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“Through love be servants of one another...” Gal. 5:13

THE NATIONAL sisterhood of PRESVYTERES

SUMMER 2009

from His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America

Dear Presvyteres of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese,

I greet you in the love and peace of our Lord and Savior.

In the New Testament, there are two understandings of time, expressed by the words *chronos* and *kairos*: *chronos* is time sequential and linear and chronicled by clock and calendar; *kairos* is time that can not be measured, time of decisive moments in one's life when God's purposes intersect the finite world of chronological time.

It is in this spirit of *kairos*, that you as valued Presvyteres of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, have taken the talents you have received from our Creator and directed them in lives of faith, love, service, and *diakonia*. It is in this grace filled reality that you persevere as true servants of God and offer His love to each other, to your families, your parishes, and collectively to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

I thank you for your service to the Church and I pray that God, Our Creator, Who is beyond the ages, the author of time and eternity, continue to give you the strength and faith to walk in His will (Ephesians 5:15) and to anticipate with joy the riches that He has prepared for those who love Him (2 Corinthians 2:9).

With paternal love in Christ,

†Demetrios, Archbishop of America

from our president cynthia paleologos

“Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with humility and gentleness.”

Ephesians 4:1-2

Dear Sisters In Christ,

Since taking office as president three years ago this has been my motto. Our most important job as presvyteres is love and support for our husbands, family and each other. This is the reason the NSP was started. If you know of a sister who is having a difficult time, call her and be a listening ear. If it is something you can't handle tell her to call the CAP Hotline or one of The Listening Connection listeners. Inform your Board Representative or Executive officers if there is a need. Keep informed as to what our insurance and pension plans are all about. We have to be the advocates for ourselves and our families.

I'm not sure if you all know that Eleni Demetri and Ranae Strzelecki have had to step back from being on the Executive Board. Eleni has been kept busy seeing to the health of her husband, Fr. Anthony. Ranae has been helping

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keeping up to date with each other

Direct Archdiocesan District

The Presvyteres of the Direct Archdiocesan District had two opportunities to meet in fellowship for the last few months.

We had our annual after Christmas Clergy & Presvyteres Dinner on December 30, 2008, at the beautiful Boathouse Restaurant in Central Park, NY. We are grateful to Presvytera Xanthi Karloutsos for making the arrangements and to our very generous host, Mr. Dean Poll, for a scrumptious meal. It was a delightful evening together and we were very happy to have His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and His Grace Bishop Philotheos join us. It was a great way to end the year with the Blessings of His Eminence. We also were happy to have our National President, Presvytera Cynthia Paleologos and her husband, Fr. Dean, join us.

On March 7, 2009, our Sisterhood held its annual Lenten Retreat at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, New Rochelle, NY. Fr. Nicholas and Presvytera Cindy Anctil were our wonderful hosts and we are truly grateful for their hospitality. We were blessed to have Mr. Joe Amato as our featured speaker. He is an excellent Psychologist and a respected spiritual mentor who has 30 years experience running retreats for clergy

and lay leaders of all ages. The topic of our retreat was: "Caring for the Caregivers". It was a great retreat and we all felt spiritually uplifted as we shared in prayer, Christian love and renewed dedication.

We are planning for our annual clergy family picnic to take place on Thursday, July 9, 2009, at St. Basil Academy in Garrison, NY. Everyone is invited and we are looking forward to a great time.

May our Lord continue watch over all of us.

Paula B. Strouzas

Metropolis of Atlanta

Over twenty-five sisters will gather at the Metropolis of Atlanta Clergy Laity 2009 in the Tampa Bay area. We are starting our four-day session on Thursday, June 11th with an elegant luncheon and ice cream social hosted by Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Clearwater, Chairing the event is Presvyteres Vasiliki Rousakis and Magda Andronache.

Friday, June 12th brings with it an exciting line-up of events that include the Presvyteres Meeting, and a Panel discussion focusing on the needs of the Presvyteres in the Atlanta Metropolis. The panel will consist of the Representatives from the various Conference areas of the Metropolis: Tampa Bay – Vasso Rousakis, Coastal - Vassi Haros, Central – Mari Mars, North

Florida – Eleni Tsigas/ Linda Saaman, and Emily Harakas will Represent the Retired Presvyteres. Friday, after the Philoptochos luncheon, we are off to the Silk Painting Class taught by our resident artist Presvytera Sultana Volaitis, a widowed Presvytera who has offered to teach this painting technique. Upon completion of the painting, each Presvytera will keep their scarf as a token gift and a larger piece will be presented to His Eminence as a token of love from his Presvyteres. Friday evening concludes with "An Evening at the Taverna" hosted by Fr. James Rousakis at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Clearwater.

Saturday, June 13th starts with the Clergy Family Breakfast with His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios. An elegant breakfast awaits the Clergy Families, hosted by Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou the Syndesmos President and Presvytera Georget Photos, Presvyteres President. Then our sisters will once again break-off for a fun filled shopping day at the International Mall and a "free night" at the Tarpon Springs Sponge Docks. The Clergy Laity Assembly comes to a close when we all gather for worship on Sunday morning and the farewell luncheon to follow.

Georget Photos

Metropolis of Boston

The Metropolis of Boston Sisterhood of Presvyteres gathered for our annual Lenten Retreat on Saturday, April 4th, 2009. We had

the pleasure of being hosted by Fr. Dean Paleologos and Presvytera Cynthia, our National Sisterhood President, at the beautiful St. Spyridon Cathedral in Worcester, Mass. Our guest speaker was the Rev. Fr. Adam Metropoulos of St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Bangor, Maine. Fr. Adam is a 2001 graduate of Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, MA, and he spoke on the topic, "The Meaning of Great Lent."

The morning began with a blessing, as Fr. Dean, assisted by Fr. Adam, led us all in the service of Orthros under the magnificent dome of "Christ Pantocrator" in the Cathedral. Then Fr. Adam, priest at St. George for the past eight years and an enthusiastic high school teacher in his past life, presented his theme and kept the discussion lively by encouraging us each to examine the personal meaning of Great Lent in our daily lives as presvyteres, considering all the demands placed upon us, and all those who look to us for love, advice, and encouragement.

Fr. Adam began with a thought-provoking story evoking the paradox inherent in Great Lent, the joy of renunciation. Then he went on to an examination of the lenten disciplines of faith, fasting, prayer, and repentance and a discussion of how they bring us into a closer relationship with our Lord. In this regard, he introduced the beautiful "Prayer of the Optina Elders" which speaks to the humble embracing of

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life's daily responsibilities with an Orthodox Christian heart. Fr. Adam concluded with a consideration of the words of St. Paul: "Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8) and a discussion of the hope that we have, even in the face of failure, because of Christ in our lives. Fr. Adam's presentation was well received.

Following the morning session, the seventeen presvyteres in attendance enjoyed a delicious lenten potluck lunch. Then the day concluded with a brief business meeting. With regrets, our President, Presvytera Vicki Toppses, felt the need to offer her resignation for personal reasons. We support her in her decision, but also offer her our sincere appreciation for her service over the past year. Thanks very much, Vicki! Taking over the president's position will be Presvyteres Eleni Klostri and Gloria Costarakis who will work together to handle all the presidential duties. Other officers remain the same: Our Vice President is Presvytera Athanasia Papademetriou; Treasurer is Presvytera Marilou Cambas, and Secretary is Presvytera Elizabeth Metropoulos.

We look forward to the National Sisterhood Retreat in Baltimore, and to our Fall activities - our Welcome Reception for the incoming seminarian wives at Holy Cross, and our Fall Retreat.

Elizabeth Metropoulos

Metropolis of Chicago



We've been busy in the Midwest! After our October NSP Board meeting, we came home and had a Metropolis Sisterhood meeting and elected officers. We then began preparing for our Clergy Family Vasilopita celebration with His Eminence Metropolitan Iakavos. We had approximately 125 in attendance. We had a sumptuous lamb meal and we sang together and the kids played and we cut the Vasilopites and a great time was had by all! We included those seminarians from our Metropolis who were home for the holidays.

We borrowed the idea from Anastasia Cassis to have a Saturday of Souls worship and fellowship gathering. We only had a few gather but it was a wonderfully uplifting time for those who participated. Thanks, Anastasia, for sharing a great idea! We also borrowed another idea from Anastasia and are beginning to gather information for a "stay connected and support each other" directory. We handed out forms at the Vasilopita celebration and will be following up with that over the next months!

In March, we had a Sisterhood Lenten retreat at our St. Iakavos Ranch and Retreat Center. Dr. Perry Hamalis was our

retreat master and Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos joined us. The topic was Martha and Mary. We all left feeling refreshed and renewed!

Also in March, our Metropolis had a Family Synaxis retreat with retreat master Dr. George Stavros. Many of the Metropolis Clergy and Presvyteres participated in this power-packed family day! There are workshops for all ages! We will have another Family Synaxis weekend retreat over the Labor Day weekend with retreat master Sister Magdalene from England.

We are laying the ground work for a "We'll Bring the Fellowship to You" program where we go, in small groups, to visit those Presvyteres unable to get out much. We are very excited about this ministry! We have also begun discussing adopting a charitable project as one of our ministries. We'll keep you all posted!

We will be joining with the pan-Orthodox OCCA (Orthodox Christian Clergy Association) in late June for a pan-Orthodox clergy family picnic. We are beginning plans for a Metropolis clergy family picnic late in the summer break and are always looking for more ways to stay connected and support each other and more venues for fellowship and spiritual support and bonding!

On another note, we are trying to "go green" as much as possible and are doing the majority of our communications via email to save the sisterhood money.

We're looking forward to continuing some fun and uplifting ministries!

*Chrysanthe Bessinas
& Michelle Halekakis*

Metropolis of Denver



Things in the Metropolis of Denver are hot right now....the reason there is not an alternate at the meeting is because this weekend is also the weekend the Presvyteres of Denver are gathering for their first Metropolis Retreat which will be held in Denver.

We have been very blessed to have Christa Dokos as chair of this event. A first for Christa and a first for this Metropolis, all the while Christa was blessed to have delivered a beautiful baby boy, Demetrios, during the planning period of the retreat. The retreat masters for the weekend are Fr. John Rallis and his wife Irene from St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in DesPlains, IL. Both are theologians from our very own Holy Cross and will bring a joint outlook to the women who are attending. Although distance in this Metropolis is great, I am thrilled to say we will have about 17-20 girls who will be attending this

The NSP website (www.nsp.goarch.org) depends on your contributions to keep it up-to-date. Please send information to Pauline Pavlakos at SISinCXC@msn.com. Thank you!

metropolis reports continued

retreat. I am confident a good time will be had by all, and I applaud Christa and her committee who have been working so hard to see this retreat is successful.

The email connection we have implemented in the Metropolis has been wonderful. It seems to be the easiest way for us to communicate and keep in touch. Many emails have come my way from those who are not in an area where there are other Presvyteres...so for them email is the way!

Angie Constantinides

Metropolis of Detroit

he Metropolis of Detroit Sisterhood of Presvyteres hosted the annual Clergy Family Vasilopeta on January 2, in Cincinnati, OH. It was a fun event with guests arriving from various locations of the Metropolis by car, van, and even private jet. We look forward to next year's celebration which has tentatively been planned to take place in Louisville, KY.

In late February and March we attended "Liturgy and Lunch". These gatherings, designed to promote prayer and fellowship among the sister Presvyteres, took place during Psychosavata. An effort was made to schedule these events at different geographical locations in order to make them available to as many presvyteres as possible. Plans for a midsummer picnic are in the works with specific details to be announced later.

A greeting card ministry

has been established with cards sent to Presvyteres for their namedays. A heartfelt thank you goes to Presvytera Teri Mago for undertaking this worthwhile and time consuming project. Our quarterly newsletter now has a name: Jacob's Well. The last issue was published in January and the next one will be sent out soon. Each issue showcases a different Presvytera with a short biography and a favorite recipe. Finding ways to keep us connected and inspired is a constant pursuit.

Anastasia Cassis

Metropolis of New Jersey

ur Metropolis Sisterhood has been quite busy. I attended the Metropolis of New Jersey Epiphany Celebration and Diving for the Cross in Ocean City, MD the weekend of January 9-11. Several other presvyteres were there as well and we had a nice visit.

I met with Metropolitan Evangelos at the Metropolis of New Jersey Headquarters prior to our Metropolis Sisterhood Annual Meeting/Retreat which was held in Jeffersonville, Pennsylvania on Saturday, March 14. Katherine Thornberg was our gracious hostess. Our retreat master was Jennifer Williams Dolan who spoke to us on "Feasting and Fasting: Making the Right Choices." All presvyteres of the Metropolis were asked to contribute their favorite Lenten recipe. (A recipe card was included

in our February 2009 newsletter and in several e-mails.) These recipes were compiled into a booklet which was handed out at the retreat and e-mailed to everyone on our e-mail list. Paper copies were mailed to those who could not attend, upon request.

His Eminence asked that I attend and give a brief presentation at the 2009 Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey Clergy Laity Assembly from May 3-May 5. I also presented a check (the first of two) to Metropolitan Evangelos for the purchase of the Saint Katherine medallion in the yet-to-be-constructed Saint John Chrysostom Chapel at the Metropolis Headquarters.

Four area Paschal Luncheons with His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos were held: Central and Northern New Jersey, Delaware Valley, Virginia, and Maryland/Northern Virginia. His Eminence would also like to have a Metropolis-Wide Picnic, possibly in September, at the new Metropolis Headquarters.

We have many means of communication. Our newsletter, *The Light*, is mailed quarterly (February, May, August, and November) and is also posted on our website (www.nsp.goarch.org/nj). We continue our longstanding tradition of featuring a presvytera in each newsletter. Our e-mail ministry continues with a minimum of monthly e-mails. We are always looking for information and pictures to post on our website, so please send your informa-

tion. In addition, we send notes of condolence to our sister presvyteres who have had a family member fall asleep in Our Lord and we telephone every presvytera in our Metropolis at least once per year.

As you know, our Metropolis will host our 2009 NSP National Retreat October 9-12 at Bon Secours Spiritual Center (www.bonsecours.org) in Marriottsville, Maryland. Alice Noplos is the retreat chairperson. We discussed the retreat at our annual meeting. Metropolitan Evangelos will send a letter to all Metropolis parishes in September, encouraging them to pay for part or all of their presvytera's expenses. His Eminence will visit us at the retreat on Saturday, October 10.

Our 2010 Metropolis Sisterhood of Presvyteres Annual Meeting/Retreat will be held on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at the Metropolis Headquarters. Victoria Delviziis will be our hostess and Maria Khoury will be our speaker. If there is interest, we will go to a Broadway show on Friday night.

If you ever have any questions, concerns, or simply just wish to chat, I am only a phone call or e-mail away and would welcome the feedback. I wish you all a nice summer.

Pauline Pavlakos

Metropolis of Pittsburgh

ur Metropolis is currently divided into six regions with six assigned representatives to report any updates to the Coordinator

metropolis/committee reports continued

and to organize regional gatherings. We hope to gather together during the summer months to plan events at the Archdiocese, Metropolis, and regional levels. They currently are as follows: Helene Hall (Ohio); Vasiliki Constantine (North); Cynthia Milanese (WV Panhandle); Sandy Chakos (Central); Cristen Petrides (East); West is "Yet-to-be-assigned."

New Assignments since January 1: 2009: Fr. Nicholas and Anna-Calliope Halkias to Holy Trinity, Steubenville, OH.

Condolences to Presvytera Eileen Sedor and her daughters on the unexpected loss of husband/father Fr. David Sedor of Altoona, PA on December 23, 2008 and to the family of Fr. Anthony Spirtos of Canton, OH, who reposed on March 2, 2009.

Births: Congratulations to Fr. Hector and Presvytera Katerina Firogianis, who welcomed baby Evdoxia Theodora on April 2, 2008, and to George and Kassiani Callos, parents of Eleni Dianthe, born on June 10, 2009 as the grandchild of Fr. George and Dianthe Livanos and Fr. Stephen and Christina Callos.

Other News: Please keep these clergy in your prayers for healing: Fr. Leonidas Drakopoulos (Clarksburg, WV); Fr. Anthony Demetri (Camp Hill, PA - Heart surgery went well on April 27th.); Fr. John Stavropoulos.

Events and Projects: The Metropolitan's annual Clergy Family Christmas party was held at the Metropolis on January 3.

A summer gathering of regional reps is being planned. Topics to be discussed will be: Archdiocese/Metropolis/regional events and ways to improve correspondence and information.

We look forward to participating in a regional Pan-Orthodox clergy wives weekend to be held at Antiochian Village in memory of Presvytera Joanne Abdalah in the fall. Plans for a periodic mailing to our sisterhood are under way also.

Becky Touloumes

Metropolis of San Francisco

he Metropolis of San Francisco held our annual retreat in January 2009 at St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center. We had scheduled to have Fr. Michael Johnson attend as our retreat master but unfortunately the day before the retreat he got sick and was not able to come. Fortunately, he sent our Metropolis President, Irene Supica, his topic questions and we were able to use these to have outstanding discussion amongst the twenty-five women who attended. These topic questions are the same ones that have appeared in the Prez to Prez emails recently. In speaking to Pres. Donna Pappas recently, (who is one of the contributors of Prez to Prez), she said that they were overwhelmed by the responses of the women and many were too personal to print.

In January, Metropolitan Gerasimos hosted four clergy family Vasilopita dinners in the Northwest,

Southwest, Northern California and Southern California. The Metropolitan is still hard at work to get a "Wellness Center" off the ground, which will provide counseling services to clergy and lay families throughout the Metropolis.

On January 11, 2009 Fr. Tom and Pres. Vaso Paris celebrated their retirement after serving 37 years at the Ascension Cathedral in Oakland, CA. There were over 700 people in attendance and Fr. Tom's godson, George Stephanopolous, served as emcee of the event. We wish them many years of health and happiness.

We want to welcome our newest member to the SF Metropolis Sisterhood, Diakonisa Stella Bekris. Deacon Niko Bekris and Diakonisa Stella were married last summer in Novato, Stella's home parish. Deacon Niko is serving half time as the Metropolis Youth Director and half time as the Assistant at the Annunciation Cathedral in San Francisco.

We have invited Metropolitan Jonah of the OCA to be our retreat master at our next retreat in January of 2010. While serving as a monk, he often attended our retreats and served as priest to the nuns at the Monastery of the Life Giving Spring. We look forward to having him and will be inviting the Matushkas of the Metropolis to attend as well.

Widowed Presvyteres

t our recent national board meeting in Las Vegas, much time was

devoted to the subject of our widows. The sisterhood is always looking for ways to express love and concern for us. We also discussed the two new scholarships for widowed presvyteres which the Retired Clergy Association (RCA) has established. President Fr. Nicholas Soteropoulos and his co workers have been tireless in finding ways to help us. Currently there are two Scholarships established by the RCA. Thanks to the generosity of the Pedas and Vidalakis families, widowed presvyteres, their children, and grandchildren have the opportunity to apply for financial aid toward their studies. At this board meeting I was asked to serve as a member of the Vidalakis scholarship committee and will happily do so for a two year term. For more information about the scholarships you can write to: RCA Scholarship Committee, 162-41 Powells Cove Blvd., Beechhurst, NY 11356, or by e-mail: nsotero-poulos@nyc.rr.com.

Meeting in Las Vegas gave me the opportunity to visit with Presvytera Helen Andrews who is home bound in the lovely home of her daughter and son-in-law there. She asked me how it was that she had received so many notes and calls during her recent illness from Presvyteres across the country. As I explained our internet news system, she and I both marveled at how this gives us such ability to keep in touch. As always, I welcome hearing from you, and pray God's love and blessings be with you all.

Mary Scoulos

National Sisterhood of Presbyteres



6th Biennial Retreat

Date: October 9-12, 2009
New Jersey Metropolis
Bon Secours Spiritual Center

1525 Marriottsville Road
Marriottsville, Maryland 21104
www.bonsecoursretreats.org



Theme: Nurturing the Nurturer- Self Care for the Presvytera
Speaker: Charlotte Eliopoulos

Cost: \$400 per person
(or \$375 per person if registered and paid in full by July 1, 2009)
includes individual room with private bathroom; meals,
transportation to/from airport
\$50 non refundable deposit is due with registration form;
balance due by September 25, 2009.

*Please plan to join us for a very relaxing, fun-filled weekend with your fellow Sisters.
If flying, plan on arriving into Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) on Friday,
October 9th between 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.*

*The retreat will conclude on Monday at 11:00 a.m. Flight information can be emailed
to anoplos@comcast.net*

**Send in your registration today! Deadline for registration is
September 25, 2009 - no exceptions!**

6th Biennial NSP Retreat Registration

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Church _____

Please mail registration form along with \$400 payment
(check made payable to National Sisterhood of Presbyteres) to:

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11 Longbottom Court
Kingsville, MD 21087

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America National Sisterhood of Presvyteres

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nsp stewardship

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Alexandra Roll
Lorraine Romas
Vasiliki Rousakis
Maria Saroles
Nancy Serviou
Stella Sfikas
Panayiota Shiepis
Olympia Simeonidis
Joan Simones
Georgia (Val) Sitaras
Chrisafie Sophocles
Gigi K. Souritzidis
Penny Stamas
Charlotte Staviski
Angeliki Stavropoulos
Nikki Stephanopoulos
Elaine V. Stratis
Paula Strouzas
Faye Stylianopoulos
Joana Tagaropoulos
Argie Talagan
Catherine Tavlarides
Elizabeth Tervo
Sophia Thanos
Helen Theophilopoulos

Stephanie Thomas
Becky Touloumes
Rose Treantafeles
Pat Tsagalakis
Joanna Tsandikos
Vasiliki M. Tzougros
Garnette Vasilakis
Pearl Veronis
Betsy Vlahos
C. Betty Vlahos
Sultana Volaitis
Harriet Wilson
Mary Ann Wingenbach
Anne Zervos
Mona Zozos

PAID THROUGH 2010

Eleni Alexopoulos
Patricia Artemas
Chrysanthe Bessinas
Joan Bogdan
Athena Gousios
Helene Hall
Anastasia Jonas
Helen M. Kehagias
Anne Macris
Diana Moskovites
Margaret Orfanakos
Stephanie Panagos
Pauline Pavlakos
Georgia Pourakis
Mary Scoulas
Ann Yankopoulos

PAID THROUGH 2012

Mary Christy
Eleutheria Dogias
Eleftheria Recachinas
Bessie Valasiadis
Archdiocesan Presbyters
Council
Metropolitan Gerasimos
of San Francisco
St Spyridon Cathedral,
Worcester, MA

Thank you for your continued support of your NSP ministries! Please use the enclosed remittance envelope to send in your 2009 stewardship.

president's message continued

out her brother, since the passing of his beloved wife. I thank them for their time and service and would like both of them to know the door is always open to come back on the board if they ever wish to.

Many thanks to Becky Touloumes and Pearlann Bithos, who have stepped in as Corresponding and Recording Secretaries. Jeannie Monos, our Treasurer, was helping with correspondence prior to Becky accepting the position. Alice Noplos had been filling in as Recording Secretary, besides her position as VP and Benevolent Fund Chair. I thank these ladies for their help.

Vicki Toppses has had to step down as the Rep. for Boston due to personal reasons. Gloria Costarakis and Eleni Klostri have graciously agreed to share the position.

Our wonderful "Prez to Prez" sisters have done it again by uplifting us with their wonderful e-mail min-

istry. We have included one of the articles in this issue so you can see what you've been missing if we don't have your e-mail address.

Be sure to attend our National Retreat in Marriottsville, MD, this coming October. It will be run by your National Board and your sisters in the Metropolis of New Jersey. Alice Noplos is chairing the event. This will be a weekend you will never forget filled with enlightenment, and laughter.

Our 2010 Clergy Laity will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, July 4-7. Christine Salzman has agreed to Chair our meetings so all of you in the Metropolis of Atlanta please let Christine know you will help her.

I send my love and prayers to all of you and ask you to keep me in your prayers.

With love in Christ,

Cynthia

"Through Love Be Servants of One Another" (Galatians 5:13)

Check out the Guidance Resources website. This resource is made available to us by our Archdiocese, but is only used by approximately 2 % of clergy and clergy families. Did you know CAP not only provides referrals for counseling, but can also provides referrals to a lawyer, certified financial planner, childcare and eldercare providers? Sign up for free emails. Have great articles and helpful tips sent right to your email inbox. Log on and you pick which types of newsletters you want to receive.



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the listening connection

Do you need someone to listen to you?

The Listening Connection (TLC) has been established by the National Sisterhood of Presbyteres as an outreach to Presbyteres, our fellow sisters in Christ. TLC is designed for fellowship and outreach only.

TLC is intended to assist the NSP in carrying out its mission:

To promote the spirit of Christian love among the Presbyteres of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; and to get acquainted with one another and to develop a genuine interest in one another's personal growth and well-being and those of their immediate family.

Our Listeners

Each of the women below have been serving TLC for five years and genuinely care about you. They are looking forward to getting to know you, creating relationships with you and more importantly to listening to you. Please do not hesitate to call, email, Skype or Facebook them.

Presv. Anthe Athas is happy to be available to anyone who just wants to talk. Presv. Anthe feels privileged to be able to serve as a listener and to be present for other Presbyteres. Fr. Robert and Presv. Anthe Athas have served parishes for 34 years; they are currently located at the Dormition of the Mother of God in Burlington, VT. They have two grown children: 33 and 31 and three wonderful grandchildren

ranging in ages from 18 months to 11 years. Presv. Anthe is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-11:30pm ET at 802-865-4416 or by email at andthejoy@aol.com.

Getting to know other Presbyteres and sharing experiences is what Presv. Anne Pappalas likes most about The Listening Connection. Presv. Anne and Fr. Tom Pappalas serve at Sts. Constantine and Helen in Reading, PA. They have three beautiful children: 25, 24, and 15. Presv. Anne and Fr. Tom have served in Christ's ministry for 25 years. Presv. Anne is available Wednesdays and Sundays from 10:00pm-12:00am ET at 610-779-7356 or by email prov317@msn.com.

Presv. Katherine Prassas finds much joy in getting to know Presbyteres and establishing long friendships. She feels The Listening Connection is a great resource and is extremely valuable for all of us. Fr. George Prassas and Presv. Katherine have served parishes for nearly 50 years; they are currently serving at Holy Trinity Church in Binghamton, NY. They have five grown children and four grandchildren with another one due in September. Presv. Katherine is available Mondays and Fridays from 9:00-11:00pm EST at 678-402-6307 or by email at yiayia5@aol.com

Contact Presvytera Shyla Hadzellis if you would like to become a volunteer listener at shyla@hadzellis.com or call at 617-530-0884.

the apc/nsp benevolent fund

Iwould like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generous donations to the benevolent fund account. This year's gifts of love appeal to the clergy families brought in over \$16,000 to help our brothers and sisters in Christ who are experiencing a difficult time. We have helped numerous clergy families through this fund, and pray that your donations will never cease, so that we can continue to offer this benevolence to those in need.

In Christ's Love,
Presvytera Alice Noplos

The following are questions that are commonly asked of this fund:

What is the APC-NSP Benevolent Fund and who is it designed to help?

The Archdiocesan Presbyters Council (APC), and the National Sisterhood of Presvyteres (NSP), to promote the spirit of Christian love among clergy families and to develop a genuine interest in one another's well being, established a Benevolent Fund to offer assistance during a time of family crisis, medical emergency and/or extreme financial need to a Priest serving in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, his Presvytera, and/or their dependent children.

Why was the APC-NSP Benevolent Fund formed?

This fund is the result of the combined efforts of the Archdiocesan Presbyter's Council and the National Sisterhood of Presvyteres, whose purpose is to promote the spirit of Christian Love among the clergy families and to develop a genuine Interest in each others well being. It was with this purpose in mind that the Benevolent Fund was created.

How is the Benevolent Fund supported?

Originally, monies come from existing Benevolent Funds of the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council and the National Sisterhood of Presvyteres. These funds were united and as of Clergy-Laity 1996, a yearly appeal takes place to maintain this fund. The National Philoptochos is also a major benefactor to this fund. All contributions or donations from organizations of individuals are greatly appreciated.

How can I help or make contributions to this valuable ministry?

If you know a clergy family who can benefit from this fund, please contact Father Steve Tsiichlis, APC President (father@stpaulsirvine.org) or Presvytera Cynthia Paleologos, NSP President (cpaleo@yahoo.com). This information is, of course, treated with the utmost respect for the family.

If you would like to contribute to this fund, please make your contribution

payable to:

APC-NSP BENEVOLENT FUND
c/o Presvytera Alice Noplos
11 Longbottom Court
Kingsville, MD 21087

What is The Gregory Paleologos Memorial Fund?

The Gregory Paleologos Memorial Fund was set up with donations given in memory of Fr. Dean Paleologos' brother, Gregory. He died of lung cancer at the age of 58. Gregory's wish was to help financially needy widowed Presvyteres, after witnessing his own mother's distress after the passing of Fr. Nicholas Paleologos. The fund offers a one-time gift of \$1,000 to widowed Presvyteres. To request benevolence from this fund please contact Presvytera Cynthia Paleologos, NSP President at cpaleo@yahoo.com. To make contributions to this fund, please send a check to Presvytera Alice Noplos (address above) made payable to "APC-NSP Benevolent Fund" with "Gregory Paleologos Memorial Fund" written in the memo section.



our patron saints

Dear Sisters in Christ,
May the NSP patron saints, Saints Mary and Martha, continue to intercede on our behalf to Our Gracious Lord, so that we may continue to glorify Him, in all that we do, always to His unending glory. May God grant the NSP many years. Chronia Polla!

In Christ,
Your NSP Board

Mary & Martha, the sisters of Lazarus Feast Day: June 4

Apolytikion

Since you believed in Christ with strong and ardent faith, and ever worshipped His divine and mighty deeds, you both adorned yourselves with all the splendour of sacred virtues. With your holy brother now, you are also vouchsafed to dwell with the ranks of Saints on high, O you sisters of Lazarus; and with him, O wise Mary and Martha, pray for us all unto the Master.

Kontakion

In the town of Bethany, you dwelt of old; now in Heaven you abide in Paradise, where our Lord's countenance shineth. For you gave your hearts and souls up with fervent longing unto Him that is the Life and the Resurrection; as you stand on high, O Mary and Martha, pray Him to grant salvation to us.

prez to prez

strengthening our clergy families

We wish to thank those who took the time to respond to the fictional “Confession of a Presvytera” Below is the confession and a few heartfelt responses.

“Confession”

I have to confess that I just don't have a spiritual life at all. I try to pray but there's never time. I have to get up and get the kids to school first thing. Then I work four hours a day. Then it's back home to get dinner ready and make sure the kids do their homework. I can't blame my husband, but he's at church just about every evening, not to mention weekends. By the time I get a few moments to myself, I'm so tired I just fall asleep in bed. I haven't opened a bible in years and half the time I don't even find time for the Trisagion prayers. I know I should be setting an example, but I guess I'm as bad as the worst of our parishioners.

Reflection #1

By way of introduction, I am in my 60's, have been a presvytera for 35 years, and have raised 4 children. When my family was young, the lifestyle described in Confession #1 was very similar to my own. I also felt remorse about my lack of spirituality. Through the years, however, I came to realize that the very things I thought were keeping me away from a more

spiritual life were actually my path to salvation. Sharing my husband with the church community to the extent that I felt like a single mother; dragging my children to church services and attempting to maintain order; participating as much as I could in church activities; making an effort to supplement the family income; balancing Lenten dietary restrictions with proper nutrition; hosting visiting clergy and missionaries; overseeing my children's schoolwork, sports, scouting, and music lessons; clinging to my sanity while severely sleep-deprived -- all this was a form of devotional prayer. By fulfilling my duties as wife, mother, and Presvytera, I was accepting God's will in my life and following the road He had set for me.

In addition to living a dedicated Christian life, there are ways to squeeze some prayer into our busy schedules. Read a short Bible passage and pray with your children at bedtime. Pray before all meals (even at McDonald's). While driving in the car, listen to recordings of hymns and prayers. Recite the Jesus Prayer while doing repetitive tasks such as folding laundry, washing dishes, vacuuming or exercising.

Finally, learn to forgive yourself and start anew. Some years ago, I visited a revered, monastic Confessor. I knelt before him and recited a list of

sins much like Confession #1. He gave me a daily regimen which included prayer, prostrations, censing, and Bible readings. I began to follow his instructions with enthusiasm, but little by little, the chaos of my life distracted me from the routine. The following year, when I visited the Confessor, I had to repeat the same list of sins. I braced myself for a severe reprimand. Instead, I felt a gentle touch on my head and heard these words, “God knows you're human. He knows you will have lapses. When you do, just start all over again.”

*Presvytera age 60
In ministry 35 years*

Reflection #2

I think at some point, we have all been here. Being a good Christian, a good wife, a good mother--this is hard work! There are so many temptations to pour oneself out, giving time and effort to the housework, dressing up to go to work, helping your children and your husband... but you are robbing them of your true self, the one which you rarely see yourself as being: the calm one who is rooted in Christ. Tell your husband you need help! Ask him for specific things, like reading the Scripture of the day aloud to you, or a reminder to pray with the kids as you drop them off at school. Ask him to pray for and with you.

Just by being mindful that you are trying to get towards God will allow Him to help you. Ask a sister presvytera to be your prayer partner for a season--she may never give up the

habit. It is easy to feel like you are going under, but if you are not enjoying life, you are not the only one who is suffering.

This confession definitely hits home for me, even though the particulars don't. For the past few months, I have been struggling to “do the right thing” for my four-month-old son, to give him the advantages of a good environment. Every so often, I have a little epiphany which makes me feel so dumb: how could I have missed that? The most recent one is to just enjoy the baby (augh! my mother was right again!) and not worry so much about my to-do list. Even though I don't get my daily prayers in every day, we are making a habit to say family prayers every morning and evening. The house is slowly getting cleaner (especially if I don't look too closely), and I am feeling better. I may even be a good mommy! And people will be glad to hear from us, even though I am still working on sending out the Christmas newsletter as we have already entered February.

*Presvytera age 28
5 years Orthodox
In ministry 1-1/2 years*

Please feel free to share anything that you have learned that may help another presvytera who may be experiencing the issues in this ‘confession.’ Of course, please seek your spiritual father's advice on any questions or issues you may have. We have many things in common and this can help us realize more than ever, WE ARE NOT ALONE in this life!



NATIONAL SISTERHOOD OF PRESVYTERES
Becky Touloumes, Corresponding Secretary
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
302 West North Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212-4626

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Visit us online at: www.nsp.goarch.org

prez to prez

Quote:

Pray not only for yourself, but for all the faithful, for the whole body of the Church without separating yourself from other believers, pray in a state of union with them as a member of Christ's Church...Prayer for others is beneficial for the one who prays: It purifies the heart, strengthens faith and hope in God and stimulates love for God and neighbor. (*St. John of Kronstadt*)

Scripture:

In the day of my trouble I will call on You, for You will answer me. (*Psalm 86:7*)

Question:

Do I have the courage to dig below the surface with my sister presvyteres? Am I willing to risk asking the "tough" questions, such as, "How is your spiritual life?" "How is your marriage?", etc. If someone asks me the "tough" questions, am I willing to answer them honestly? Am I actively cultivating enough trust in my relationships to risk this kind of transparency?

See "prez to prez" on page 11 inside for personal and inspiring reflections on these questions and issues. Also, visit <http://www.nsp.goarch.org/prez2prez.html> for a complete archives of this important ministry of the NSP.