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
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
Petar Papavasiou
Nickolas Vellopoulos
Triantafillo Foussekis
Vasileios Papavasileiou
George Karalis
Eleni Katsios

ORGANIZATIONS
AHEPA: Ioannis Apostolakis
Cantors: John Lyssikatos
Dr. Vasili Amfilo
Marion Manickas, Director
Cultural Society:
Greek Pride: Andrea Vastis
Nancy Georgitis
George Microulis
Greek School: Panagiota Vastis, Principal
Sophia Augoustakis
Stavroula Papavasiou
Sunday School: Elizabeth Lazouras, Director
Stavroula Papavasiou
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 Demopoulos
Sophia Balamas
Seminarian: Alexandros Douvres

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 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.”
Τὴν ἀνάγκη γιὰ ἕναν χριστιανισμὸ ποὺ θὰ ἐπανασυνδεθεῖ μὲ τὴ χαμένη του ἐρωτικότητα καὶ τὴν ἐπιθυμία γιὰ ζωή, ἐπισημαίνει ἕνας καταξιωμένος θεολόγος. Στὸ τρέχον τεῦχο 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 Σχεδία στὶς 24 Απριλίου τοῦ 2019.

"Εχετε σημειώσει ὅτι ἡ ἐνανθρώπηση τοῦ Λόγου τοῦ Θεοῦ Πατέρα εἶναι ἡ κατεξοχὴ μετανάστευση. Πώς ἑρμηνεύετε αὐτὴ τὴ θεολογικὴ ἀνάγνωση τῆς μετανάστευσης;

ὁ Θεός Λόγος σαρκούμενος προσέλαβε τὸ ξένο, τὸ ἄλλο, τὸ ἐντελῶς διαφορετικό. Πρόκειται γιὰ μία ἐθελοντικὴ μετανάστευση, ὥστε νὰ φανερώσει τὸ μυστήριο τῆς ἀγάπης ποὺ φτάνει μέχρι τὸ Σταυρὸ.

"Ο Χριστὸς εἶναι ὁ μέγας ἐρωτικός. Ἡ ἐπὶ γῆς πορεία τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ὑπῆρξε τραγική. Ξένος γιὰ τοὺς ὁμόφυλους ξένους, ποὺ τὸν μίσησαν καὶ τὸν θανάτωσαν σὰν ξένο. Ξένος γιὰ τοὺς δικούς του μαθητές, τὴν ἴδια του τὴ μητέρα, γιὰ τὴν κτίση ὁλάκερη, γιὰ τὴν ζωὴ μὰ καὶ τὸ θάνατο, τὸν ὁποῖο νίκησε μία γιὰ πάντα. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος καλεῖται νὰ μιμηθεῖ τὸν τρόπο τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου καὶ νὰ ἀνοίξει τὶς σχέσεις του πέρα ἀπὸ τὰ ὅρια ποὺ θέτουν κριτήρια ἔθνους, φυλῆς, φύλων ή θρησκείας. Τὸ ἀγκάλιασμα, ἡ ὁλοκληρωτικὴ πρόσληψη καὶ ἡ ἀνοχὴ τοῦ ξένου καὶ τοῦ ἀγνωστοῦ φανερώνει τὴν ἀληθινὴ διακονία τῆς ἀσκητικῆς ἀγάπης. Βέβαια, γιὰ κάποιους, ἡ Ἐκκλησία περιορίζεται σὲ πράξεις τελετουργικές, σὲ μία κάποια διεκπεραίωση. Βρισκόμαστε, ἔτσι, συχνὰ ἐνώπιον ἀντιλήψεων καὶ νοοτροπιῶν καθαρότητας ποὺ εἰσάγουν μία κάποια «ὄρθοδοξη εἰδωλολατρία» καὶ «πνευματικότητα», ἐκεῖ ὅπου ὁ Θεὸς ἀδυνατεῖ νὰ σχετιστεῖ μὲ τὸν κόσμο καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπο. Καὶ ἂν αὐτὴ εἶναι ἡ ἀσθένεια ἑνὸς, ἐντέλει, ἰδεολογικοῦ χριστιανισμοῦ, ποὺ ἀγνοεῖ τὸν ἰδίο τὸν ἄνθρωπο, συναντοῦμε συχνὰ τὴν ἀσθένεια ἑνὸς στείρου ἀκτιβισμοῦ, ποὺ ταυτίζεται ἀδιάκριτα μὲ ὁτιδήποτε ἱκανοποιεῖ τὸν ψυχολογικὸ του καθωσπρεπισμό, καὶ ὁ τρόπος φανέρωσης τῶν ἰδιοτελῶν συνδρόμων του εὐεργέτη καὶ τοῦ σωτῆρα.
σὲ ἀντίφαση μὲ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο. Στὴν οὐσία, δὲν ὑπάρχει γνησιότερος ύλισμὸς ἀπὸ τὸν χριστιανικό, διότι δίνει στὰ σάρκα αἰώνιότητα. Ὡς πολλοί ἄλλος ύλισμὸς που τελειώνει στὸν τάφο εἶναι λειψός καὶ ἀνάπτυκτος. Δυστυχώς, κἀ̂τω ἀπὸ τὶς ἐπιδιώξεις ἐνός ὄψιμου καὶ ἱδιόμορφου γνωσικισμοῦ, ὁ χριστιανικός δὲν δέχθηκε σχεδὸν ποτὲ τὸν ἀνθρώπως πῶς ἔχει. Πίστεψε καὶ ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ πιστεύει πῶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶναι αὐτὸ που εἶναι μείον τῆς φύσης του, ἔνα σώμα καὶ μία ψυχὴ υφασμαμένη στὴν ἰδεολογία τοῦ προπατορικοῦ ἀμαρτήματος. Γ’ αὐτὸ ἀναλώθηκε στὰ ὄρια τῆς ἀνθρωπολογίας τοῦ – ὑπόλογης πάντα στὸ μυστήριο τῆς σάρκως, ὡς ἂν ὁ Θεός προσλαμβάνει τὸν ἄνθρωπο στὸ σύνολό του– στὴ δημιουργία ἐνός ἄνθρωπου ἄλλου, ἐνός ἄνθρωπου ποὺ σίγουρα δὲν εἶναι ὁ ἄνθρωπος ποὺ ἔπλασε ἡ ἀνάπτυξη καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ Θεοῦ. Κλασικότερη περίπτωσις ὅπως ἡ περίπτωσις τῶν γυναικῶν, οἱ ὁποῖοι κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς λοχείας του, ὡς ἔπατο καὶ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸ τῆς ἐμμήνου ῥυσίων τους, θεωροῦνται σωματικά καὶ ψυχικά ἀκάθαρτες!

ΤΟ ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΖΩΗΣ

"Εχετε τονίσει ότι ἐκείνο που κυριαρχεῖ στὶς μέρες μας εἶναι ἡ «έξορια τοῦ βαθαντού». Τι ἀκριβώς σημαίνει;

Ὁ ἄνθρωπος φοβᾶται τὸ τάνατο καὶ χτίζει έτσι μία ζωὴ χωρὶς βαθαντό, ποὺ τοῦ ἀφαιρεῖ ἀκόμη καὶ αὐτὴ τὴ δυνατότητα νὰ ἀκούσει τὸν τάνατον τότε τὸν ἀνηρίζει. Εἶναι κοινὰ ἄποδεκτό νὰ ἀναπτύξουμε τὸν βαθαντό ποὺ δεν αὐτὸς ἀναπτύξει τὸν βαθαντόν ποὺ ἀποτελεῖ τὴ μόνη δυνατότητα αὐτὸς ἀναπτύξει τὸν βαθαντόν. Ο βαθαντός εἶναι αὐτὸς ὁ θάνατος, ὁ ἀνθρώπως ποὺ αὐτός ἀναπτύξει τὸν βαθαντόν, καὶ τὴν ἀρνηθεί. Καὶ τὸν παντὸς παντίς εἶναι ἂν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ῥυθμοῖς τοῦ βαθαντοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ θάνατος εἶναι αὐτὸς ἡ ἀρνηθεί. Καὶ τὴν ἀρνηθεί. Και τὸν παντὸς παντίς εἶναι ἂν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ῥυθμοῖς τοῦ βαθαντοῦ, καὶ τὴν ἀρνηθεί. Καὶ τὸν παντὸς παντίς εἶναι ἂν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ῥυθμοῖς τοῦ βαθαντοῦ, καὶ τὴν ἀρνηθεί.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td>9:15am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4:30 to 6pm Online Greek School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNDAY OF THE CANAANITE</td>
<td>SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE (Triodion Begins)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasilopita Sunday</td>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>7pm to 6pm Zoom Adult Class Seminar Aeschylus’ Masterpiece “The Persians”</td>
<td>7pm Parish Council</td>
<td>4:30 to 6pm Greek School</td>
<td>4:30 to 6pm Greek School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>GOYA Meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON</td>
<td>SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Office Closed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUDGMENT SUNDAY (Meatfare Sunday)</td>
<td>JUDGMENT SUNDAY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUDGMENT SUNDAY</td>
<td>JUDGMENT SUNDAY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Meatfare Sunday)</td>
<td>(Meatfare Sunday)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td>8am Orthros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30am Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>7pm to 6pm Zoom Adult Class Seminar Aeschylus’ Masterpiece “The Persians”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assembly</td>
<td>General Assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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!!!
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 Valentinos (Greek) / Valentinus (Latin) commemorate two Early Christian saints, Saint Valentine the Presbyter of Rome (July 6th) and Hieromartyr Valentine the Bishop of Intermna (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.
Aeschylus' 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
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!

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

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

METROPOLISOFBOSTONCAMP.ORG

WINTER CAMP ’22
FEBRUARY 19-21
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.
Updated List of Christmas Offerings and Donations

Mr. Andre Alix  
Dr. & Mrs. Vasili Amfilo  
Mrs. Athena Bras  
Ms. Katherine Brathas  
Ms. Helen Buco  
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 Stergls  
Mrs. Frances Sterpis  
Mrs. Pashalia Strekouras  
Mr. & Mrs. Evangelos Tsakonas  
Mrs. Efthelia 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 Eviginia Skodras

Consider including the Endowment Fund in your will and be a supporting pillar to secure the Assumption’s survival in perpetuity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nicholas Aguiar</th>
<th>Mr. Leonidas Fousekis &amp; Samantha Arredondo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Walter Almeida</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Fousekis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. &amp; Mrs. Vasilii Amfio</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Brian &amp; Elaine (Brathas) Froment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Richard Amoling</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Robert Gallo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Anastasios Andrikopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. William Gaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Vasiliki Andrikopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. George Georgiadis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Elias Antonakos</td>
<td>Presbytera Anastasia Georgiadis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Ioannis Apostolakis</td>
<td>Ms. Nancy Georgiotics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Emmanuel Apostolidis</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Theodore Georgitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Augoustakis Family</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Brian Gerace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Avramidis Family</td>
<td>Mrs. Maria Gialelis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Sophia Balamas</td>
<td>Mrs. Laura Giannakas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Arthur Bassis</td>
<td>Mr. Zackary Giannakas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Elaine Bassis</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Patrick Gilbert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. James Belliveau</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Raymond Girard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kenneth Bianchi</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Russell Golombiewski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nicholas Bitsakis</td>
<td>Ms. Catherine Gordon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kosta Bitsis</td>
<td>Mrs. Eve Gouras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Fred Boccelli</td>
<td>Mrs. Vasiliki Andrikopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Stephen Botsford</td>
<td>Mr. George Antonakos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles Boyle</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Dimitrios Iatrou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Athena Bras</td>
<td>Mr. Vasileios Izanidis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Michael Bras</td>
<td>Mrs. Eleni Jabterakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brathas Family</td>
<td>Mr. Elias Jabterakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Helen Buco</td>
<td>Dr. &amp; Mrs. Philip J. Jameson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John Bunch</td>
<td>Ms. Zoi Kalaitzidis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Nancy Caccio</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Kalantzis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. William Campos</td>
<td>Ms. Stavroula Kalivas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Alexandros Chrisidis</td>
<td>Mr. John Kanelakos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John Chrisidis</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Michael Kapos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Maria Anna Chrisidis</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. William Kapos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Zoe Chrisidis</td>
<td>Mr. Nicolaos Kapoulas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christodoulou Family</td>
<td>Ms. Elizabeth Karageorge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Christy Christopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Niko Karageorgos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Cicma</td>
<td>George &amp; Regina (Lyutkevich) Karageorgos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Peter Colantonio</td>
<td>Mr. George Karalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Eleini Dafulas</td>
<td>Mr. Joseph Karalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Dafulas</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Achilles Karalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John Dafulas</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nicholas Karalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Dafulas</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Steve Karavasilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Haralampos Daniel</td>
<td>Mr. Michael Karavolis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Joan Metaxas Dauria</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Athanasios Katsinas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Demetrios Delivos</td>
<td>Mrs. Elena Katsios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Rocco Deluca, Sr.</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Chris &amp; Georgia (Katsios) Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Emmanouel Demetroutes</td>
<td>Mr. George Ketinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Demopulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Aleko Kimbouris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Tina Demopulos</td>
<td>Ms. Barbara Kiras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Matthew Dion</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Sotiriou Kitsilos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Fotini Dionisopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Thomas Kizirian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Paul Dionisopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Mark Kology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Konstantinos Dokos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Alexandros Kontoulis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Cyriake Doukas</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Zafiris Kontoulis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Fr. &amp; Presbytera George Economou</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nick Korentis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Fackos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Anastasios Koronios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Steven Fackos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Christos Kosivas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Georgette Ferrucci</td>
<td>Mrs. Kostandina Kounavis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Richard Forest</td>
<td>Mr. Theodore Kounavis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Alexander Aguiar</td>
<td>Dr. &amp; Mrs. Georgios Kourkouliotis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Walter Almeida</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Elia G. Koutros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. &amp; Mrs. Vassilii Amfio</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Koutsoukos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Richard Amoling</td>
<td>Miss Parris Kyriakakis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Anastasios Andrikopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Stephen Kyriakakis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Vasiliki Andrikopoulos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Lambakis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Elias Antonakos</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Michael LaTorella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Ioannis Apostolakis</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Gerard Lavoie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Emmanuel Apostolidis</td>
<td>Elizabeth Lazouras Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Augoustakis Family</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Peter Lazouras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Avramidis Family</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles Leahourites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Helen Buco</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Peter Leahourites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John Bunch</td>
<td>Mr. Christopher Leahourites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Nancy Caccio</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Roger Lemire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. James Belliveau</td>
<td>Ms. Constantina Lengas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kenneth Bianchi</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Angelo C. Limnios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nicholas Bitsakis</td>
<td>Mr. John Lyssikatos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kosta Bitsis</td>
<td>Dr. Alexis Anastasia Mancini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Fred Boccelli</td>
<td>Dr. &amp; Mrs. Melvin J. Mancini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Stephen Botsford</td>
<td>Ms. Gail Manickas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles Boyle</td>
<td>Mrs. Marion Manickas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Athena Bras</td>
<td>Mr. Peter Manis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Michael Bras</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Jonathan Mastin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brathas Family</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Anthony Matarazzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Helen Buco</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Jonathan McNamaras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John Bunch</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Michalopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Nancy Caccio</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nicholas Michalopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. James Belliveau</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Theodore Michalopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kenneth Bianchi</td>
<td>Mr. George Microulis &amp; Mrs. Elizabeth Menges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Nicholas Bitsakis</td>
<td>Mr. Paul Microulis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kosta Bitsis</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Peter Microulis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Fred Boccelli</td>
<td>Mrs. Evanne (Papas) Mirabile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Stephen Botsford</td>
<td>Mrs. Betty Missirlis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles Boyle</td>
<td>Mr. George Moragemos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Athena Bras</td>
<td>Ms. Georgia Moretti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Michael Bras</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Stephen Mudge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Demetrios Delivos</td>
<td>Ms. Cyriake Doukas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Alexander Aguiar</td>
<td>Rev. Fr. &amp; Presbytera George Economou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Walter Almeida</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Fackos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. &amp; Mrs. Vassilii Amfio</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Richard Forest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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. Haralambs 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 Pitiangas
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. Efthalia 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. Efthieia and Ms. Fotini Tzaferis
Mrs. Penelope Vartanian
The Carlson / Vastis Family
Mr. & Mrs. George Vastis
Ms. Valerie Vastis
Mr. & Mrs. Nickolas Vellopoulos
Miss Anastasia Vellopoulos
Ms. Tanya Vlado
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. Vasilis Amfilo
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Amoling
Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Andrikopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Ioannis Apostolakis
The Augustakis 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 Georgitis
Mrs. Zacharie Haseotes Vinios
Mr. & Mrs. George P. & Polyxeni Haseotes
Mr. Vasiliou 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
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
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. Efthalia 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. Efthieia and Ms. Fotini Tzaferis
Mrs. Penelope Vartanian
The Carlson / Vastis Family
Mr. & Mrs. George Vastis
Ms. Valerie Vastis
Mr. & Mrs. Nickolas Vellopoulos
Miss Anastasia Vellopoulos
Ms. Tanya Vlado
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

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 Vellopoulos
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 ΙΧΘΥΣ (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.

---

**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 though 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.**
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](http://iocc.org).

Yiannis Apostolakis
Excellent Coffee Company
Home of Ocean Coffee Roasters
Downeast Coffee and Espresso Northeast
Phone: 401-724-6393
Fax: 401-724-0560

St. Barbara Philoptochos Society
Come Join Us!
President — Patti Panichas

Looking for a Real Estate Agent?

Call Melissa Perdikakis
Let her help you buy or sell your home. Schedule your appointment to get a complementary market evaluation.

401-269-9168
Melissa.perdikakis@gmail.com
www.melissaperdikakis.realtor

Affordable social media management for small businesses by Angela Milas
www.amhengage.com
401.741.9394 info@amhengage.com
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 Vellopoulos, Nick Vellopoulos, Anastasia Vellopoulos, 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
Synchronized for success

Nationwide valuation, title and closing solutions

1-877-696-LINC

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

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