τὶ ἐννοεῖτε;

Ἡ ποιότητα ἑνός πολιτισμοῦ δὲν μπορεῖ παρὰ νὰ μετρίεται ἀπὸ τὴ στάση πού αὐτὸς κρατᾷ ἀπέναντι στὸν ἔρωτα καὶ τὸ θάνατο. Πραγματικότητες ὀριακές, πού ὁ τραυματισμὸς τοὺς τραυματίζει θανάσιμα τὸ σύνολο τῆς ὑπαρξης καὶ ὀδηγεῖ στὴν ἔξοδο ἀπὸ τὴν πραγματικὴ ζωὴ. Ἡ στάση τῆς ὀρθόδοξης θεολογίας ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἀπέναντι σὰ θεμελιακὰ θέματα τοῦ ἔρωτα, τῆς σεξουαλικότητος, τῆς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ τῶν ἡδονῶν ἀπέτελεσε στὸ παρελθόν, ἀποτελεῖ καὶ σήμερα τὴν ἀχίλλειο πτέρνα τῆς Ὀρθοδοξίας. Ὁ ἔρωτας ἐνοχοποιήθηκε καὶ δαιμονοποιήθηκε. Πρόκειται γιὰ θέσεις πού προέρχονται ἀπὸ τὰ σπλάγχνα τῆς ἀρχαίας ἑλληνικῆς σκέψης (Πλάτων, Στωϊκοί), τὸν ἑλληνιστικὸ ἰουδαϊσμό, τὸν γνωστικισμό καὶ τὸν συριακὸ μοναχισμό, καὶ ἐδῶ βρίσκεται ἡ μεγάλη τραγωδία τῆς σύγχρονης Ὀρθοδοξίας: στὴν πίστη πῶς ὀλη αὐτὴ ἡ παραχάραξη τοῦ Χριστιανικοῦ μηνύματος ἀποτελεῖ παραμονὴ στὴν πιστότητα τῆς χριστιανικῆς παράδοσης. Συνέπεια, ὀλων τῶν παραπάνω, πού εἶναι βιασμὸς τῆς ὀντολογίας τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, ὑπῆρξε σὲ ἀρκετὲς περιπτώσεις ἡ μετατροπὴ τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ γεγονότος σὲ κλειστὸ σύστημα, σὲ ἔρημη χώρα πού κατοικεῖται ἀπὸ ἀνέραστους ἀνθρώπους, ἀνθρώπους μπερδεμένους πού φέρουν πάντα ἐπάνω τους τὴν ἐνοχὴ τῆς φυσικῆς τους ἀλήθειας

Ὀντως, ἔχει καλλιεργηθεῖ ἡ αἴσθησις ὅτι ὁ χριστιανισμὸς εἶναι μίαν θρησκείαν τῆς πνευματικότητος πού στέκεται ἀπέναντι στὴ σωματικὴτητα καὶ τὴν ὑλικὴτητα, πού θεωροῦνται διεφθαρμένα.

Ἡ μεγάλη ἀμαρτία εἶναι ὅτι ψυχοποιήσαμε, πνευματοποιήσαμε τὸν ἄνθρωπο, κάτι πού βρίσκεται

σὲ ἀντίφαση μὲ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο. Στὴν οὐσία, δὲν ὑπάρχει γνησιότερος ὕλισμός ἀπὸ τὸν χριστιανικό, διότι δίνει στὴ σάρκα αἰωνιότητα. Ὅποιοσδήποτε ἄλλος ὕλισμός πού τελειώνει στὸν τάφο εἶναι λειψὸς καὶ ἀνάπηρος. Δυστυχῶς, κάτω ἀπὸ τὶς ἐπιδράσεις ἐνὸς ὄψιμου καὶ ιδιόμορφου γνωστικισμοῦ, ὁ χριστιανισμός δὲν δέχθηκε σχεδὸν ποτὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπο ὡς ἔχει. Πίστεψε καὶ ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ πιστεύει πῶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶναι αὐτὸ πού εἶναι μεῖον τῆ φύση του, ἓνα σῶμα καὶ μία ψυχὴ φυλακισμένα στὴν ἰδεολογία τοῦ προπατορικοῦ ἁμαρτήματος. Γι' αὐτὸ ἀναλώθηκε στὰ ὄρια τῆς ἀνθρωπολογίας του – ὑπόλογης πάντα στὸ μυστήριο τῆς σάρκωσης, ὅπου ὁ Θεὸς προσλαμβάνει τὸν ἄνθρωπο στὸ σύνολό του – στὴ δημιουργία ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἄλλου, ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου πού σίγουρα δὲν εἶναι ὁ ἄνθρωπος πού ἔπλασε ἢ ἀγάπη καὶ ἢ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ Θεοῦ. Κλασικότερη περίπτωση ὅλων ἢ περίπτωση τῶν γυναικῶν, οἱ ὁποῖες κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς λοχείας τους, ὅπως ἐξάλλου καὶ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸ τῆς ἐμμήνου ρύσεώς τους, θεωροῦνται σωματικὰ καὶ ψυχικὰ ἀκάθαρτες!

ΤΟ ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΖΩΗΣ

Ἔχετε τονίσει ὅτι ἐκεῖνο πού κυριαρχεῖ στὶς μέρες μας εἶναι ἢ «ἐξορία τοῦ θανάτου». Τὶ ἀκριβῶς σημαίνει;

Ὁ ἄνθρωπος φοβᾶται τὸ θάνατο καὶ χτίζει ἔτσι μία ζωὴ χωρὶς θάνατο, πού τοῦ ἀφαιρεῖ ἀκόμη καὶ αὐτὴ τὴ δυνατότητα νὰ τὸν ἀρνηθεῖ. Εἶναι κοινὰ ἀποδεκτὸ σήμερα πῶς ὁ θάνατος ἀποτελεῖ τὸ ἀποπαῖδι τοῦ τεχνικοῦ πολιτισμοῦ. Ἀντικείμενο ἀπαγόρευσης καὶ κοινωνικῆς ἀρνήσεως πού ἐπιβάλλει ὁ καθωσπρεπισμός. Ἀπὸ παράδειγμα τούτης τῆς ἐξορίας τοῦ θανάτου ἀπὸ τὸ πεδίο τῆς ζωῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀποτελεῖ ἢ ἀπομάκρυνση τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἀπὸ τὸν οἰκεῖο χώρο, τὸ σπίτι, ἀμέσως μετὰ τὸ θάνατό τους, ἢ φύλαξή τους σὲ εἰδικὰ διαμορφωμένους χώρους μέχρι καὶ τὴ στιγμή τῆς κήδευσής τους, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἢ τοπικὴ ἐξορία τοῦ κοιμητηρίου ἀπὸ τὸ κέντρο τῶν πόλεων καὶ τῶν χωριῶν. Συνήθως, ἢ πρόφαση γιὰ τούτη τὴν ἀπομάκρυνση τῶν νεκρῶν ἀπὸ τὸν χώρο τῶν ζώντων σχετίζεται μὲ λόγους ὑγείας καὶ ὑγιεινῆς, ἀλλὰ ὅλοι σήμερα γνωρίζουμε ὅτι τὸ μεῖζον πρόβλημα εἶναι ἢ ἀφαιμάξη τοῦ μυστηριακοῦ χαρακτήρα τοῦ θανάτου. Ἀποτέλεσμα τούτης τῆς ἀδυναμίας τοῦ σύγχρονου ἀνθρώπου νὰ ἀποδεχθεῖ τὸ θάνατο ἀποτελεῖ, δίχως ἄλλο, καὶ ἢ ἀδυναμία του νὰ

ἀποδεχθεῖ τὴ ζωὴ. Ἡ ἀπώθηση τοῦ θανάτου, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀσθένειας, τῆς ἀρρώστιας, συνιστᾶ σ' ἀλήθεια ἀπώθηση τῆς ἴδιας τῆς ζωῆς. Βέβαια, τούτη ἢ ἀρνήση τῆς ζωῆς, τῆς ὁποίας προϋπόθεση καὶ ὄχι ἀπλὰ ἀποτέλεσμα εἶναι ἢ ἀρνήση τοῦ θανάτου, γίνεται πάντα στὸ ὄνομα τῆς ζωῆς. Στὸ ὄνομα μίας νοσηρῆς ἐπίγειας «ἀθανασίας», πού ταυτίζεται μὲ τὴν ἀπολυτοποίηση τῆς στιγμῆς καὶ ἀγνοεῖ ἐπιδεικτικὰ τὴ δυνατότητα τῶν ἐσχάτων.

Δὲν συναντοῦμε, ὅμως, καὶ τὸ ἀντίθετο στὸν χριστιανισμό; Μία ἀποδοχὴ τοῦ θανάτου;

Ἐὰν ὁ πρῶτος τρόπος μὲ τὸν ὁποῖο συντελεῖται τὸ ἔγκλημα ἐνάντια στὸ θάνατο εἶναι ἢ ἀρνήση του, ὁ δεύτερος τρόπος εἶναι ἢ «ἀποδοχὴ» του, μέσα ἀπὸ τὸν ἀπολυτοποιημένο «ἀσκητισμό» καὶ τὴν ἀρνήση τῆς σάρκας. Ὁ θάνατος στὴν περίπτωσή αὐτὴ κυριαρχεῖ καταθλιπτικὰ πάνω στὴ ζωὴ, τὴν ὁποία, ἐντέλει, ἀφανίζει. Τὰ πάντα εἶναι ἀλλοῦ καὶ ἢ ἱστορία μίᾶ παραισθητικῆς ἁμαρτίας πού πρέπει νὰ ξεπεραστεῖ προκειμένου νὰ κυριαρχήσει τὸ εἰδωλοποιημένο ἐπέκεινα. Τὸ μόνον νόημα τῆς ζωῆς συνίσταται στὴν προετοιμασία γιὰ τὸ θάνατο. Σὲ μία συνεχῆ ἀπουσία πού ἀγνοεῖ πῶς ἢ μνήμη τοῦ θανάτου, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ ἴδιος ὁ θάνατος, ἀποτελεῖ τὴ μόνον δυνατότητα γιὰ μετοχὴ στὸ μυστήριο τῆς ζωῆς. Ὁ μόνιμος καημὸς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας εἶναι ἂν ὑπάρχει ζωὴ μετὰ τὸ θάνατο, ἀλλὰ δὲν ἀναλογιστήκαμε ποτὲ ἂν ἐντὸς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, πλέον, ὑπάρχει ζωὴ πρὶν ἀπὸ τὸ θάνατο. Ὑπάρχει ἢ αἴσθησις ὅτι ὑπάρχουν δύο διαφορετικὲς ζωές: μία ζωὴ ἐδῶ καὶ μία ζωὴ μετὰ. Γιὰ τὸν χριστιανισμό, ὅμως, ἢ ζωὴ εἶναι μία καὶ συνεχῆς. Ἄρα, ὅσο πιὸ δυναμικὰ ζεῖ κανεὶς ἐδῶ τὴ ζωὴ, θὰ ζήσει καὶ τὰ ἔσχατα. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶναι φτιαγμένος γιὰ ἀφθαρσία καὶ ζωὴ. Τὸ θάνατο δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ τὸν ἀποδεχθεῖ κανεὶς, καὶ κυρίως κανένας χριστιανός. Εἶναι μία νικημένη πραγματικότητα. Μοῦ εἶχε πεῖ κάποτε ἢ Κικὴ Δημουλά: «Νομίζω ὅτι δὲν εἶμαι χριστιανή, γιὰ τὸν ὅτι δὲν μπορῶ νὰ ἀποδεχθῶ τὸ θάνατο». «Μὰ γιὰ αὐτὸ εἶστε πραγματικὰ χριστιανή», τῆς ἀπάντησα. Σίγουρα, ὁ θάνατος εἶναι μία ἀγριότητα, καθὼς σπάει τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς ζωῆς. Ποιὸς μπορεῖ νὰ δεχθεῖ μέσα του ὅτι οἱ σχέσεις του μὲ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πού ἔχει στὴ διάρκεια τῆς ζωῆς του ἔχουν ἢμερομηνία λήξης; Ἔφευγε ὁ πατέρας μου ἀπὸ καρκῖνο καὶ τοῦ λέω: «Φοβᾶσαι τὸ θάνατο;». Σκέφτηκε λίγο καὶ μοῦ εἶπε: «Ὁχι, τὸ θέμα εἶναι ὅτι ἔχω ἀγωνία ἂν θὰ εἶμαστε μαζί».



February 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD 8am Orthros 9:15am Divine Liturgy 4:30 to 6pm Online Greek School	3 4:30 to 6pm Online Greek School	4	5
6 SUNDAY OF THE CANAANITE 8am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Vasilopita Sunday Sunday School	7 7pm to 8:30pm Zoom Adult Class Seminar Aeschylus' Masterpiece "The Persians"	8	9 4:30 to 6pm Greek School 7pm Parish Council	10 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	11	12
13 SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE (Triodion Begins) 8am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Sunday School GOYA Meeting	14 7pm to 8:30pm Zoom Adult Class Seminar Aeschylus' Masterpiece "The Persians"	15	16 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	17 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	18	19
20 SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON 8am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy	21 Church Office Closed 7pm to 8:30pm Zoom Adult Class Seminar Aeschylus' Masterpiece "The Persians"	22	23	24	25	26 1st SATURDAY OF SOULS 8am Orthros 9:15am Divine Liturgy St. Spyridon's Apokriatiko Glendi @ Wyndham Newport Hotel, Middletown, RI 6pm Cocktails 7:30pm Dinner
27 JUDGMENT SUNDAY (Meatfare Sunday) 8am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Sunday School General Assembly	28 7pm to 8:30pm Zoom Adult Class Seminar Aeschylus' Masterpiece "The Persians"					

Assumption of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church
97 Walcott Street, Pawtucket, Rhode Island

UPDATED NOTIFICATIONS

CHURCH SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE PLACE

Masks are required at all time in the Church, Community Center, Church Office

Greek School (Classes will remain online for the first week of February)
(Teachers will contact Greek School families with updated information)

Sunday School (Classes will resume on February 6th)

Coffee Hours (Will resume on February 6th)

Choir (Will resume on February 6th)

Community Center and Church Office (Access will resume on February 1st)
(You can also contact the Church Office at 401-725-3127 or secretary@assumptionri.org
Envelopes can be placed in locked mailbox outside the doors to the Community Center)

Vasilopita Sunday (Scheduled to take place on February 6th)

GOYA Meeting (Scheduled to take place on February 13th)

General Assembly (Scheduled to take place on February 27th)

Assumption of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church has adopted an across the board indoor masking requirement in our church building at all times and during all church services as well as in our Community Center and Church Office at all times. Our Assumption masking requirement will remain in effect until further notice.

May God Bless all of you,
Rev. Fr. Philip Zymaris

Visit our Assumption Church website:

<https://www.assumptionri.org/>

Click "**VIRTUAL CANDLE**" to light a candle
Click "**VIRTUAL TRAY**" to make an offering

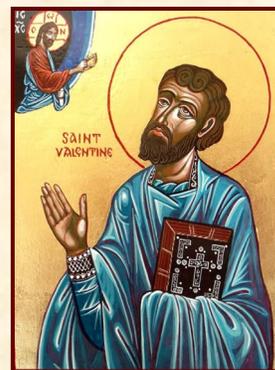
Thank you for your continued support!!!



THE HISTORICAL & ORTHODOX ST. VALENTINE

(from blogs.goarch.org — An internet ministry tool of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America)

Now a commercialized holiday celebrating modern Western courtship and romance, the ancient Christian origins of Saint Valentine's Day are largely forgotten. The actual Orthodox liturgical Feast Days of Valentinus (Greek) / Valentinus (Latin) commemorate two Early Christian saints, Saint Valentine the Presbyter of Rome (July 6th) and Hieromartyr Valentine the Bishop of Interamna (Terni), Italy (July 30th). Although the historical records for these two saints are not complete, and what we do know about their lives has often been subjected to considerable confusion, their martyrdoms are well known to us. Because of their refusal to renounce their faith in Christ, both Valentines were imprisoned, tortured, and executed around 270, during the persecution of Christians under the Roman Emperor, Claudius II.



Because they shared the same name, were contemporaries, resided near each other in central Italy, and ultimately, shared similar fates, the two Valentines' personal histories were intermingled and conflated over the centuries, producing inconsistencies and puzzlement in many accounts of their lives. What most sources indicate, however, is that Bishop Valentine was renowned during his lifetime as a healer of the sick and blind, while Valentine the Presbyter would become notable in the historical memory of Christians, originally both Eastern and Western, as a courageous steward of marriage. Indeed, because of his connection to the sacrament of marriage, it would be the latter Valentine, the Presbyter from Rome, who would serve as the inspiration for the Late Medieval Western literary foundations for what would by the nineteenth century evolve into today's popular, secular Valentine's Day.

According to the most common narrative, Presbyter Valentine, a priest in Rome, drew the ire of Emperor Claudius by ignoring the imperial ban against allowing men who had not fulfilled their military obligations to the Empire to marry. Remaining loyal to his moral commitment and beliefs as a Christian priest, Valentine refused to compromise the sanctity of marriage to the will of the state. In defiance of imperial edict, Valentine continued to unite and bless Christian couples, which were legally barred from marrying. This association with young Christian beloveds became the muse over several centuries for an increasingly fictionalized, romantic expropriation and reconstruction of Saint Valentine in the West, one that has led to the modern Saint Valentine's Day. Indeed, the memory of Saint Valentine became so distorted and uncertain over the centuries, that the Roman Catholic Church ended its commemoration and veneration — traditionally associated with mid-February in the West — of him as a calendar saint in 1969, effectively surrendering the historical Valentine to his appropriation and exploitation by Western popular culture.

As in other matters of reverence and faith, the Orthodox Church's veneration of Saint Valentine remains immutable. Secularization in the West accounts in large part for the Papacy's move to discard the memory of Saint Valentine's martyrdom in the face of commerce and frivolity, but Orthodoxy still honors Saint Valentine, the Presbyter from Rome, for his martyrdom — and as for all its saints, the Orthodox Church honors St. Valentine as a model of the life in Christ.

For Orthodox Christians, Saint Valentine's Day is most fully understood as a celebration of romantic love and of God's love. Indeed, Valentine was willing to sacrifice his life not for Eros but in order to sanctify and make whole the union of young couples through the blessing of God's love. Demonstrating our love for God and reaching our fulfillment in Christ through our relationships with our spouses, families, and communities, is a way of life that is at the heart of Orthodoxy. By living a life in emulation of Christ, Saint Valentine shared this fundamental truth of Orthodox Christianity with the world, one that is more beautiful and lasts longer than flowers and cards — it is eternal.

Dr. Alexandros K. Kyrou is Professor of History at Salem State University, where he teaches on the Balkans, Byzantium, and the Ottoman Empire.

ÆSCHYLUS' MASTERPIECE "THE PERSIANS"



Adult Class Seminar via Zoom
Mondays from 7 to 8:30pm
February 7th thru April 11th
(an 8-week class)

Following our study, "Aspects of Greek Civilization", we will continue with the reading of Aeschylus' classic masterpiece, "The Persians" – This tragedy is based on the historic events of the Persian defeat in the battles of Marathon and Salamis. Although it is a celebration of the Greek victory, Aeschylus describes the universal experience of suffering caused by the wars from the perspective of one of the losers and shows sympathy and compassion towards those who lost their beloved ones. – Due to the continuation of the pandemic, classes will be conducted online via Zoom.

If interested in joining the class or for more information, please call
John Lyssikatos 401-728-4452



METROPOLIS of BOSTON CAMP

WINTER CAMP '22

FEBRUARY 19-21

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 7PM ON...
1/3 FOR GRADES 11 & 12 | 1/5 FOR GRADES 9 & 10 | 1/6 FOR GRADES 6-8

M E T R O P O L I S O F B O S T O N C A M P . O R G



FAITH | HERITAGE | FELLOWSHIP | SPORTS | ARTS | NATURE | MORE!

COMMUNITY

OVER 100 YOUNG PEOPLE GATHER EVERY YEAR FOR MBC WINTER CAMP TO HAVE DEEP CONVERSATION ABOUT FAITH AND LIFE WHILE EXPERIENCING AN UNFORGETTABLE WEEKEND OF FUN



FIELD TRIPS

FOR DECADES, MBC HAS BEEN VISITING PAT'S PEAK IN HENNIKER, NH FOR SKIING, SNOWBOARDING, AND TUBING! THIS YEAR, WE ARE ADDING AN ADDITIONAL FIELD TRIP FOR THOSE WHO WOULD PREFER A WARMER OPTION!

GREAT OUTDOORS

MANY OF OUR CAMPERS RAVE ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE GREAT NH OUTDOORS! THIS YEAR, NH FISH & GAME WILL BE TEACHING OUR KIDS HOW TO ICE FISH ON BOTH OF OUR BEAUTIFUL LAKES!

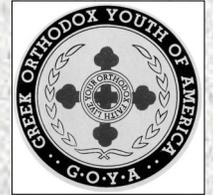


FRIENDSHIP

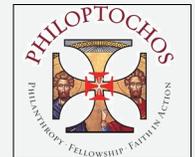
CAMPERS LEAVE MBC WISHING THEIR WEEKEND LASTED A WHOLE WEEK. THE BONDS THEY FORM WITH THEIR PEERS LAST BEYOND THE WEEKEND AND EXTEND TO A LIFETIME OF FRIENDSHIP. THERE ARE NO FRIENDSHIPS QUITE LIKE MBC FRIENDSHIPS!

Congratulations to the new and returning
Assumption GOYA Officers for 2021-2022!
Elections for GOYA were held in November

President:	Joe Bunch
Vice President:	Katerina Lazouras
Treasurer:	George Mastin
Social Chair:	Ellie Dafulas
Corresponding Secretary:	Alana Zervas
Recording Secretary:	Vacant



2021 Philoptochos Donations



St. Barbara Philoptochos Society provides donations and financial support to many organizations in need throughout the year. With help from all of you, we are able to continue our philanthropic work. The following is a list of donations made in 2021.

National Philoptochos and Metropolis of Boston

- Vasilopita
- Social Services
- Cancer Fund
- Autism
- St. Photios Shrine
- Orthodox Christian Mission
- Support a Mission Priest
- Hellenic College/Holy Cross Lenten Event
- St. Basil School
- IOCC
- 75th Anniversary Founders Fund
- Orthodox Christian Fellowship
- Hellenic College/Holy Cross Scholarship Fund
- Retired Clergy Widow Presbyteres Benevolent Fund
- National Philoptochos Emergency Fund
- Patriarchate Fund
- National Sisterhood of Presbyteres
- Unicef
- General Medical Fund

- Attleboro Senior Center of the Elderly
- Philoxenia House
- Metropolis of Boston Camp — 2 Children
- Hellenic Nursing Home
- Meeting Street School
- Amos House
- Multiple Sclerosis of RI
- Crossroads
- The Samaritans
- RI Food Bank
- Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of RI

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

- Church Decorations for Easter
- Easter Egg Bags
- Church Decorations for Christmas
- Landscaping

Total Donations for the Year 2021: \$6050.00

Provided 10 Koliva -- January thru November 2021

We would like to thank everyone in our community for their dedication, talent, and support of the Philoptochos Society. May 2022 be a Healthy, Happy, and Successful year for all of us.

Cemetery Fund

Assumption Church is in the process of having work performed by landscapers on our grounds at Walnut Hill Cemetery on Armistice Boulevard in Pawtucket.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would consider making a donation to help with the upkeep and beautification of the grounds where so many of our deceased loved ones are buried. If you have not already done so, please contribute to the Cemetery Fund so that completion of the work can take place. Thank you to those parishioners who have already made donations.



Updated List of Christmas Offerings and Donations

Mr. Andre Alix
Dr. & Mrs. Vasili Amfilo
Mrs. Athena Bras
Ms. Katherine Brathas
Ms. Helen Bucu
Rev. Fr. & Presbytera George Economou
Mr. & Mrs. George Fackos
Mr. Leonidas Foussekis & Miss Samantha Arredondo
Mr. & Mrs. William Gaza
Mrs. Eve Gouras
Mr. Charles Johnson
Ms. Stavroula Kalivas
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Lemire
Mr. John Lyssikatos
Mr. Paul Microulis
Mrs. Evanne (Papas) Mirabile
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Mudge
Dr. & Mrs. Constantine Pagonis
Ms. Denise Panichas
Mrs. Harriet Pappas
Dr. & Mrs. Angelo Pharmakidis
Mrs. Marion Pollock
Ms. Elaine Sioras
Mrs. Emily Soukas
Mrs. Dorothy Stergis
Mrs. Frances Sterpis

Mrs. Pashalia Strekouras
Mr. & Mrs. Evangelos Tsakonas
Mrs. Eftehia and Ms. Fotini Tzaferis
Mrs. Penelope Vartanian
Miss Anastasia Vellopoulou
Mrs. Joanne Wright

Mrs. Georgette Ferrucci (Flowers for Nativity Icon #1 in loving memory of George G. Skoutas and Michael Ferrucci)
Mrs. Georgette Ferrucci (Christmas Offering in loving memory of George G. Skoutas and Michael Ferrucci)
Mrs. Betty Missirlis (Christmas Offering in loving memory of husband George and parents Achille and Martha)
Ms. Patti Panichas (Christmas Offering in loving memory of her parents Peter & Helen)
Mrs. Dorothy Skoutas (Flowers for Nativity Icon #2 in loving memory of George G Skoutas and Michael Ferrucci)
Mrs. Dorothy Skoutas (Christmas Offering in loving memory of George G. Skoutas and Michael Ferrucci)
St. Barbara Philoptochos Society
(Poinsettias for decorating the Church)
Mrs. Joanne Wright (Christmas Flowers)



Let Us Help Our Endowment Fund Grow

As church membership dwindles in many places while ever-growing maintenance fees rise, many parishes are establishing endowment funds to meet their needs and secure their financial survival. Here at Assumption in Pawtucket, thanks to the foresight and vision of past parishioners and parish councils, we are blessed because we already established such an endowment fund many years ago.

We are also blessed here at Assumption in that, having established our Endowment Fund, many parishioners generously contributed to it in the past and to this day. Indeed, some parishioners were even kind enough to endow sizable funds through their wills to our community in order to guarantee the continuity of our beloved parish. We are where we are today thanks to such people and we should never let their generosity be forgotten.

Our Endowment Fund's value is \$790,071.58 as of January 28, 2022. As our community's By-Laws stipulate, half of our Endowment Fund's annual return goes towards the budget expenses of our community and the other half is re-invested.

In realizing the needs of our community and sharing the great vision of these benefactors, it behooves us to imitate them and to make whatever contribution we can – small or great – to continue their tradition and to help the fund grow. In this way we will secure the future of our beloved Assumption Church. For this purpose, each month we will include this new column dedicated to the Endowment Fund in our monthly newsletter. We will be posting the current value of the fund to keep you abreast regarding its growth and we will list the names of past parishioners as well as new donors who contribute to the fund in memory of loved ones. For the sake of confidentiality, names will be included but not the monetary amounts.

Let us all honor our benefactors by imitating them, sharing in their dreams for the future and by fostering with them the continuation of our church into perpetuity.

Recent Donations to the Endowment Fund

**Assumption Church Choir
in Loving Memory of
Virginia Skodras**

**Mrs. Pashalia Strekouras
in Memory of Evignia Skodras**

Consider including the Endowment Fund in your will and be a supporting pillar to secure the Assumption's survival in perpetuity.

Updated Stewards in Good Standing 2021

Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Aguiar
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Almeida
 Dr. & Mrs. Vasili Amfilo
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Amoling
 Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Andrikopoulos
 Mrs. Vasiliki Andrikopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Elias Antonakas
 Mr. & Mrs. Ioannis Apostolakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Emmanouil Apostolidis
 The Augoustakis Family
 The Avramis Family
 Mrs. Sophia Balamas
 Mr. Arthur Bassis
 Ms. Elaine Bassis
 Mr. & Mrs. James Belliveau
 Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Bianchi
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Bitsakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Kosta Bitsis
 Mr. & Mrs. Fred Boccelli
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Botsford
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Boyle
 Mrs. Athena Bras
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bras
 The Brathas Family
 Ms. Helen Buco
 Mr. & Mrs. John Bunch
 Mrs. Nancy Cacicio
 Mr. & Mrs. William Campos
 Mr. & Mrs. Alexandros Chrisidis
 Mr. & Mrs. John Chrisidis
 Ms. Maria Anna Chrisidis
 Ms. Zoe Chrisidis
 The Christodoulou Family
 Mr. & Mrs. Christy Christopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. George Cicma
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Colantonio
 Mrs. Eleni Dafulas
 Mr. & Mrs. George Dafulas
 Mr. & Mrs. John Dafulas
 Mr. Nicholas Dafulas
 Mr. & Mrs. Haralambos Daniel
 Mrs. Joan Metaxas Dauria
 Mr. Demetrios Delivos
 Mr. & Mrs. Rocco Deluca, Sr.
 Mr. & Mrs. Emmanouel Demetroules
 Mr. & Mrs. George Demopulos
 Mrs. Tina Demopulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Dion
 Dr. Fotini Dionisopoulos
 Dr. Paul Dionisopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Konstantinos Dokos
 Ms. Cyriake Doukas
 Rev. Fr. & Presbytera George Economou
 Mr. & Mrs. George Fackos
 Mr. Steven Fackos
 Mrs. Georgette Ferrucci
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Forest

Mr. Leonidas Foussekis & Samantha Arredondo
 Mr. & Mrs. George Foussekis
 Mr. & Mrs. Brian & Elaine (Brathas) Froment
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gallo
 Mr. & Mrs. William Gaza
 Mr. George Georgiadis
 Presbytera Anastasia Georgiadis
 Ms. Nancy Georgitsis
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Georgitsis
 Mr. & Mrs. Brian Gerace
 Mrs. Maria Gialelis
 Mrs. Laura Giannakas
 Mr. Zackary Giannakas
 Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Gilbert
 Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Girard
 Mr. & Mrs. Russell Golombiewski
 Ms. Catherine Gordon
 Mrs. Eve Gouras
 Mrs. Zacharie Haseotes Viniot
 Mr. & Mrs. George P. & Polyxeni Haseotes
 Mr. Vasilios Haseotes
 Ms. Athena Haseotes
 Mr. Demetrios E. Haseotes
 Mr. & Mrs. George & Kristen Haseotes
 Mr. Ari Haseotes
 Ms. Lily Haseotes Bentas
 Ms. Kelly Stocker-Haseotes
 Mr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Iatrou
 Mr. Vasileios Izanidis
 Mrs. Eleni Jabterakes
 Mr. Elias Jabterakes
 Dr. & Mrs. Philip J. Jameson
 Ms. Zoi Kalaitzidis
 Mr. & Mrs. George Kalantzis
 Ms. Stavroula Kalivas
 Mr. John Kanelakos
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kapos
 Mr. & Mrs. William Kapos
 Mr. Nicolaos Kapouleas
 Ms. Elizabeth Karageorge
 Mr. & Mrs. Niko Karageorgos
 George & Regina (Lyutkevich) Karageorgos
 Mr. George Karalis
 Mr. Joseph Karalis
 Mr. & Mrs. Achilleas Karalis
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Karalis
 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Karavasilis
 Mr. Michael Karavolis
 Mr. & Mrs. Athanasios Katsinas
 Mrs. Eleni Katsios
 Mr. & Mrs. Chris & Georgia (Katsios) Gray
 Mr. George Ketinos
 Mr. & Mrs. Aleko Kimbouris
 Ms. Barbara Kiras
 Mr. Sotirios Kitsilis
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kizirian
 Mr. & Mrs. Mark Kology

Mr. & Mrs. Alexandros Kontoulis
 Mr. & Mrs. Zafiris Kontoulis
 Mr. & Mrs. Nick Korentis
 Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Koronios
 Mr. & Mrs. Christos Kosivas
 Mrs. Kostandina Kounavis
 Mr. Theodore Kounavis
 Mr. & Mrs. Georgios Kourkouliotis
 Dr. & Mrs. Elias G. Koutros
 Mr. & Mrs. George Koutsoukos
 Miss Parris Kyriakakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kyriakakis
 Mr. & Mrs. George Lambrakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael LaTorella
 Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Lavoie
 Elizabeth Lazouras Family
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Lazouras
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Lehourites
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Lehourites
 Mr. Christopher Lehourites
 Mr. & Mrs. Roger Lemire
 Ms. Constantina Lengas
 Mr. & Mrs. Angelo C. Limnios
 Mr. John Lyssikatos
 Dr. Alexis Anastasia Mancini
 Dr. & Mrs. Melvin J. Mancini
 Ms. Gail Manickas
 Mrs. Marion Manickas
 Mr. Peter Manis
 Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Mastin
 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Matarazzo
 Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan McNamara
 Mr. & Mrs. George Michalopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Michalopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Michalopoulos
 Mr. George Microulis & Mrs. Elizabeth Menges
 Mr. Paul Microulis
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Microulis
 Mrs. Evanne (Papas) Mirabile
 Mrs. Betty Missirlis
 Mr. George Moragemos
 Ms. Georgia Moretti
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Mudge
 Ms. Bessie Nickerson
 Mr. Andreas Nicolos
 Mr. Dimitri Nicolos
 Mr. & Mrs. Vassilios Nicolos
 Dr. & Mrs. Nicholas Nikolopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Nikou
 Mrs. Alexandra Nikou
 Mr. & Mrs. Stefan Pagios
 Dr. & Mrs. Constantine Pagonis
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Pagonis
 Mr. Gilbert Pan
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Panagiotis
 Ms. Lygere Panagopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. George Panagos

Updated Stewards in Good Standing 2021

Mrs. Angela Panichas
 Ms. Denise Panichas
 Mrs. Eleanor B. Panichas
 Mr. & Mrs. George T. Panichas, Jr.
 Ms. Patricia Panichas
 Mr. Peter Panichas
 Mr. & Mrs. Haralambos Papavasiliou
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Papavasiliou
 Mr. & Mrs. Vasileios Papavasileiou
 Mrs. Harriet Pappas
 Ms. Karen Pappas
 Dr. Georgia Patsiopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Costas Perdikakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Saki Pitliangas
 Mrs. Dina Platsidakis
 Miss Maria Platsidakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Nikitas Platsidakis
 Mrs. Marion Pollock
 Senator & Mrs. Leonidas Raptakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Joshua Rego
 Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Roditakis
 Ms. Joanne Roditakis
 Mr. Paul Roditakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Keith Rogers
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Rogler
 Mr. & Mrs. Abraham Saxionis
 Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Seely

Ms. Elaine Sioras
 Mrs. Irene Sioras
 Mrs. Dorothy Skoutas
 Mr. Gregory Skoutas
 Ms. Evangelia Sosa
 Mrs. Emily Soukas
 Mr. George Soukas
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Soukatos
 Mrs. Sandy Stamoulis
 Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Stathakis
 Mr. Nicholas Stathakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Stathakis
 Mrs. Eleni Stathatos
 Mr. & Mrs. Athanasios Stefanopoulos
 Mrs. Lee Stephanopoulos
 Mrs. Dorothy Stergis
 Mrs. Frances Sterpis
 Mrs. Anastasia Stoukides
 Mrs. Eftalia Stratis
 Mr. & Mrs. John Stratis
 Mrs. Pashalia Strekouras
 Ms. Angela Sukatos
 Mrs. Anastasia Susset
 Ms. Gina Taktikos
 Mr. Steven Taktikos
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Thibeault
 Mr. & Mrs. Evangelos Tsakonas

Mr. John Tsikouras
 Mr. & Mrs. Christos Tsimikas
 Mr. & Mrs. Stergios Tsimikas
 Ms. Georgia Tsimortos
 Ms. Nicoletta Tsimortos
 Mr. Peter Tsimortos
 Mrs. Aspasia Tsonos
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Tsukatos
 Mrs. Eftehia and Ms. Fotini Tzaferis
 Mrs. Penelope Vartanian
 The Carlson / Vastis Family
 Mr. & Mrs. George Vastis
 Ms. Valerie Vastis
 Mr. & Mrs. Nickolas Vellopoulos
 Miss Anastasia Vellopoulou
 Ms. Tanya Vladov
 Mr. & Mrs. George Vourvachakis
 Dr. & Mrs. Thomas & Marie (Lascarides) Walsh
 Mrs. Alexandra Whitmore
 Mrs. Joanne Wright
 Mr. & Mrs. Louis Xifaras
 Mrs. Maria Zaharakos
 Mr. & Mrs. Petros Zervas
 Mr. Nicholas Zervas
 Dr. & Mrs. Harry Zervas
 Dr. Christopher Zoto
 Rev. Fr. Philip & Presbytera Xanthippi Zymaris

Stewards in Good Standing 2022

Dr. & Mrs. Vasili Amfilo
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Amoling
 Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Andrikopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Ioannis Apostolakis
 The Augoustakis Family
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Bitsakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Kosta Bitsis
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Botsford
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Boyle
 The Brathas Family
 Mr. & Mrs. Alexandros Chrisidis
 Ms. Maria Anna Chrisidis
 Rev. Fr. & Presbytera George Economou
 Mr. Leonidas Foussekis & Samantha Arredondo
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gallo
 Ms. Nancy Georgitsis
 Mrs. Zacharie Haseotes Vinius
 Mr. & Mrs. George P. & Polyxeni Haseotes
 Mr. Vasilios Haseotes
 Ms. Athena Haseotes
 Mr. Demetrios E. Haseotes
 Mr. & Mrs. George & Kristen Haseotes

Mr. Ari Haseotes
 Ms. Lily Haseotes Bentas
 Ms. Kelly Stocker-Haseotes
 Ms. Martha Iazzetti
 Mr. Vasileios Izanidis
 Mr. George Karalis
 Mr. Joseph Karalis
 Mr. Michael Karavolis
 Mr. & Mrs. Chris and Georgia (Katsios) Gray
 Mr. George Ketinos
 Mr. & Mrs. Aleko Kimbouris
 Mr. & Mrs. Angelo C. Limnios
 Mr. John Lyssikatos
 Mr. George Microulis & Mrs. Elizabeth Menges
 Mr. Paul Microulis
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Microulis
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Mudge
 Mr. Andreas Nicolos
 Mr. Dimitri Nicolos
 Mr. & Mrs. Vassilios Nicolos
 Dr. & Mrs. Nicholas Nikolopoulos
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Nikou

Mrs. Alexandra Nikou
 Mr. & Mrs. George Panagos
 Ms. Patricia Panichas
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Papavasiliou
 Mr. & Mrs. Costas Perdikakis
 Miss Maria Platsidakis
 Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Seely
 Ms. Elaine Sioras
 Mrs. Irene Sioras
 Mr. Gregory Skoutas
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Soukatos
 Mrs. Sandy Stamoulis
 Mrs. Dorothy Stergis
 Mrs. Anastasia Susset
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Thibeault
 Mrs. Penelope Vartanian
 Miss Anastasia Vellopoulou
 Mrs. Alexandra Whitmore



Dear Friends,

As we begin our new year 2022, we would like to ask all of you to reflect on the celebration of 100 years of AHEPA in the USA and the world! In an age when very few organizations have lasted more than 30 years, AHEPA is the voice of Hellenism in this country and the world with a strong service record for education, philanthropy, civil responsibility, community engagement and promotion of our Hellenic ideas! ***AHEPA is you, and you make AHEPA! The more together, the stronger we are and the more of an impact we have!***

Let's get ready for District 7 Hellenic History Tournament!

Every year AHEPA (Yankee) District 7 organizes the Hellenic History Tournament (HHT). The Hellenic History Tournament is a competition for high school students about the 3500-year-long history of the Hellenes. It is open to students in grades **8-12 at competition time**. Participants have an opportunity to win a share of the \$3000 in prize money for the first team and \$1500 for the second team! The tournament takes place in late November at **St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, Orange, CT**, and it is conducted in English. All participants will receive an AHEPA signed certificate of participation. Your local AHEPA Chapter A121 is sponsoring our team's participation including any registration fees, books and notes. Last time our team joined many other teams from New England which met in CT for an amazing day of learning, growing experience, and Hellenic culture pride. **Our team in the past has won the first prize!** We plan to sponsor a team for this year as well. We are looking for high school students to learn about the 3500-year-long history of the Hellenes – our heritage. We are looking for 3 team members as well as 1-2 alternates. **For more information, please contact** Ioannis Apostolakis, apos_main@outlook.com (please set subject HHT) Tel. (508) 261-1221.

Byzantines knew about America before Columbus!



The history of America's discovery must be rewritten (anyway) if the following news is true: Inside the Cockaponset Forest in the south of the U.S. state of Connecticut is the oldest Christian Church in America, masterfully carved in stone. The on-site inscriptions prove its existence for 1500 years from today, made by Orthodox Christian monks of Byzantium! In this particular area there are many Greek cups (in the shape of a small cup) framed with purely Christian symbols or monograms of Christ, with baptistries, candlesticks. There are also a despotic throne (or episcopal cathedral) and a Bema. Similar masterpieces were found in an oasis of Morocco in north Africa.

The researcher Frederick J. Pohl studying the inscriptions placed the arrival of monks in North America around 480AD at a time of great upheaval in north Africa. Until 430AD many bishops operated in north Africa (mainly Tunisia and Carthage) where, until today, temple ruins are preserved. It was at that time that the persecution of Christians by the Arianists began. Also, the monks in those areas had come into direct conflict with the monarchs who ruled north Africa, and as a result they were persecuted, mainly, in the desert and mountains of Eastern Libya. From there they fled by boat to present-day North America. The findings recorded in the Christian Church were the following:

- Manuscript of a monk who returned to north Africa in 534AD after the defeat of the barbarian monarchs by Justinian. The manuscript mentions the northwestern course of the monks as soon as they sailed from Morocco.
- Found 96 carvings with the monogram of Christ and the Virgin Mary, some of which have the shape of a fish with letters IXΘΥΣ (Christ God the Son of Sotir).
- A candlestick with 14 holes with the Byzantine letters IC engraved on it. Between the two letters is carved a Byzantine complex. The base of the candlestick is a small column in Greek Doric style!!
- Another drawing from a cup bears the Byzantine letters MP which refers to the word mother (i.e. the Virgin Mary).
- Two exceptional baptistries were found: a rectangular and a flame-shaped one (symbol of the Holy Spirit taken at baptism) with 9 holes for candles (The 8 symbolize the 8 days after the Crucifixion and the 9th symbolizes the Easter candle, symbol of Christ and the Resurrection.)
- There are also representations of waters and fish pouring into the Ocean, symbols of the newly baptized Christians known as "little fish" emerging from the waters of the century-old life after baptism.
- Finally, a carved throne was found next to the baptistery.

DefenceNet Newsroom

info@defencenet.gr

15.01.2022 | 15:30

From DefenceNet Newsroom online site!

We Must Preserve the Legacy We Inherited!

We need you to join our AHEPA A121 (Pawtucket) Chapter!

We ask all of you to join and support your AHEPA Pawtucket chapter. You can get as much involved as you have time or desire. Please keep in mind, that just by becoming a member and through your yearly membership fee you help us to . . .

- ***Support AHEPA activities and publications***
- ***Support our Chapter's activities and representation***
- ***Give strength to our Pawtucket chapter through membership counts***
- ***Provide academic and athletic scholarships***
- ***Make our voice heard for things that matter***
- ***Make a difference in every community and in the country as well***

This is an invitation to everyone – we need all of you! Your opinion will always counts, whether you are attending our meetings in person, or you are submitting your ideas via email, phone, text or personal conversation. For membership information and/or applications, please see Yianni Apostolakis, Tom Andrikopoulos or Nick Bitsakis

For more information, please visit www.ahepa.org.



IOCC *Helping others help themselves*
INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

**INSPIRED BY FAITH.
DRIVEN BY PURPOSE.**

At IOCC, we've helped people in more than 60 countries across the world.



Joy is extremely easy to come by!

Here we are! In the new year, 2022, with a pandemic going on and with so many adjustments to our daily lives! And yet there is hope, excitement for the new year and all the good moments we had waiting for it to arrive! We talk about fun and some of the fun things we did waiting and celebrating for the new year! The meals we shared, the outings we did, the presents we exchanged, the time we spent together with loved ones!

And yet, as each year goes by, a few things remain the same. People around us who need help are oftentimes overwhelmed by a feeling of loneliness, desperation, anxiety. And oftentimes we cannot help thinking that "I am only one – how can I help everyone in this world?"

*IOCC gives you an opportunity to reach beyond our parish and community and by becoming a monthly donor IOCC can receive matching funds and truly make every dollar you donate count for six or seven! Even a \$10 monthly donation can reach so many people, where a bag of seeds for a farmer can be less than \$50! Then we will be able to speak not only of the fun things we do, but also of the joy of helping somebody in this world who thought that he was all alone! **Please visit iocc.org and become a monthly donor! It's worth it!***

A Chance to See



"I never imagined that she would be able to walk free without needing me to carry her," said Bahyah, whose daughter Leila faces multiple health challenges. Born in Irbid, Jordan, to a family who fled Syria, Leila was diagnosed with Down's syndrome at birth and soon developed cerebral palsy and a heart defect. Through an IOCC program, she received occupational therapy and special education, and worked with specialists on perceptual and cognitive abilities, plus motor and social skills. Leila's specialists soon discovered she also had a visual impairment, which an ophthalmologist recommended surgery to correct. While Leila awaits her surgery

date, IOCC provided her with glasses — and the improvement was almost immediate. "She stopped crying all the time," Bahyah said. "She became more social and started playing with other kids." Today, at age 7, Leila's journey is far from over, but she and her family have new hope.

IOCC Awareness Events



Chestnut Ridge, NY

ARAA-Otrada in Chestnut Ridge, New York, its St. Elizabeth Charitable Fund, and the scouts at St. George Pathfinders of America gathered to assemble hygiene kits. ARAA-Otrada dedicated funds from their charitable Belosselsky Fund to purchase the supplies needed to prepare these kits. Everyone laughed and worked together, and the final result was not only

the assembly of 500 health kits, but also boxing and preparing everything for delivery. *Our special thanks go to Boris Maltsev who organized this kit drive and to ARAA-Otrada, their staff, and the scouts from St. George Pathfinders of America, who made this possible.*



Pittsburgh, PA

On Saturday December 11th, the youth of St. George Antiochian Cathedral of Pittsburgh gathered and assembled 504 health kits. Fr. Joshua Makoul led the group in prayer, followed by a brief explanation of how we come together in Christ's name to help our neighbors in need via IOCC. *Special thanks to the organizers of this event: Sub-Deacon Michael Janakis, Dr. Beth Ann Papas, and Nick & Maria Terezis, as well as to the amazing youth of St. George Antiochian Cathedral.*

Here is How YOU Can Help More!

- **Become a monthly donor to IOCC**
- **Send a donation to IOCC for a cause that touches your heart!**
- **Give a donation to Ioannis Apostolakis, payable to IOCC, for any occasion you would like to make a difference!**

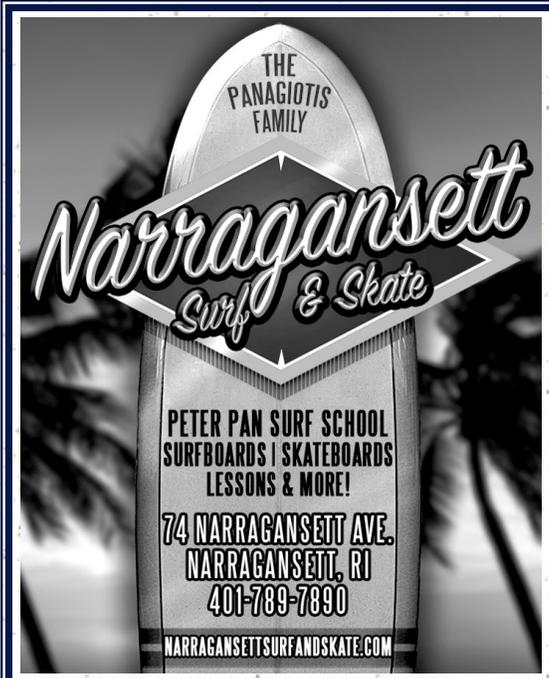
Help Us Provide For Those in Need!

And remember, 92 cents of every dollar you give goes to our humanitarian work. The other 8 cents is for administration and fundraising costs. Charity Navigator gives IOCC a 4-star rating (highest possible) for financial health, accountability and transparency. Plus, every dollar you give helps us secure \$7 more in support from governments, foundations, and other sources.

IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$650 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy. To learn more about IOCC, please visit our website at iocc.org.

Yiannis Apostolakis

Advertising



THE PANAGIOTIS FAMILY
Narragansett Surf & Skate

PETER PAN SURF SCHOOL
SURFBOARDS | SKATEBOARDS
LESSONS & MORE!
74 NARRAGANSETT AVE.
NARRAGANSETT, RI
401-789-7890
NARRAGANSETTSURFANDSKATE.COM

St. Barbara Philoptochos Society
Come Join Us!



President — Patti Panichas

Excellent Coffee Company

Home of Ocean Coffee Roasters

Downeast Coffee and
Espresso Northeast

Phone: 401-724-6393

Fax: 401-724-0560



**LOOKING FOR
A REAL
ESTATE
AGENT?**

Call Melissa Perdikakis

Let her help you buy or sell your home. Schedule your appointment to get a complimentary market evaluation.

☎ 401-269-9168

✉ Melissa.perdikakis@gmail.com
🌐 www.melissaperdikakis.realtor



AMH
ENGAGE



**Affordable social media
management for
small businesses
by Angela Milas**

www.amhengage.com

401.741.9394 Info@amhengage.com

**Pawt Times
No.1 Car Wash!**



CAR WASH
Central

Special \$4 OFF
THE WORKS Inside and Out
or
THE WORKS EXTERIOR
RIMS, UNDERCARRIAGE,
SEALERWAX & POLISH WAX

clip coupon

587 Central Ave - Pawtucket, RI - 401.725.0300 - carwashri.com

The weekly, online
catechism
zillions are watching:



*Coffee with
Sr. Vassa*

Find it on YouTube.
Join the zillions.

At Home with Anastasia
Anastasia Kaufman, Realtor CDPE, SFR, ABR
RE/Max Town & Country



My Greek heritage has taught me the importance of family and home; let me help you find your true dream home.



Combining a lifetime of experience in the Rhode Island & So. MA market with consistent integrity and honesty with my clients, I will be **your hardworking advocate** in the Real Estate Market.

www.anastasiakaufman.com 401-338-2749

**Newsletter
Advertising**

**Your ad could be
right here in the . . .**

“Christian Light”

**For more information:
Assumption Church Office
Call 401-725-3127 or Email
secretary@assumptionri.org**

Church Grounds

You can help to beautify our church grounds. Donations towards our church grounds are always very much appreciated so that our property can remain beautiful year round. Appreciation and many thanks to **Roula Vellopoulou, Nick Vellopoulos, Anastasia Vellopoulou, Ioanna Wright, and Charoula Xoulei Campos** who are our church gardeners spending endless hours cutting the grass, planting, watering, and trimming the beautiful flowers and shrubs surrounding our premises.





Vasilis “V” Izanidis, AIF®
Financial Advisor

Helping families & businesses achieve their financial goals,
one strategy at a time.

“Always plan ahead, it wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.”
- Richard Cushing



v.izanidis@pioneer-financial.com

117 Metro Center Blvd., Suite #2008
Warwick, RI 02886
PH: 401-244-3200 ext. 223
CELL: 774-331-9350

www.pioneer-financial.com

Vasileios Izanidis is a Registered Representative and Investment Advisor Representative with Securian Financial Services, Inc. Securities and Investment Advisor Services offered through Securian Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC. Pioneer Financial Group is independently owned and operated.
3993928 - 12/2021

Synchronized for success



Nationwide valuation, title
and closing solutions

1-877-696-LINC

LINCOLN APPRAISAL

George T. Panichas, Jr.
Chairman/Chief Executive Officer

LINCOLN ABSTRACT

George K. Demopoulos, MRICS, RA, SRA
President/Chief Valuations Officer



NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Pawtucket, RI
Permit No. 149

Address Service Requested



GIANFRANCESCO
FRIEDEMANN &
MICROULIS, LLP

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

George P. Microulis, Esq.

214 Broadway
Providence, RI 02903

(401) 270-0070
gpm@gianfrancescolaw.com