

# The Cathedral Chronicle

Volume 24: No. 1

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023



## Father's Message:

Dear Parishioners of St. John's Cathedral,

It gives me great joy to greet you for the first time as priest and pastor of this wonderful community. Our Spiritual Father and Archpastor, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, has appointed me to assume the pastoral ministry of the Metropolitan Cathedral as of February 1. It is very humbling for me to be entrusted with this parish and to continue the work of my dear brother in Christ and respected colleague, Fr. Angelo. I ask that we all continue to keep Fr. Angelo, Pres. Patricia, and their family in our prayers during this very challenging time.

My family and I thank you for the warm welcome and hospitality you have already shown us so far and pray that God grant us to accompany you for many years on the path towards Christ's Kingdom. We ask for your patience over the coming months as we finish out the school year and move to this area, God willing, in the summertime. I will be commuting back and forth as needed, and am here most days to attend to the needs of the Cathedral.

It is fitting that we find ourselves not only at the beginning of our ministry here, but also at the beginning of the holiest time of our

ecclesiastical year, Great and Holy Lent. For all Orthodox Christians, this is a time when we, like the Prodigal Son of Christ's parable, return to our Father's house. We may have allowed ourselves to stray from His house and found ourselves "in a far country," but this is the time that the Church calls us back and welcomes us home. We only need to heed that call, rise up, and return home, where our Heavenly Father welcomes us with open arms. To that end, the Church in Her wisdom offers us the beautiful services of Lent and Holy Week, and urges us all towards greater prayer to God, love towards our neighbor, and self-denial through fasting. Great Lent is a great and challenging journey, but the joy of our homecoming, and our arrival to the great feast of Pascha, is beyond words.

I look forward in the coming weeks to joining you on that journey towards Christ's Resurrection. I wish you all a blessed Lent full of prayer and love. With paternal love and blessings, I remain

in Christ,

+Fr. Gregory Gilbert



## MEET FR. GREGORY GILBERT

Fr. Gregory was born and raised in Knoxville, TN. After graduating from high school, he attended Davidson College in Davidson, NC, where he studied Classics (Ancient Greek and Latin) and met his future wife, Presvytera Catherine, who also studied Classics. After college, he taught Latin for three years at a private high school in Nashville, TN. It was during this time that Fr. Gregory, who was raised in the Southern Baptist church, began to look for a form of Christianity closer to what he had learned of the ancient Church in his studies.

This search led him to the local Greek Orthodox parish and, eventually, to St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, NY, where he received his M.A. in Theology in 2004. After seminary Father and Presvytera moved to the Washington, D.C., area so that he could pursue graduate studies at the Catholic University of America. He received a second M.A. in Classics in 2008

and a Ph.D. in Greek and Latin in 2014. In his research, Fr. Gregory specializes in the writings of the Church Fathers. During his graduate studies at CUA, Fr. Gregory served as the Head Chanter at Sts. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Frederick, MD.

He has traveled a great deal in the Greek world, including two summers digging at an archeological site in Cyprus and a semester traveling to archeological sites throughout Greece. Most recently, Fr. Gregory and his family spent a year in Greece, where he had a fellowship for his doctoral research at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens (at the Gennadios Library). While in Greece, Fr. Gregory also completed the coursework and examination for the Diploma of Byzantine Chant, issued by the Greek Ministry of Culture. After returning from Greece, Fr. Gregory spent two years as an adjunct lecturer in the Ancient Studies Department at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos ordained Fr. Gregory as a deacon on October 4, 2015, and elevated him to the priesthood on October 25, 2015. From 2015-2017 Fr. Gregory served as the presiding priest of Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella Greek Orthodox Church in Darlington, Maryland, and from 2017-2023 of St. Demetrios, Upper Darby.

On February 1, 2023, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America appointed Fr. Gregory to the Metropolitan Cathedral of St. John the Theologian in Tenafly, New Jersey. He is joined by Presvytera Catherine and their five children.

## ΜΙΑ ΓΝΩΡΙΜΙΑ ΜΕ ΤΟΝ Π. ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟ ΓΚΙΛΜΠΕΡΤ

Ο π. Γρηγόριος γεννήθηκε καί ανατράφηκε στό Νόξβιλ, Τενεσί. Μετά τίς ἐγκύκλιες σπουδές του, σπούδασε Ἑλληνική καί Λατινική φιλολογία στό Κολλέγιο Ντέιβιντσον, στή Βόρεια Καρολίνα, ὅπου γνώρισε τήν Πρεσβυτέρα Αἰκατερίνα, ἡ ὁποία σπούδασε κι αὐτή τήν κλασσική φιλολογία. Ἀφοῦ ἔλαβε τό πτυχίο του, ὁ π. Γρηγόριος ἦταν καθηγητής Λατινικῶν σ' ἓνα ἰδιωτικό λύκειο στό Νάσβιλ, Τενεσί. Αὐτά τά χρόνια ὁ π. Γρηγόριος, πού εἶχε μεγάλωσει Διαμαρτυρόμενος στήν Ἀναβαπτιστικήν ἐκκλησία, γύρευε μία ἐκκλησία πιό παρόμοια στήν ἀρχαίαν ἐκκλησία πού εἶχε γνωρίσει στίς σπουδές του. Αὐτή ἡ ἔρευνα τόν ὁδήγησε στήν τοπικήν Ἑλληνορθόδοξον ἐνορία ὅπου κατηχήθηκε καί τελικά στήν ἱερατική σχολή τοῦ Ἁγίου Βλαδιμήρου στήν Νέα Ὑόρκη ὅπου τελείωσε τίς θεολογικές του σπουδές τό 2004. Συνέχισε τίς φιλολογικές του σπουδές στό Καθολικό Πανεπιστήμιο τῆς Ἀμερικῆς στήν Γουάσινγκτον καί τό 2014 ἀναγορεύθηκε Διδάκτωρ Ἑλληνικῆς καί Λατινικῆς Φιλολογίας, μέ εἰδικότητα στήν Πατρολογία. Κατά τήν διάρκεια τῶν διδακτορικῶν του σπουδῶν ὁ π. Γρηγόριος ὑπηρετοῦσε ὡς πρωτοψάλτης στόν Ἱ.Ν. Ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καί Παύλου, Φρέντερικ, Μαίρυλαντ. Ὁ π. Γρηγόριος ἔχει ταξιδέψει σ' ὅλην τήν Ἑλλάδα καί τήν Κύπρο γιά ἀρχαιολογικές σπουδές, συμπεριλαμβανομένων δύο καλοκαιριῶν πού δούλευε σέ ἀρχαιολογικές ἀνασκαφές στήν Κύπρο. Ὁ π. Γρηγόριος μέ τήν οἰκογένειά του πέρασαν τό 2011-12 στήν Ἑλλάδα ὅπου συνέγραφε τήν διδακτορική του διατριβή ὡς Ὑπότροφος Φούλμπραϊτ στή Γεννάδειο Βιβλιοθήκη τῆς Ἀμερικανικῆς Σχολῆς Κλασσικῶν Σπουδῶν στήν Ἀθήνα.

Στήν Ἑλλάδα ὁ π. Γρηγόριος συνέχισε καί τίς σπουδές του στήν ψαλτική τέχνη καί ἐπέτυχε τό Δίπλωμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικῆς, ἐπικυρωμένον ἀπό τό Ὑπουργεῖο Πολιτισμοῦ. Ἀφοῦ ἐπέστρεψε στήν Ἀμερική, ὁ π. Γρηγόριος ἐδίδασκε ἀρχαῖα ἐπί δύο χρόνια στό Πανεπιστήμιο Μαίρυλαντ στό Baltimore County. Ὁ Σεβ. Μητροπολίτης τέως Νέας Ἱερσέης, νῦν δέ Σάρδεων, κ. Εὐάγγελος ἐχειροτόνησε τόν π. Γρηγόριο εἰς διάκονον στίς 4 Ὀκτωβρίου 2015 στό Φρέντερικ, Μαίρυλαντ, καί εἰς ἱερέα στίς 25 τοῦ ἰδίου μηνός στόν Ἱ.Ν. Ἁγ. Δημητρίου, Upper Darby. Τό 2015-2017 ὁ π. Γρηγόριος ὑπηρετήσεν ὡς ἱερατικῶς προϊστάμενος στόν Ἱ.Ν. Ἁγίων Μαρίας Μαγδαληνῆς καί Μαρκέλλας, Darlington, Maryland καί τό 2017-2023 στόν Ἱ.Ν. Ἁγίου Δημητρίου, Upper Darby τῆς Πεννσυλβάνιας. Τῆ 1η Φεβρουαρίου 2023 ὁ Σεβ. Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀμερικῆς κ. Ἐλπιδοφόρος τόν διόρισε στήν προϊσταμενία τοῦ Μητροπολιτικοῦ Καθεδρικοῦ Ναοῦ τοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου στό Τέναφλαϊ, Νιού Τζέρζεϋ. Ὁ π. Γρηγόριος μέ τήν Πρεσβυτέρα Κατερίνα ἔχουν πέντε παιδιά.

### **Mark the Date:**

- April 30<sup>th</sup>, Sunday, Greek Independence Day Parade, NYC
- June 2, 3 & 4, Friday – Sunday, Taste of Greece St. John the Theologian Annual Festival

## **President's Message:**

Dear Families of St. John the Theologian:

On behalf of the entire Parish Council, I wish you and everyone in your circle a healthy and fruitful start to 2023. The last few months have been eventful for the community at St. John's, but everyone on the Parish Council is undaunted and excited by what lies ahead. We look forward to partnering with all of you under the leadership of our superb new priest, Fr. Gregory Gilbert, as we support him in growing our Cathedral. In that regard, our newly-elected Executive Council is comprised of:

- Vickie Rokkos – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President
- Elaina Charas – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- Sean Callahan - Secretary
- George Tsougarakis – Asst. Secretary
- Michael Camarinos – Treasurer
- Theo Zacharatos – Asst. Treasurer
- Stephen Ferranti – Past President

Please join me in congratulating them, and in thanking everyone on the Parish Council for all it does for St. John's. And particularly join me in thanking our recent Presidents, Stephen Ferranti and Aris Chicles, for the Herculean work they and their teams did during the Pandemic.

Hebrews 10:25 states "...Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Considering this, we're off to an encouraging start. Recent weeks at the Cathedral have brought back familiar sights and sounds – a visit by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, a church bustling with activity, the Narthex echoing with the voices of young families coming to St. John's, and our ministries revving up for the year ahead – it's been exciting to see the Cathedral getting back to many of its pre-Covid activity levels and norms (and paper bulletins on Sunday are even making a comeback!).

Yet with all the headlines about declining church attendance nationwide – and those stories are real, regrettably – we know there's much to navigate, and much to do, to keep our beloved church pointed

in the right direction. Our vision for the Cathedral remains "To be the community that is recognized as having the best youth programs and ministries that will enable our Cathedral to increase our membership and bring people to Jesus Christ." So, in that regard, parents, please sign up your children for our world-class Sunday School... and bring them! And we have so many other wonderful ministries at St. John's – our superlative Philoptochos, Greek School, GOYA, PTO, Kali Parea and Scouting programs, and so many more. Please be active, sign-up, and volunteer – the church needs you, especially now. And at whatever level you are able, please consider becoming a Steward. Stewardship is a ministry of our faith, and it enables all the programs we connect with each other through St. John's. And when we connect, we reinforce our unity in Christ and our Greek Orthodox faith, and we're stronger as a result.

On a somber note, many of you know that our beloved Fr. Angelo Artemas was hospitalized at the beginning of the year just as he was to take a new assignment in the Midwest. As we communicated in our note from January 23 and other communications, the parish is taking significant efforts to support Father and his family during this time. We continue to pray fervently to God for Fr. Angelo's full healing and the continued well-being of Presbytera Patricia and their three amazing daughters during this time.

In closing, we look ahead, certainly with some remaining challenges to traverse, but with confidence and optimism. We look forward to finishing our newly remodeled Fellowship Hall – we are already utilizing this delightful facility for many church and family events, and hope that you consider this for your next gathering. Spring will be here soon, we'll be entering the paramount Paschal season and from there we'll move on to our Greek Festival, June 2-4. The Events team has numerous other events planned for our community throughout 2023, as we further renew our fellowship following Covid – and I look forward to seeing you all at St. John's.

Wishing you all of God's Blessings, and a contemplative and peaceful Lent.

George L. Staphos, Parish Council President



## St. Philothea Philoptochos Society News



On behalf of the St. Philothea Philoptochos Society, I pray that this message finds you all well. As we begin the Lenten season, a sacred period of reflection and preparation before the celebration of Easter, our Philoptochos Chapter remains unwavering in its mission and efforts.

As we continue to keep Fr. Angelo and his family in our prayers, we want to welcome Fr. Gregory Gilbert, Presvetera Catherine, and their family to our community. Our Board members continue to work tirelessly to assist those who are less fortunate, along with the help and generosity of the entire St. John The Theologian community.

### OUR RECENT ACTIVITIES

**Annual Christmas Party** – On Tuesday, December 6, 2022, we held our annual Christmas Party at Seasons in Washington Township, NJ. With this being our first holiday party since before the pandemic, it was a joy to see so many familiar faces finally back together again reconnecting, dancing, enjoying great food and having a wonderful time! Sincere thanks to the chair ladies, all who attended, and to all our generous sponsors!



**Supporting the Needy** – In early January, our Philoptochos sisters started the new year off right in the spirit of kindness and generosity by taking time to purchase and deliver a hefty carload of much needed diapers to the center for Food Action in Englewood, NJ! They also purchased and delivered 46 cases of water bottles (a total of 1,840 water bottles!!) to Family Promise in Hackensack, NJ. When there is an urgent need we are there!! Thank you to the chair-ladies who did all that shopping and delivering.



### **Christmas/New Year Activities:**

During November and December, we sold sweets and Vasilopitas. Big thank you goes to all the co-chairs and ladies who were able to help, as well as all the parishioners that supported our fundraising efforts during the Christmas and New Year's Holidays.

Community Christmas card was well organized and implemented again this year, thanks to the efforts of Athena Apostle and her committee for collecting all the names, printing and mailing.

**January General Meeting Guest Speaker** – At our General Meeting on Tuesday, January 24, we were pleased to have two extremely knowledgeable and experienced speakers, Theodora Ziongas, Assistant Executive Director, Hamilton-Madison House, and Paulette Geanacopoulos, LMSW, Director, Department of Social Work Services, National Philoptochos, join us to speak about The Challenges of Caregiving for a Parent, Spouse, or Disabled Child. Both Theodora and Paulette provided extensive information on a topic of importance to all, along with a detailed packet of resources and helpful tips provided by the National Philoptochos Caregiver Support Group.



**Welcome Brunch for Father Gregory Gilbert** - On Sunday, February 5, our Philoptochos Chapter and Parish Council joined together to provide a community brunch to welcome Father Gregory Gilbert, Presvytera Catherine and their children to our community. The Sunday liturgy was very well attended, and our newly renovated Fellowship Hall was filled for the warm welcome!



### **Go Red Sunday and Visit from His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America –**

On Sunday, February 12, we held our annual celebration of National Heart Health Month by collectively wearing red and handing out a red rose to all ladies present that day, as a call to action for women to take control of their heart health. On the same day, we also joined with our Parish Council to provide a community brunch to welcome His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America who served the Divine Liturgy. It was an honor to have him with us!



**St. Philothea Feast Day Celebration** - On Sunday, February 19, we held our annual celebration of the Feast Day of St. Philothea, patron saint of our Chapter, along with an artoclasia service for the health and wellbeing of our Philoptochos members and a memorial service for our Chapter's Philoptochos members who have fallen asleep in the Lord. We also hosted a community brunch after services in honor of the occasion.



## **OUR MISSION CONTINUES...**

### **Feeding the Hungry and Supplying Essentials to the Needy:**

- **Family Promise, Hackensack, NJ - Feeding the Homeless** – Continued distribution of complete dinners to the homeless.
- **Center for Food Action, Englewood NJ - Local Food Pantry** – Continued shopping and delivery of food to our local food pantry.
- **Operation Classroom - Comfort Closet** – Continued support of this program by providing essentials for needy students in various schools in Newark NJ.

### **Support to Charitable Organizations:**

- St. Michael's Home
- Ukraine Relief Fund
- Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief

### **Social Service:**

Our Social Service Committee continually and discreetly distributes supermarket certificates and other support to local families and individuals in need through our confidential vetting process. Please contact Fr. Gregory or Maria Kamilaris if you know of anyone who may need assistance.

### **Metropolis Philoptochos of New Jersey Commitments:**

- Emergency Social Service Fund (Sunday of Orthodoxy Tray Collection)
- Schools of the Patriarchate, (amount determined by the chapter)
- Metropolis Office Fund Obligation
- Social Service Fund Obligation

### **National Philoptochos Commitments:**

- Academy of Saint Basil
- Autism Assistance Fund
- Children's Medical Fund
- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- National Philoptochos Emergency Fund - National Philoptochos authorized \$50,000 to be released from this fund for the Earthquake in Turkey and Syria

- General Medical Fund
- Hellenic College Holy Cross School of Theology
- International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)
- National Sisterhood of Presvyteres Benevolent Fund
- Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)
- Orthodox Christian Mission Center and Support a Mission Priest (OCM)
- Retired Clergy and Widowed Presvyteres Benevolent Fund
- Saint Photios Shrine
- Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Founders Fund
- Social Services
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

**Girls' Night Out and Annual Membership Drive** – Wednesday, February 22, 7 p.m., at Axia Taverna in Tenafly. Join us for a fun night with drinks and meze!

**Clean Monday, Vespers and Great Complime Dinner** – Monday, February 27, our Chapter will host a light Lenten community dinner after the vesper service.

**General Meeting** – Tuesday, March 21, 7:30 p.m.

**Preparations for the Annual Festival** – Every year, our Philoptochos members gather to bake traditional Greek pites, sweets, and pastries for sale at our Cathedral's annual Festival in June. Please join us this year on Wednesday/Thursday, May 10/May 11 to make the pites, and on Wednesday/Thursday, May 17/May 18 to make the sweets and pastries.

**Elections:** This is a very special year as we will have to elect a slate of New Board members for the term 2023-2025 in May. It is very important that you are up to date with your Philoptochos stewardship and church stewardship. According to the Bylaws, a screening committee needed to be appointed, and I appointed Aspasia Melis and Barbara Kostakis.

It is their duty to make sure that all candidates are qualified according to the National Philoptochos Bylaws. If you are interested in joining the Board, please notify any Board Member or Aspasia and Barbara for further information. MAKE A DIFFERENCE- COME JOIN US!!!

***Dues and private donations have been a huge help to keep our mission going. If you have not yet done so, please mail in your 2023 membership dues. You may also use the following link (or access it on the Philoptochos page of our Cathedral's website) to submit your stewardship dues and donations: <https://www.stjohntenaflly.org/philoptochos/about-philoptochos>***

***We are thankful for everyone who continues to support us!***

I wish everyone a happy, healthy, and peaceful and blessed Lent, Holy Week and Easter!  
Καλό Πάσχα!

With love in Christ,  
Maria Kamilaris, President



## ***Greetings from the PTO!***

On behalf of the PTO we want to share our best wishes and blessings for this New Year. We first want to extend our prayers of health and love to Father Angelo, Presvytera and their family. The PTO would also like to welcome Father Gregory Gilbert, Presbyteria Catherine and their family to the Cathedral!

The PTO has been busy planning engaging activities for our children as well as fundraisers in order to continue to support our exceptional Greek & Sunday School programs.

Our first big fundraiser this year was a very well-attended, successful and hilarious Comedy Night with Gus Constantellis (@ConstantlyGus)!



Next came our beautiful OXI Day Celebration. The children presented wonderfully in our gorgeous and most blessed church, while renovations were underway in Fellowship Hall.



We have also been so lucky to be able to come together in person for all PTO meetings and even managed to sprinkle in a ZUMBA lesson during one of them. Family Bowling Night in November was right up our "alley" and our families had a blast! Our children then joined the children of St. Basil's Academy for an enriching service project building gingerbread houses for St. Basil's holiday event. A "sweet" time was had by all.



In December, the PTO hosted a Winter Wonderland Dance for the children which featured a DJ, photobooth and mini Tricky Tray with fun items for the kids!



The Church Christmas Pageant was a huge success and a beautiful sight to behold. We also very much enjoyed watching our Greek School children perform their holiday poems after which we had a visit from Santa himself who helped collect gifts to donate to various local charities for children in need.



Night entitled Lucky in Love! This event replaced our beloved and long-running Tricky Tray but we believe we've started a new and exciting tradition as far as PTO fundraisers go. On behalf of our Greek and Sunday School programs, our PTO sends many thanks to all who came and all who donated to our fundraiser. That night WE were the ones Lucky in Love with the love and support our community showed us! A special thanks to our donors & sponsors and to our PTO members who came together as a force to pull this off.



We are truly blessed to be able to raise our children in this Cathedral surrounded by the love of Father Gilbert and Presbytera, our Greek & Sunday School teachers, all of our families and community. We look forward to planning more great events throughout the year. Please follow us on Facebook (PTO St. John's Cathedral) and Instagram (st.johnstenafly\_pto) for the latest updates and information.

We wish you all a blessed 2023!

*Mariella Kapsaskis & Jennie Ballas*

## **KALI PAREA:**

Welcome to a New Year 2023 and new beginnings at St. John's.

First of all, we would like to welcome Fr. Gregory Gilbert, Presbytera Katherine and their family to St. John's. We are looking forward to getting to know them.

We are planning new activities and events for the coming year. We will have our second meeting on Tuesday, February 21 at 1pm in the church Hall. The presentation will be Prescription Drug Abuse. Sandwiches and dessert will be offered.

We would also like to invite everyone to become members of Kali Parea. No one is too young or too old. Our primary goal is to socialize and enjoy each other's company especially after the isolation from the Covid pandemic. We are looking forward to seeing everyone.

Maria Kyriacou  
President.

## **STEWARDSHIP:**

Dear fellow stewards,

I am happy to report that 2023 Stewardship is off to a good start! Many of you have already made your 2023 pledge. If you have not, please do it this week.

As a stewardship committee, we are working on strategies to connect with more Orthodox Christians within reach of our Cathedral. We have a team of over 16 parishioners who are on the Stewardship Committee. We had our first meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup> and have several action items.

Covid-related lockdowns negatively impacted our Stewardship program in 2021 and 2022. In 2022, we only generated \$350,000 in Stewardship revenue. Under normal circumstances, we would need to increase 2023 Stewardship to at least \$425,000. Unfortunately, 2023 is not normal as we must cover an additional \$125,000 in unplanned expenses. With a goal of \$550,000, the Stewardship committee is asking you to increase your financial commitment.

Your Stewardship Commitment is a testimony of your dedication to your own spiritual growth and the spreading our beloved Orthodox Faith. We thank you on behalf of the Cathedral of St. John the Theologian and pray that 2023 will be filled with joy, good health, and fulfillment.

Yours in Christ,  
The Stewardship Committee

## **2023 Monday Lenten Services and Lectures**

### **Monday February 27**

6:00 pm Great Compline Service

7:00 pm Lenten Dinner sponsored by Philoptochos

Speaker: Anastasia Economos

Topic: Recent Pilgrimage to Constantinople, Holy Lands & Jordan

### **Monday March 6**

6:00 pm Great Compline Service

7:30 pm Lenten Dinner sponsored by Parish Council

Speaker: George Demacopoulos

Topic: "Preparing for Holy Week with the help of St. Romanos the Melodist"

### **Monday March 13**

6:00 pm Great Compline Service

7:00 pm Lenten Dinner sponsored by AHEPA

Speaker: Dn. Vitaly Permiakov

Topic: TBA

### **Monday March 20**

6:00 pm Great Compline Service:

7:00 pm Lenten Dinner sponsored by PTO

Speaker: Rev. Bogdan Bucur

Topic: TBA

### **Monday March 27**

6:00 pm Great Compline Service

7:00 pm Lenten Dinner sponsored by Kali Parea

Speaker: Dean Vafiadis

Topic: "Monastic Wisdom: Letters of Saints & Monks"

### **Monday April 3**

6:00 pm Great Compline Service

7:00 pm Lenten Dinner sponsored by GOYA

Speaker: Telly Papanikolaou

Topic: "Why does God allow evil"

## **AHEPA Bergen Knights Chapter 285:**

TENAFLY, NJ – The Order of AHEPA Bergen Knights Chapter #285 hosted the New Jersey Premiere of “My People” a feature documentary by Anna Rezan on Sunday, January 29th to honor the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

"My People" is the story of the Jews of Greece during the Holocaust, the Axis occupation, the great Greek resistance and the role of the Greek Orthodox clergy. "My People" is a hymn to love and courage as it is discovered by a young woman in her quest to uncover her Greek Jewish family's history. The film is produced, written & directed by Anna Rezan along with Academy Award winners Mitchell Block and Kim Magnusson.

Eleni Purgioti, Pantelis Kodogiannis and Zafeiris Haitidis serve as executive producers.

Anna Rezan joined us from Los Angeles in the Fellowship Hall of Saint John the Theologian. The Fellowship Hall was filled to capacity as over 200 attended from the St. John the Theologian community and the surrounding Greek-American and non Greek-American communities.

Prior to the film a short video produced in 1985 was shown highlighting the Order of Ahepa's role during World War II. Entitled “The Ripples Will Never Cease” it highlighted Ahepa's condemnation of Fascism, Communism and the Nazis treatment of Jews in 1938, the first organization of its kind to do so in the United States; the half-billion dollar Ahepa United States War Bond effort; the Greek War Relief Effort; and the 5 million bushels of wheat that Ahepa delivered to Greece.

The showing was followed by a reception and a Q & A session with Anna.

“My People” was enthusiastically-received by an audience that was deeply moved by this inspiring untold story. The film evoked memories from those in the audience who lived thru the tragic events and the unnecessary loss of their friends. At the same time, they and other attendees, of all ages, found “My People” to be optimistic. Amongst the positive feedback for

the film, an attendee found the film to be "powerful, yet delicately handled in relation to other Holocaust films" that he has seen over decades.

Anna: "I was thrilled to receive an invitation from AHEPA & their Bergen Knights chapter regarding 'My People.' I grew up in Athens, always hearing about the great work that they do and everything they have done for Greece. They are the true Philhellenes and they have proved that unity can result in greatness. My directorial debut carries a strong message ...that is unity and the positive outcomes that it always brings upon the world. I am honored that my cause aligns with that of AHEPA and I feel grateful for this opportunity that paves the way for many other synergies in the future."

Special thanks to Anna for joining us for the New Jersey premiere of her wonderfully well-done documentary film, “My People”.

Official Teaser

<https://youtu.be/9Y60FCTwoIU>

Official Trailer

<https://youtu.be/xcKSjviWWyY>

Visit "My People" on

Facebook [www.facebook.com/mypeoplemovie/](http://www.facebook.com/mypeoplemovie/)

Follow "My People" on

Instagram: [@mypeoplemovie](https://www.instagram.com/mypeoplemovie)





AHEPA held a fundraising “fun” event on Thursday Feb 16<sup>th</sup>, our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Tavli Tournament. It was a successful event with 20 players and a number of onlookers. We raised a good amount towards another service dog for Veterans with PTSD.



Upcoming, AHEPA Bergen Knights will sponsor one of the Monday Lenten Dinner Lecture series, on March 13<sup>th</sup>. We are looking forward to having the Lectures back in person, along with the food!

March 23<sup>rd</sup>, Thursday, will mark the return of the Bergen County Greek Independence Day Flag raising ceremony, cosponsored by Bergen County and the three local AHEPA chapters. It will be held at 2 Bergen County Plaza at 12:30pm. There will be honorees by all three AHEPA chapters. The Honorees from the Bergen Knights will be George Makris , Eva Poneris, Homer Vanides and Jack Kessiosoglou. Come join us for some Inspirational speeches and entertainment, and some snacks at the end.

March 26<sup>th</sup>, Sunday, we will co-Host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Englewood Cliffs Greek Independence Day Flag Raising Ceremony at the Fire House, after Liturgy. Please come and enjoy another day of Cultural Pride.



## GOYA:

St. John the Theologian has been having a wonderful GOYA season so far! Many events in recent months have given Tenafly GOYA so many opportunities, as well as provided us with memories that are sure to last a lifetime. One of our most notable successes is taking second place in the FDF Greek folk dance competition in Maryland! The dance team has truly been working to their fullest potential—it definitely paid off.



The Tenafly girls volleyball team ended the season strong, with our Senior team taking second place trophy! As for fundraisers, our first ever GOYA vs. Alumni volleyball and basketball tournaments were held, and raised funds for Saint Basil's Academy in Garrison, NY.

Our annual "Whiteout" fundraiser also was a huge success, for we were able to raise not hundreds, but *thousands* of dollars in order to support cancer fundraisers and to help those in need.

As for updates in our church as a whole, we were overjoyed to welcome Father Gregory Gilbert to the St. John's family this past month. Our community is looking forward to getting to know Father Gilbert and making him feel welcome.

Some upcoming GOYA events to look forward to include the Sights and Sounds competition, GOYA Olympics, and, of course, GOYA prom, which TenaFly will be hosting this year! The prom committee is so excited to make this prom the best one yet. For more information on any of the listed events, please feel free to contact a GOYA advisor through email ([goya.tena-fly@gmail.com](mailto:goya.tena-fly@gmail.com)). St. John's GOYA wishes everyone a wonderful lent and Pascha!

By Lianna Gourmos



## BOY SCOUTS:

Troop 25 scouts range from 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, with lots of activities from hiking, biking, bowling, civic ceremonies, camping and more. The goal is to help make our scouts mature into young men with communication and leadership skills to bring them into adulthood.

Back in October the scouts visited the Fort Lee Historic Park and then hiked across the George Washington Bridge. We also had a meeting around a campfire one Friday evening. In November the scouts participated in the



Veteran's Day celebration at church, performing the Flag Ceremony. In December they had a District Bowling day at the Montvale lanes.

January started with our Cabin Camping trip at Camp Alpine where we practiced for the Klondike Competition and had lots of fun. At the end of the month we participated in the Klondike Competition where the scouts travelled around to six different areas, pulling their equipment on a dog sled and competing in first aid, fire building and cooking, orienteering, lashings, team building and shelter building. Then they had the sled race competition. They slept well that night.

February 5<sup>th</sup> was Scout Sunday, the 113<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of scouting in the U.S. We attended the Liturgy that day, which coincided with Father Gregory's first Sunday Liturgy at St. John.

If you'd like to join our Scouts, Cubs, Boys or Girls, please contact Peter Hilaris at [hilarispb@aol.com](mailto:hilarispb@aol.com) or 551-486-7489.



## **Scholarship Opportunities:**

### **GOYA & other youth:**

Asteris Fanikos-NJ Hellenic Commission-609 462 5634

Attached is the NJ Hellenic American Heritage Commission scholarship competition in conjunction with the Metropolis. Scholarship Invitational NJ High School Students of Hellenic descent are invited to submit an essay that will be judged by the NJ Hellenic American Heritage Commission and the NJ Department of Education. The winning author will receive a \$2,000 Scholarship. Awards will be presented at the NJ Greek Independence Day reception on March 18, 2023. Submit your response of less than 1,000 words before March 4, 2023. For further information, please contact: [Hellenic.Commission@sos.nj.gov](mailto:Hellenic.Commission@sos.nj.gov) or [afanikos@hotmail.com](mailto:afanikos@hotmail.com) The link follows: NJ Department of State - NJ Hellenic American Heritage Commission - Essay Contest Or <https://nj.gov/state/hellenic-essay-contest.shtml#:~:text=NJ%20High%20School%20Students%20of%20Hellenic%20descent%20are,Hellenism%20Award%20and%20the%20Irene%20Leontarakis%20Agape%20Award.>

Essay Question\* Population realignment is being experienced around the world at an increasing rate and the topic of immigration has become increasingly common in the national dialogue. The United States has been the destination for immigrants seeking a better life since its inception. As a result, the American population has always been comprised of a large number of diverse communities. Like other ethnic groups, citizens of Greece and Cyprus have assimilated into the fabric of the American community; but it has not been without serious challenges. In the 1920's, for example, Greek immigrants were brutally targeted by the KKK and other discriminatory groups. Half a century later, displaced Cypriots migrated to the United States as refugees seeking safety after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. And today, thousands of ethnic Greek Ukrainians have left everything behind as Odessa and Mariupol have been decimated. Reflecting on the Hellenic experience, how do you believe the United States should address the issue of immigration? How do immigrants impact the United States? What can communities do to address continuing population realignment? What benefits and challenges does immigration present to communities and the nation?

### **-St. John the Theologian Scholarship:**

Available to any Seniors in High School who are children of a Steward.

Application from church office. 201-567-5072  
Deadline August 15<sup>th</sup>

### **-AHEPA:**

#### **-Bergen Knights Chapter Scholarship:**

Available to any High School Senior who's parent is a member of the AHEPA Bergen Knights chapter.

[hilarispb@aol.com](mailto:hilarispb@aol.com)

Deadline May 1<sup>st</sup>

#### **-AHEPA District #5 Scholarships:**

Available to High School Seniors who's parent are AHEPA members.

<https://Ahepadistrict5.org/scholarship.htm>

Deadline April 30<sup>th</sup>

#### **-AHEPA National Scholarships:**

Available to High School Seniors, College and Graduate students who are themselves or parents are AHEPA members.

<https://Ahepa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-AEF-Application.pdf>

Deadline March 31<sup>st</sup>

### **-SCOUTS:**

#### **-Tony Triant Memorial Scholarship:**

Available to High School Seniors who are Boy Scouts in Troop 25 or Girl Scouts in Troop 653 who earned the Eagle/Gold award and are baptized in the Eastern Orthodox Faith

Contact [hilarispb@aol.com](mailto:hilarispb@aol.com)

Deadline June 15<sup>th</sup>

#### **-EOCS Scholarship:**

Available to High School Seniors Boy/Girl Scout who earned their Eagle/Gold Award and the Alpha Omega religious award.

<https://www.eocs.org/scholarship>

Deadline April 30<sup>th</sup>

### **-Basil S. Hilaris,MD Memorial Scholarship:**

High School Senior/College student who's parents are Stewards of St. Johns and are entering a medically related program.

Award not to exceed \$2500

For Info or application: [hilarispb@aol.com](mailto:hilarispb@aol.com)

Deadline June 15<sup>th</sup>

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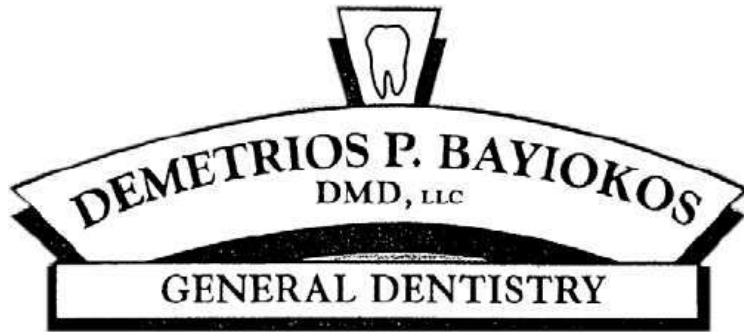
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