On the Second Sunday of the Fast we celebrate the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, a significant saint of the 14th century. He is celebrated because our theology and our liturgical practice today bear the stamp of the Palamite “school” of the “hesychasts,” the group basically founded by Palamas, and in this sense this is another “Sunday of Orthodoxy.”

On the Third Sunday of the Fast we celebrate the veneration of the Holy Cross. The reason for this is because this is the middle Sunday of Lent and the Cross is the central point of Christianity and the prerequisite for the Pascha that we are preparing for during Lent.

On the Fourth Sunday of the Fast we celebrate the memory of St. John, the author of the “Ladder.” The reason for this is that this book is a staple of Orthodox spirituality and is common reading material during Great Lent, especially in the monasteries.

On the Fifth Sunday of the Fast, however, we celebrate the memory and the example of St. Mary of Egypt. As Professor Ioannes Phountoules of blessed memory says, “St. Mary is placed at the peak of the pyramid of Lent, as an incarnation of all the ideals of this period and as the apex of its endeavors.”

But why?

“\textit{When we speak about St. Mary of Egypt the amazing Byzantine portrayal automatically comes to mind. A darkened, dry skeletal body, almost fleshless, half naked, with her hands folded over her chest, with an expression of calm in her face, opening her mouth with holy desire to receive Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ, offered her by Abba Zosimas. It is as if she is the very incarnation of Great Lent itself, of psychosomatic ascesis leading to Eucharistic union with Christ (Ioannes Phountoules, Liturgical Themes, Thessaloniki 1977, p. 70).}"

Great Lent is structured very wisely to nourish us with the spirituality and the theology of the Church and it actually shows us what the final purpose of human life is.

Its structure is as follows:

On the First Sunday of the Fast we celebrate the restoration of icons, which occurred under Empress Theodora in 843 A.D. This is the “Sunday of Orthodoxy.” It was given this name because the theology of the icon is connected with the theology of the incarnation (the fact that God became man), without which there is no Christianity.

Fr. Philip’s March Message: \textbf{The Signposts of Great Lent All Lead to St. Mary of Egypt}
We conclude Lent not with a supposedly spotless saint, someone who could be presented as blameless, and therefore unapproachable and distant from our own situation and experience (as in the case of Gregory Palamas and John of the Ladder – most of us are neither bishops, nor monks, nor authors!), rather we end Lent with a former prostitute who repented. This means that the meaning of Lent is not to be found so much in the beautiful, deep, profound but abstract for most people, theology – as in the case of the theology of the icons, the theology of Gregory Palamas, or the writings found in the “Ladder” of John – as in the universal need for a relationship with God which is the result of repentance (which literally means “change of direction, change of mind”) as in the case of St. Mary. This means that the purpose of Lent is something that pertains to all of us, and the response of St. Mary is something relevant to all without exception. In other words, we cannot all be St. Gregories or St. Johns, but we already are Marys of Egypt since her situation is the universal situation of all of us (if we are honest with ourselves!): we are all sinners!

The purpose of Lent, then, is for us to foster a drastic change in our lives, to introduce a crisis into our insulated schedules (through the change of food, schedule, etc.) in order to be shaken from our convenient but basically phony life and to finally be honest with ourselves and realize, that, beyond the phony masks we wear to present a blameless persona to the world, we are the prostitute Mary before she repented. Consequently, in the same way that the prostitute Mary best symbolizes all of us, her repentance also represents the turn we can all potentially make. Her turn of life is a paradigm for the goal of human life: we are made to be in love with God as was St. Mary and this is indicated by her example of changing from superficial unfulfilling loves to the one love that makes human life meaningful: the love of God – and Great Lent ends with this lesson. For this reason we can say that the whole goal of Great Lent – which is the same as the goal of human life itself – is love: genuine love for God and neighbor. And this is because “God is love”: when we
love we are truly icons of God. The fact that we exist at all is a result of the love of God and we are created to love as God loves.

At the close of Lent the Church also presents us with another example: that of the Panagia. The same weekend when we celebrate St. Mary of Egypt we also celebrate the Panagia with a special service called the “Akathist Hymn” (this used to be the celebration of the Annunciation). So Lent ends with the two Marys together! We are all Marys of Egypt but our goal is to reach the stature of Mary the Mother of God, as did St. Mary of Egypt. Indeed, when she repented she became so much like the Panagia that her memory is practically celebrated together with the Panagia! Both of them loved God so much and for this reason the life of both of them was a great “Yes” to God. This answer of both of these Marys to the challenge of human life is an example for all of us and the ultimate goal of human life. So the simultaneous celebration of the two of them is not by chance, this is the wisdom of the Church! In fact for this reason Great Lent is not to be understood as a negative period of denial of the good gifts of God (food, etc.) – a period of “no” (“what am I going to ‘give up’”) – but rather a positive period of giving and love – a period of “yes”! For this reason in the Fifth Sunday of the Fast Great Lent very appropriately culminates with the love and the “yes” of the two Marys: of The Ever-Virgin-Mary and the former-prostitute-Mary. Indeed, when we say yes to God as did Mary of Egypt we become like the Panagia: we give birth to Christ symbolically, in other words we make him a tangible reality in our life and community, we incarnate His presence in our activities and we share Him with the surrounding world. This is the mission of the Church!

Thus, both of these Marys serve as symbols for us. The icon of the Panagia is the first icon we see when we enter an Orthodox Church as she is depicted in the most visible place in the conch above the altar in the sanctuary – she basically serves as the icon of the Church itself (the faithful body of believers). Something similar is at play in the case of St. Mary of Egypt: while the other signposts of Lent show the way, only Mary of Egypt is the very culmination of Great Lent and its fulfillment.

A very blessed Great Lent to all!
Κατά τήν Γ’ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστείων, τομέα τής προσκύνησης τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ. Η προσκύνηση αὐτή τίθεται σ’ αὐτὸ το σημεῖο διότι εἶναι ακριβῶς στή μέση τῆς Τεσσαρακοστῆς καὶ ο Σταυρός εἶναι σημαντικότατα εἰκόνα του Χριστιανισμοῦ καὶ καίριο σύμβολο γιά τόν ἀσκητικό ἁγίων που γίνεται κατά τήν Τεσσαρακοστή ἁλλά καὶ προσαπαιτούμενο γιά τήν νοητή τῆς Ἀναστάσεως, στάν ὅποια ὁδηγοῦν ὅλες οἱ προετοιμασίες τής περιόδου αὐτής.


Σκοπός τῆς Τεσσαρακοστῆς εἶναι νά κάνουμε μία δραστική τομή στήν ζωή μας (μὲ τήν ἀλλαγή τροφίμων, ρουτίνας, κ.λ.π.) γιὰ νά βγούμε από μία ἁντεκτέλλοντας παράδειγμα τῆς Παναγίας μὲ ἕνα ἀνεπιπλανημένο νόημα τῆς Τεσσαρακοστῆς καὶ τῆς Παναγίας. ΟΠΟΤΕ, ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΙ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΜΙΣΘΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΤΙΒΑΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΠΟΥ ΜΑΣ ΦΟΡΑΣΟΥΜΕ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟ (ἄν εἴμαστε εἰλικρινεῖς μὲ τόν Θεό): Εἴμαστε ὅλοι ἁμαρτωλοί!

Πρώτη τής Τεσσαρακοστῆς εἶναι νά κάνουμε μία δραστική τομή στήν ζωή μας (μὲ τήν ἀλλαγή τροφίμων, ρουτίνας, κ.λ.π.) γιὰ νά βγούμε από μία ἁντεκτέλλοντας παράδειγμα τῆς Παναγίας μὲ ἕνα ἀνεπιπλανημένο νόημα τῆς Τεσσαρακοστῆς καὶ τῆς Παναγίας. ΟΠΟΤΕ, ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΙ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΜΙΣΘΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΤΙΒΑΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΠΟΥ ΜΑΣ ΦΟΡΑΣΟΥΜΕ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟ (ἄν εἴμαστε εἰλικρινεῖς μὲ τόν Θεό): Εἴμαστε ὅλοι ἁμαρτωλοί!

Alpha ή Εκκλησία στό κλείσιμο τῆς Σαρακοστῆς μᾶς παρουσιάζει καὶ ένα ἄλλο παράδειγμα: τό παράδειγμα τῆς Παναγίας. Τό ιδίο Σαββατοκύριακο που γιορτάζουμε τήν μνήμη τῆς Ὁσίας Μαρίας γιορτάζουμε καὶ τήν Παναγία μὲ ένα ἀρίθμο τρόπο μὲ τήν τέλεσι τοῦ Ἀκαθάστου ᾿Αμυνοῦ (κάποτε αὐτή ἤ τελετή ἦταν γιορτὴ τοῦ Εὐαγγελισμοῦ τῆς Θεοτόκου). ΟΠΟΤΕ, ᾿Η Τεσσαρακοστή κλείνει μὲ τήν μνήμη τῶν δύο Μաρίων μας! Εἴμαστε ὅλοι Μαρίως τῆς Αἰγύπτου ἀλλά ὁ προορισμός μας εἶναι νά γίνομε ὅλοι Παναγίες, ὅπως ἦν ᾿Οσία Μαρία. Μάλιστα, οταν μετάνοιωσε ἐγινε τόσο πολύ σάν τήν Παναγία πο ιορτάζεται ἡ
μνήμη της τὸ ἴδιο σαββατοκύριακο μαζί μὲ τὴν Παναγία! Καὶ οἱ δύο ἀγάπησαν πάρα πολὺ τὸν Θεό καὶ γι’ αὐτό ή ζωή τῶν δύο ἦταν ένα μεγάλο «ναί» στὸ Θεό. Αὐτή ή ἀπάντηση στὸ Θεό τῶν δύο αὐτῶν Μαρίων εἶναι παράδειγμα γιὰ ὅλους μας καὶ τὸ νόημα τῆς ζωῆς μας. Όποτε ὁ ταυτόχρονος ἐστρατιώσεως τῶν δύο μαζί δὲν εἶναι τυχαῖος, εἶναι ή σοφία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας! Στὴν πραγματικότητα η Μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστή δὲν εἶναι ἀρνητική περίοδος ἀπορρίψεως τῶν καλῶν δώρων τοῦ Θεοῦ (καλῶν φαγητῶν, κ.λπ.) — περίοδος τοῦ «δικαίου» — ἀλλὰ θετική περίοδος δοσίματος καὶ ἀγάπης — περίοδος τοῦ «ναί!» Γι’ αὐτό στὸ Ε’ Σαββατοκύριακο τῶν Νηστειῶν ἢ Σαρακοστή πολὺ σωστὰ κλείνει μὲ τὴν ἀγάπη καὶ τὸ «ναί» τῶν δύο Μαρίων: τῆς Ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας καὶ τῆς πρώην πόρνης Μαρίας! Όντως, όταν εμεῖς σὰν τὴν Μαρία τὴν Αἰγύπτια λέμε ναὶ στὸν Θεό την Αἰγύπτη λέμε να καὶ καὶ ’μεῖς στὴν πραγματικότητα στὴ ζωή καὶ στὴν κοινότητά μας, ἐνσαρκώνειμε τὴν παρουσία Του στὶς πράξεις μας καὶ Τὸν μοιραζόμαστε μὲ τὸν κόσμο γύρω μας. Αὐτὸς εἶναι ο σκοπός τῆς Ἐκκλησίας!

‘Ετσι οἱ δύο Μαρίες συμβολίζουν ἑμᾶς. Ἡ εἰκόνα τῆς Παναγίας Πλατυτέρας εἶναι η πρώτη που βλέπουμε όταν μπαίνουμε στὴν Ἐκκλησία, άνδρα βρίσκεται στὸ πιὸ ὀρατὸ σημείο πάνω στὴν κόγχη τοῦ ἱεροῦ — εἶναι βασικὰ καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Αλλὰ καὶ στὴν περίπτωσι τῆς άλλης Μαρίας έχουμε κάτι παρόμοιο: τὸν δρόμο, ἡ ὁσία Μαρία ἡ Αἰγύπτη εἶναι η ἱδία ή κορυφή τῆς Τεσσαρακοστῆς καὶ η ὀλοκλήρωσή της.

Καλὴ Τεσσαρακοστὴ σὲ ὅλους!

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE of BOSTON

Sunday, April 26, 2020
Parade Begins at 1 P.M.
from Boylston Street to Charles Street

Bus will Depart
From Cranston at 10:30 A.M.
From Pawtucket at 11 A.M.

Children Free
Adults Voluntary Offering
Return to Pawtucket around 4 P.M.
Return to Cranston around 4:30 P.M.

Reservation MUST be made through
Anthony George
ageorge711@yahoo.com
401-580-0112

Lunch and snacks will be provided on the bus.
A morning trip on the train. Two ladies are sitting in the seats ahead of me. They don’t know each other. Yet, after a little while they started exchanging information and struck up a nice conversation.

At one point the younger woman offered to lend the older woman a tabloid magazine she was holding. It was one of those popular magazines that deal with show-biz gossip. This younger woman was answered with a harsh harangue from the older passenger on how terrible those magazines are and that we shouldn’t waste our time with gossip.

About a half an hour passed. The younger woman eventually drifted into a nice peaceful nap. The older woman began to glance in the direction of the younger to make sure her co-passenger had indeed fallen asleep. Once she was sure of this, she discerningly took the gossip magazine that a few minutes ago she was angrily against and scolded her co-passenger for, and she began to peruse through it with great interest and curiosity.

How much we love to hide! To seem to be something we are not. How difficult it is for us to accept that simultaneously within us is the adult and the child, the mature and the immature, the logical and the emotional, the saint and the sinner . . . How difficult it is for us to accept the totality of our existence; that along with the light in us is an equal amount of darkness. That our tears contain water and salt . . .

From the blog of Fr. Livyios (Charalambos Papadopoulos)
RI Orthodox Clergy Fellowship
Services for Great Lent 2020

Sunday March 8 (Orthodoxy Sunday) – St. Michael’s – Woonsocket – 5PM
74 Harris Avenue / 401-762-3939 = Preacher – Fr. Philip Zymaris

Sunday March 15 – Assumption Parish – Pawtucket – 5PM
97 Walcott Street / 401-725-3127 = Deacon Michael Sabounjian

Sunday March 22 – St. John’s Parish – Woonsocket – 5PM
501 East School Street / 401-766-3343 = Preacher – Fr. David Kinghorn

Sunday March 29 – Sts. Sahag & Mesrob – Providence – 5PM
70 Jefferson Street = Preacher – His Grace Bishop DANIEL
Primate Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church – Eastern Diocese

Sunday April 5 – Sts. Mary & Mena – (Hope) Cranston – 5PM
2433 Scituate Avenue / 401-615-5501 = Preacher – Fr. George Economou

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

ADULT CLASS SEMINAR

Mondays February 24th to April 6th
6 to 8 P.M. Assumption Community Center

A 7-week class is being offered on Plato’s classical masterpiece, “Phaedo”. In Phaedo, Socrates, in a fearless and brave attitude – a few hours before he was put to death condemned by his fellow Athenians – discusses with his disciples his belief in the immortality of the soul. The class is being held on Mondays from 6 to 8 P.M. in the Community Center of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church.

For further information, please call John Lyssikatos at 401-728-4452.
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<td>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY (CHEESEFARE) 8 A.M. Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School</td>
<td>2 CLEAN MONDAY (Great Lent Begins) 6 to 8 P.M. LYSSIKATOS CLASS 7 P.M. Parish Council</td>
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<td>7 SATURDAY OF SOULS 8 A.M. Orthros 9 A.M. Divine Liturgy</td>
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<td>SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 8 A.M. Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School 5 P.M. VESPERS St. Michael’s Woonsocket Fr. Philip Zymaris will be the Preacher (Choirs Sing)</td>
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<td>SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS 8 A.M. Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School 5 P.M. VESPERS Assumption Pawtucket</td>
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<td>8 A.M. Orthros</td>
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<td>GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE</td>
<td>7 P.M. AKATHIST HYMN</td>
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<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
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<td>7 P.M. MATINS of Holy Thursday &amp; Anointing</td>
<td>7 P.M. Presanctified Liturgy</td>
<td>6 A.M. Orthros with Great Canon &amp; Hours</td>
<td>10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Bread Pick-Ups</td>
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<td>10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Bread Pick-Ups</td>
<td>12 Noon to 3 P.M. Good Friday Retreat</td>
<td>Making of Palms</td>
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<td>5:30 P.M. Vespers</td>
<td>6 A.M. Orthros</td>
<td>6 A.M. Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil</td>
<td>12 Noon to 3 P.M. Good Friday Retreat</td>
<td>3 P.M. APOKATHILOSIS</td>
<td>12 MIDNIGHT Resurrection Service and Orthros of Pascha</td>
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<td>12 Noon to 3 P.M. Good Friday Retreat</td>
<td>12:30 A.M. Paschal Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom</td>
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Assumption of the Virgin Mary
Greek Orthodox Church
97 Walcott Street, Pawtucket, RI

Traditional Palm Sunday Luncheon

April 12, 2020
Immediately following Divine Liturgy

Adults: $23
Children 15 and Under: $13
Children 6 and Under: Free

Purchase your tickets after Church in the Community Center
For reservations contact:
Elaine Bassis 508-761-4626 or bazzie@comcast.net
Jean Soukatos 401-474-1833 or jeansoukatos@gmail.com
Church Office 401-725-3127 or secretary@assumptionri.org

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS PRIOR TO PALM SUNDAY!!!
EASTER BREAD

Philoptochos will be baking Easter Bread on April 8th & April 9th

Please place your order by March 22nd • $9 per loaf
Elaine Sioras • elainesioras@gmail.com
(401) 724-1031 • (401) 617-7950

Pick-ups will be on Saturday, April 11th from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.
and after Church on Palm Sunday, April 12th

All orders must be paid for at the time of pick-up

GOYA News March 2020

For last month, GOYA did some planning for future fundraisers and activities. We will continue to work hard for our GOYA and for our trip to the camp in the spring. Once again, thank you for the support of our community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ellie Dafulas, GOYA Recording Secretary

Philoptochos

At our last meeting, we discussed upcoming fundraisers including our breakfast scheduled for Sunday, May 3rd, and our Bingo scheduled for Friday, June 12th. The schedule for festival cooking will soon be posted. Plans for our “end of year” luncheon were decided upon. This year it will be held at the Wharf Tavern in Warren on Saturday, June 6th. All members are welcome!!!

Our President, Pat Panichas, would like to thank the “team” that worked on Saturday and Sunday for a successful meatball dinner which took place on Sunday, January 26th. The team included Elaine Sioras, Vikki Kizirian, Ann Mudge, Nikki Tsimortos, Georgia Tsimortos, Betty Gallo, Zoe Thibeault, Tina Demopulos, Joanne Wright, Sophia Augoustakis, Demetra Bianchi, Jean Soukatos, Joanne Roditakis, Sharon Turk, and Catherine Gordon. Special thanks to Mrs. & Mrs. George Dafulas and Family for their generous donation to the event. We are planning on purchasing an AED for our church community. It will be a valuable asset.

As always, if anyone is interested in becoming a Philoptochos member, please join us at a meeting. Philoptochos members share fellowship, a common goal of helping our church, community, and beyond. Meetings are held after Sunday Divine Liturgy. Any questions, please feel free to contact a board member.

Ann Mudge
Philoptochos Recording Secretary

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Ann Mudge
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Greek School
2020 Greek Independence Day Program

We invite you to the celebration of Greek Independence Day which will take place on Sunday, March 29th, after Divine Liturgy. Our Children, who attend the afternoon Greek School, will present a program depicting the spirit and ideas of our forefathers in their heroic fight for freedom. What better place to hold this celebration than in our beautiful church hall, for the church led the fight for liberation. Let us all join together on Sunday the 29th full of pride for our children who will perform on this day — poems, sketches, and dances — honoring the heroes of 1821. The PTO is preparing a special coffee hour reception for that day for all of you to enjoy with appetizers and desserts.

Panagiota Vastis, Principal
Sophia Augoustakis

Greek Independence Day Programs

Pawtucket City Hall
City Council Chambers

DATE: Thursday, March 26, 2020
TIME: 12 Noon
PLACE: Pawtucket City Hall

Our Greek School students will be participating in the annual Greek Independence Day Flag-Raising Program at Pawtucket City Hall in the City Council Chambers with the Mayor of the City of Pawtucket, Donald Grebien.

Reception to follow at Pawtucket City Hall.

We are honored that the Regional Governor of Rodos and the Southern Aegean, Georgios Hadzimarkos, will be in attendance at our Pawtucket City Hall ceremony and reception.

Rhode Island State House

DATE: Thursday, March 26, 2020
TIME: 4 P.M.
PLACE: Rhode Island State House

You are invited to join the children of the Pawtucket, Cranston and Newport Greek Schools as they gather with our State Officials and Greek Consulate guests to commemorate this special day in our history.

The Rhode Island State House ceremony will be followed by a Reception hosted by Assumption of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, 97 Walcott Street, Pawtucket, Rhode Island. We will share great pride as our own Greek Pride of Rhode Island Dance Troupe performs at the reception.

We are greatly honored that Georgios Hadzimarkos, the Regional Governor of Rodos and the Southern Aegean, will be in attendance at the Rhode Island State House ceremony as well as at the reception in our Assumption Community Center.
In the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen. Lord Jesus Christ our God, accept our offerings as You have accepted the gifts of Your people throughout the ages. We offer these gifts to Your glory, for the support of the ministries of Your Holy Church, for the alleviation of suffering and hunger, and for the proclamation of Your Gospel to the whole world. Grant us Your blessing, Lord our Savior, that we may always be faithful stewards, continuing to share the gifts you have given us, by the power of Your grace, mercy and love. May Your name be glorified forever. Amen

Please help the church meet its operating expenses by making your donation TODAY!!!

Άν έχετε ξεχάσει να στείλετε την έτησια συνδρομή σας για τα έξοδα και τη σωστή λειτουργία της Εκκλησίας, παρακαλείστε να κάνετε την απαραίτητη δωρεά σας ΣΗΜΕΡΑ!!!
How should we celebrate 25th of March 1821?

March 25th, 1821 marks the rebirth of Greece, after 400+ years of brutal Ottoman occupation. Our fathers and mothers stood tall, when their faith, heritage and life was under siege. They fought without military training, without supplies and oftentimes without food so that today, we, the descendants of heroes, patriots and martyrs, can celebrate. They fought the Ottomans as well as the oppressive powers of Europe at the time opposing any idea of freedom or independence. They were driven by faith, by the ideas of American and French revolution, by the desire to be free or to happily give their lives so that their children could be free. In their fight, they were joined by Philhellenes from the Unites States, France and other parts of the world. Today we have many options to celebrate 25th of March. Poems, songs, parades, speeches – they are all good and necessary. However, they typically end in about 1-2 hours and then what? Are the ideas of Hellenism, such as Greek culture, civilization, principles and ideals, including humanism, reason, the pursuit of knowledge, the arts, moderation and civic responsibility brought to life for just 1-2 hours and then they are forgotten? Today, in 2020, in the Americas and throughout the world there is the new Society of Friends, AHEPA. We are united, by oath, to fight for Hellenism, to leave our tradition in this country and all the world and to have a voice, a pulse to fight for what our parents have left us. Above all, from 1922, we strive to guarantee our children the pride of Hellenism. At the same time, we have offered so much in this country, much more than any other organization. Let’s all add one more way to celebrate March 25th – Philhellenes, Greeks, Greek Americans and Americans – JOIN AHEPA AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL AHEPA PAWTUCKET CHAPTER TODAY! Let’s celebrate March 25th each and every day, for what it stands, as proud AHEPAns! We Must Preserve the Legacy We Inherited! We need you to join our AHEPA A121 (Pawtucket) Chapter!

Greece ratifies major new military deal with United States

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Greek lawmakers ratified an agreement with the United States on Thursday to significantly expand military cooperation as Greece faces escalating tensions with neighboring Turkey. Members of parliament voted 175-33 to ratify the Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement signed in October by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a visit to Athens. The deal provides for increased joint U.S.- Greece and NATO activities at Greek military bases and facilities in Larissa, Stefanovikio, and Alexandroupolis, in central and northern Greece, as well as infrastructure and other improvements at the Souda Bay U.S. naval base on the island of Crete. The U.S. Air Force is already operating MQ-9 Reaper drones out of Larissa airbase. “This is for the mutual benefit of our defense and our economies,” conservative lawmaker Ioannis Lambropoulos said in parliament ahead of the vote. “At a time when we are receiving threats to our sovereignty, we are seeking the support of our allies.” Greece is locked in a dispute with NATO ally Turkey over maritime boundaries and oil-and-gas drilling rights in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as over war-torn Libya. Emerging from a protracted financial crisis, Greece is planning multiple upgrades to its armed forces, concentrating on its air force and naval capabilities, largely with U.S. and French defense firms. The government has expressed interest in purchasing MQ-9 Guardian drones and well as joining the F-35 fighter program at a later date. The plans were discussed at a White House visit earlier this month by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

U.S. Consul General Lauds "Strong Partnership" with AHEPA Family

U.S. Consul General in Thessaloniki Gregory W. Pfleger addressed the District 25 mid-winter conference in Thessaloniki last weekend. In a tweet, Consul General Pfleger stated he is "proud of the strong partnership between our U.S. Mission in Greece and the AHEPA family." He also spoke about the promotion of "an enduring bond based on mutual respect, shared values, history and heritage that connect our two countries."

For more information, please visit www.ahepa.org.
We have achieved a lot; we still need to do more!

Dear friends, it takes a bit of faith, a bit of effort, a bit of effort, and lots of love and passion to achieve the things we have accomplished working all of us together. Your help will make us accomplish even more and will teach our children that we live and practice our faith! The road ahead is challenging, however looking back . . .

Look What YOU Made Possible!

- In Syria, more than 51,000 children and adults received psychosocial support through Dream Centers and other programming.
- Almost 100 health professionals were trained to treat podoconiosis, and they in turn trained more than 7,500 of their colleagues in Ethiopia.
- In Greece, more than 400 families received prepaid grocery cards, allowing them to purchase about 22,000 pounds of fresh food per month.
- At Azraq Camp in Jordan, IOCC has reached nearly 400 refugees with health and well-being support.
- At least 640 families in Lebanon received more than 44,400 fresh, hot meals through IOCC’s community kitchens.
- Supporting long-term recovery, more than 130 US volunteers worked over 4,100 hours rebuilding homes damaged in natural disasters.

A Chance for a Healthy Childhood

Childhood malnutrition is as dangerous as many diseases. It frequently causes complications like anemia that can lead to organ damage and strain on the heart. And in Gaza, where jobs are scarce and incomes are low, malnutrition is a common problem. To help combat it, IOCC launched a major health and nutrition initiative in 2018, working with preschoolers and their caregivers. This project, implemented by IOCC in partnership with Peace Winds Japan and with support from the Japan Platform, focuses on three critical areas: screening for and treating malnutrition in youngsters, offering parents health and nutrition training, and supporting kindergartens in promoting their students’ health.

Retal, a four-year-old girl, lives with her mother, her 5-year-old brother, Yahiya, her uncles, and their families in her grandparents’ house. The families’ combined income — only about $165 a month — must stretch to feed everyone. So when Retal and her brother came to the IOCC screening program, both were malnourished, Retal even more severely than Yahiya. They were referred to a local partner clinic, where both received treatment and were monitored at a series of follow-up visits. Within six months, both Retal and Yahiya had received normal health and nutrition assessments. Meanwhile their mother, Alaa, attended IOCC sponsored workshops on health and nutrition to help her children stay healthy after they finished treatment. “I am forever grateful,” Alaa said, “for IOCC [and these] services to help our children.” Like Retal, five-year-old Hidaya was malnourished. The youngest of nine siblings, she was severely underweight. Her growth had been mildly stunted, and her teacher had noticed that she had trouble focusing in her kindergarten class. Through the IOCC health and nutrition program, Hidaya received the treatment she needed for malnutrition, and her parents learned how to make better food choices using the resources they have. As Hidaya’s mother said, “The best way to set your child up for a lifetime of healthy eating is to let them see you eating a healthy diet.” In 2019, thousands of children were screened; those who needed specialized care were referred for treatment. In addition, the staff at 12 kindergartens attended workshops to learn screening methods, and the teachers also received first-aid training. While malnutrition remains a concern in under resourced areas, the combination of detection, treatment, and education that this program provides is proving effective.

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!

To learn more about IOCC, please visit our website at 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

Gansett Juice
Narragansett Surf and Skate
74 Narragansett Avenue
Narragansett, RI 02882
Phone: 401-789-7890
Email: bicsurf@hotmail.com
Website: narragansettsurfandskate.com
The Bovis Family invites your family to enjoy authentic Greek and Italian cuisine at our sister restaurants. Call now to book your reservation. καλή όρεξη!

Rosalina Restaurant
50 Aborn St.
Providence
(401) 270-7330

Kleos Restaurant
250 Westminster St.
Providence
(401) 443-4083
Help beautify our church grounds. Donations towards our church grounds are always much appreciated. Please bring any donations to the Church Office so that our grounds will remain beautiful year round. Many thanks to Roula Vellopoulos, Nick Vellopoulos, and Ioanna Wright who are our church gardeners spending endless hours planting, watering, and trimming our beautiful flowers and shrubs surrounding our premises.
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George T. Panichas, Jr.
Chairman/Chief Executive Officer

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