



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America National Sisterhood of Presvyteres



~March, 1998 Newsletter~

-From Our President-

January, 1998

My Dear Sister Presvytera,

The recent visit of His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I to the United States created an atmosphere of anticipation and enthusiasm throughout our country. Even though his pastoral visitations were not very long, I hope that many of you were able to see him and receive his blessings when he visited your diocese.

Although, there were many unforgettable moments throughout his month long stay, I think it was his visit in Chicago which, for us as presvyteres, will be the highlight of his trip. After a beautifully-inspiring Vesper Service at the Church of Sts. Constantine and Helen in Palos Hills, His All Holiness spoke to "his" priests and presvyteres, who were deeply moved by his comments.

Later, we were all hosted to a wonderful dinner, where we again had the opportunity to spend time with His All Holiness. Even after a very long and tiring day, he patiently posed for pictures with everyone who was present. It was an evening which will long be remembered.

The combined Clergy and Presvyteres Retreat was held the following day. Our two guest speakers, Rev. Dr. John Chrysavgis and Presvytera Mary Hallick, each spoke with a great deal of sensitivity, which was reflected by the overwhelming response of the audience afterwards. Everyone present agreed, that these combined national retreats should be held annually. Hopefully, another retreat can be held in October 1998.

The National Board of the NSP met in Chicago, prior to the beginning of the retreat. Along with reports from diocese reps and committee chair people, Elaine Gigicos, who also attended the meeting, presented us with some ideas for activities and speakers for our gatherings at the 1998 Clergy-Laity Congress. It will be held in Orlando, Florida from July 5-9, therefore, mark your calendar, so you don't miss the workshops and other events being planned by Elaine.

As President of our Sisterhood, I have been asked by His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon, to attend the weekly steering committee meetings for the Clergy-Laity Congress which are held at the Archdiocese. This is in addition to the Chairmanship of the Archdiocesan Council Clergy and Clergy Family Committee. It is a great honor for our Sisterhood to be given this kind of recognition.

We will invite His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon to one of our sessions at the Clergy-Laity, so that each of you can have the opportunity to speak with him and get to know him better.

In closing, I pray that 1998 will be a blessed year for you and your family.

Your Sister in Christ,
Margaret Orfanakos

-From His Eminence-

January 19, 1998

Dear Presvyteres,

"Christ our lord, Light of Lights, God made manifest, has shone upon the world. O ye peoples, let us glorify Him!"

During these last seventeen months, one of my greatest joys has been the experience of seeing priests and presvyteres who are truly Christ-centered serving our parishes. Indeed, it is heartening to see how the presvtera can enhance the formation of a wholesome family of faith, a spiritual community.

It is in Christ-centered life and shared diakonia that I pray will distinguish each of you as you begin another year of service in faith and love to His Church. May our Almighty God forever guide you in the words of St. Paul "....lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with humility, and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

You are an example and an inspiration to many. My prayers are with you always. May 1998 be a year filled with every spiritual treasure.

With paternal love in Christ,
†Spyridon
Archbishop of America

-New Website Address-

Our Webmistress, Pauline Pavlakos, has asked us to please announce the new address for the NSP Website:

<http://ww2.goarch.org/goa/institutions/nsp>

The entire NSP thanks Pauline for the beautiful homepage she has created for our Sisterhood. It is a great source of instant communication.

News From Around The Country

-Diocese of Atlanta-

submitted by Dora Chelpon, Diocese rep.

The Atlanta Diocese will have a Clergy-Presvyteres Retreat March 16-18, at the Marywood Retreat Center in Switzerland, Florida, located in northeast Florida. The theme of our retreat will focus on our well-being and is titled "The Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Well-Being for Us and Our Families."

Speakers will include, Presvytera Garnette Vasilakis, a nutritionist who will share her expertise on nutrition; Dr. John Chirban, an Orthodox Psychologist, who will speak on our emotional well-being, and Fr. Eugene Shockley of Huntsville, Alabama who will focus on our spiritual well-being.

A Presanctified Liturgy will be celebrated at the St. John the Divine Church in Jacksonville on the occasion of the name day of His Grace Bishop Alexios. We will also have the opportunity to visit the St. Photios Shrine and celebrate Orthros there prior to leaving on Wednesday.

The planners of the retreat are hoping to make it a spiritual experience, as well as have a "light side." What better way to accomplish this than to be among the fellowship of other priests and presvyteres.

-Diocese of Boston-

submitted by Cynthia Paleologos, Diocese Rep.

The visit of His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew to the United States was indeed exciting. His presence in Boston was especially inspiring to everyone here also. During a wonderful breakfast gathering given by the clergy and presvyteres of the Diocese in his honor, a beautiful quilt made by Jeanne Constantinou and signed by the presvyteres of the Boston Diocese, was presented to His All Holiness. It was truly a day to be remembered.

-Mark Your Calendar-

The Midwest Orthodox Clergy Wives, who have hosted three day retreats for the past fifteen years or more at the Romanian Vatra near Ann Arbor, MI, are planning another retreat for September 25-27, 1998. All clergy wives from across the country are welcome. Past speakers have included Bishop Basil, Mother Xenia, Matushka Julianna Schmemann and many others. For more information, please call Carolyn Nastos, in Flint, MI.

-Diocese of Chicago-

submitted by PearlAnn Bithos, Diocese rep.

During the first days of November, His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew came to the Chicago area. While His All Holiness was with us, we were hosts of the National Clergy/Presvyteres Retreat which was sponsored by the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council and the National Sisterhood of Presvyteres. It was so nice to see so many of you there. It truly was a blessing to see this type of retreat take place and it is hoped that more national retreats can be held in the future.

Metropolitan Iakovos, along with the Diocese of Chicago Sisterhood and their families, celebrated the New Year at the annual Clergy Family Vasilopita, held on January 2nd. It was hosted by Fr. Soterios and Pam Demetriou of the Assumption Church in Olympia Fields, IL, with the help of their Philoptochos. Over ninety clergy, presvyteres and "pks" enjoyed an evening of fellowship and the cutting of the vasilopita. Thank you Pam and Fr. Sam for a wonderful evening.

The last few months of 1997 brought new babies to some of our clergy families. Congratulations to Fr. Chris and Michelle Kontos, South Bend, IN, a baby boy; Fr. Michael and Nancy Condos, Peoria, IL, a baby boy; and Fr. John and Kiki Kalomas, Justice, IL, a baby boy.

Future events: A Lenten Retreat, the date and place to be announced; Spring Luncheon and Elections in early May, and the Clergy-Laity Congress in Orlando in July. **Orlando, HERE WE COME!!!**

On behalf of the officers and the entire Sisterhood of the Diocese of Chicago, many blessings to you and yours in 1998!

-Diocese of Denver-

submitted by Pauline Pavlakos & Paul Loejos, Diocese reps.

Axios! Congratulations to His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah who was elevated to the ecclesiastical rank of Metropolitan on November 24, 1997. Eis Polla Eti, Despota!

Welcome to MaryAnn and Father Gregory Wingenbach to the diocese! They are serving the parish of the Annunciation in Missoula, Montana.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Orlando!

News From Around The Country

-Diocese of Pittsburgh-

submitted by Tina Patitsas, Diocese rep.

All of us in our Diocese were very excited with the visit of His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I. Although, we haven't met to share our sentiments, I know that we are all very thankful to have spent time with him. We are really grateful to those individuals who worked so hard, thereby, giving us this wonderful opportunity.

We had a Clergy family Christmas party at the Diocese, hosted by Metropolitan Maximos where he gave a gift to each child. Also, a dinner with His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon was held January 13, 1998 during a pastoral visit to the Diocese of Pittsburgh. It is an honor for us to share such times with our hierarchs. May God grant them many years.

The Clergy/Presvyteres Retreat this year will be held on March 10-12, 1998 at the Antiochian Village. For more information, please contact me, Tina Patitsas.

-Diocese of San Francisco-

submitted by Elaine Stephanides, Diocese Rep.

The Presvyteres Sisterhood of the San Francisco Diocese continues to hold an annual retreat at the St. Nicholas Ranch in Dunlap, CA. This year's retreat will be held on January 30, 31 and February 1 with Dr. Peter Kalellis as our guest speaker. The theme of this year's gathering is "From Stress to Spirituality." Our retreat is a wonderful opportunity to join in fellowship with our sister Presvyteres from throughout the Diocese, to pray together, time to reflect and meditate, to exchange thoughts and ideas and receive some spiritual food with strengthens us in our personal lives.

In 1997 several transfers and new assignments took place in our Diocese. We extend a warm welcome to our diocese to Fr. Angelo and Patricia Artemas to St. George in Downey, CA. Transfers brought Fr. Peter and Victoria Delvizis to St. Gregory Church in El Cajon, CA; Fr. Anthony and Themis Evangelatos to St. George Church in Eugene, OR; Fr. Steven and Kathleen Tschlis to St. Paul Church in Irvine, CA; Fr. John and Maria Hondros to Assumption Church in Seattle, WA; Fr. Ted and Stacy Dorrance to a new mission parish in the Portland, OR area; Fr. Michael and Maria Khoury to St. Katherine Church in Redondo Beach, CA. We were sorry to bid a fond farewell to Fr. Jim and Angela Gavrilos who left our Diocese for the parish in Boca Raton, FL.

We look forward to gathering with all of you at this year's Clergy-Laitly Congress in Orlando, FL.

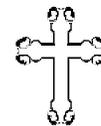
-New York- Archdiocesan District-

submitted by Paula Strouzas, Diocese Rep.

The Clergy, Presvyteres and the families of the New York Archdiocesan and New Jersey Dioceses enjoyed a wonderful gathering at St. Basil's Academy this past summer. We were very happy that His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon was with us throughout the entire day. He blessed our gathering, shared in the delicious food that was prepared by the priests and presvyteres and participated in the day's events. It was truly a joyous day for all of us and our children to be together with his Eminence. We were truly blessed and we are looking forward to a Clergy and Presvyteres Lenten Retreat in the Spring of 1998.

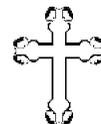
The highlight of the year of course was the visit of His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I. Many priests and presvyteres were actively involved in the preparations for his visit with us from October 24th to the 27th. One of the many special events which took place during these four days, was a Pan-Orthodox Vesper Sevice at the Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral where only, clergy, presvyteres, monks and nuns were invited to attend. Furthermore, on Sunday, October 26th, 20,000 people from the tri-state area gathered into Madison Square Garden for the Partiarchal Divine Liturgy. The Garden was transformed into a holy place-a Holy Church of Christ. It was a spiritual journey, in which hundreds of priests, presvyteres and their families experienced and will treasure forever.

To celebrate the New Year, His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon invited all the clergy families to the Archdiocese for the cutting of the Vassilopita on Friday, January 10. This was another treasured opportunity for fellowship among our families and our spiritual father.



May Their Memories Be Eternal

We have been informed of the passing away of two of our presvyteres. Presvytera Gloria Evrotas, who resided in West Des Moines, Iowa and Presvytera Frances Dali, who resided in Chicago, Illinois.



National Sisterhood of Presbyteres

Information Form

Please fill out the following information and return to Presvytera Goldie Doukas 58 Rankin Road Snyder, NY 14226. This information will help us keep the NSP in closer contact and determine what each Presvytera would like to see the Sisterhood accomplish. All information will be kept confidential. Thank you for taking the time.

Last name: _____

First name: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Parish/City: _____

Diocese: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

Work Phone Number: _____

Occupation: _____

Husband's Name: _____

Child(ren)'s Names and Dates of Birth:

Goals you would like to see the NSP accomplish:

Any special needs you might have:

-A Note From The Treasurer-

Happy New Year--may it bring health and happiness, and all God's blessings to all of you and your families.

The visit of His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I, was an uplifting and exciting experience for all of us within the Greek Orthodox Church in the United States. It was also very special that our Clergy/Presvyteres Retreat included having dinner with His All Holiness--what a memorable experience it was!

I enjoyed seeing all of you who were at the Retreat in Chicago, and now look forward to our meetings during the Clergy-Laity Conference in Orlando.

Thanks for all the notes you send me with your stewardship checks. I do enjoy all of them very much.

In Christ's love,

Theodora Chelpon, Treasurer

Balance in Account as of
December 31, 1997- \$2,072.77

*Thank You!
Thank You!*

-Stewardship Members-

Paid to 1997

Eleni Alexopoulos
Helen Andrews
Karen Balkas
Anastasia Bandy
Georgia Champion
Joanna Christofidis
Georgia Christou
Argyroula Combitsis
Coola Dimas
Alice Gaines
Mary Harbatis
Lula Hondras
Olga Hountalas
Anastasia Jonas
Georgia Kastaris
Angela Katinas
Nicole Keares
Margaret Kireiev
Michele Kontos
Leouela Kostopolos
Voula Liacopoulos
Elizabeth Limberakis
Paula Loejos
Effie Manikas
Georgia Muksuris
Helen Nacopoulos
Veatriky Neofotistos
Helen Nichols
Iris Orfanakos
Christina Papulis
Eva Paul
Christen Petrides
Yota Pieratos
Evonne Raptis
Theano Rexinis
Lucy Scoulas
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Stella C. Sfikas
Joan Simones
Helen Suhayda
Bessie Thanos
Athena Theodosian
Toula Trifon
Garnette Vasilakis

Paid to 1998

Vasilias Apostolakis
Vivian Bacalis
Irene Bebis
Georgia Bissias
Pearlann Bithos
Joan Bogdan
Colette Bourantas
Erasmia Calivas
Eleni Chakalos
Georgia Champion
Dora Chelpon
Flora Chioros
Angelyn Christon
Angie Constantinides
Mary Constantinides
Jeanne Constantinou
Maria Dalber
Daisy Dimon
Eleftheria Dogias
Denise Dorozenski
Aspasia Dorrance
Goldie Doukas
Kathryn Dounelis
Kay Efstathiou
Anna Gallos
Constance Gialopsos
Elaine Gigicos
Christina Govits
Helene Hall
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Helen Karamanos
Maria Karloutsos
Helen Katre
Helen Moskovites Kehagias
Rita Kissal
Kathleen Kolitsos
Maria Kourouvasilis
Elaine Krommydas
Evdokia Kyriakos
Lula Latto
Demetra Leftheris
Despina Leventis
Dianthe Livanos
Kostoula Manousakis
Irene Mantis
Mariann Mantzouris
Amphitrite Manuel
Penelope Metaxas
Magdalene Michalopoulos
Penelope Mihos
Dina Milas
Diana Moskovites
Evangeline Moulketis
Sylvia Nicozisin

Joan Orfanaks
Margaret Orfanakos
Vangie Orfanakos
Theodora Paleologos
Cindy Paleologos
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Irene Palis
Calliope Papagikos
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Mariam Paraschou
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Mary Scoulas
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Gigi Souritzidis
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Irene Supica
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Catherine Tavlarides
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Eleni Theoharis
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Joanna Tsandikos
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Kaliopie Vastakis
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Ann Yankopoulos
Irene Zanetos
Anne Zervos
Mona Zozos

Paid to 1999

Eleni Alexopoulos
Elaine Gigicos
Katherine Lionikis
Iris Orfanakos
Christina Papulis
Catherine Sirigos

National Sisterhood of Presvyteres Membership

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

✓ Please indicate if your donation is for one or 2 years!

1 year 2 years

Amount Sent \$ _____

Make checks payable to *National Sisterhood of Presvyteres*

Send to: Theodora Chelpon • 5800 Keystone Road • Pensacola, FL 32504

Confidential Assistance Program

A Program of the Archdiocese Benefits Committee

It is with great pleasure that we inform you that the Confidential Assistance Program, the newest of the benefits available from our Pension Benefits Program, is in full operation. Please read the following so that you will be properly informed.

The Archdiocese recognizes that the health and well-being of its clergy and laity are the keys to the health and well-being of the Church. We are aware that personal problems, or difficulties at home with our families might detract from effectiveness in our Ministry. We offer the members of the Archdiocese Pension Benefits Program a Confidential Assistance Program (CAP) to help resolve day to day concerns.

Eligibility All Active and Retired Pension Plan members, and members of their household may use the CAP, including clergy, presbyteres, lay employees, family members, and other household members.

Examples of Concerns Just about any kind of personal problem can be handled through CAP.

- Family:

The pressures of everyday living, demands of priesthood, parenting issues, concerns about elderly parents, health - these and other problems can put tremendous stress on household members.

- Troubled Children:

Emotional or behavioral problems, learning disabilities, alcohol or drug abuse can seriously disrupt the family unit. Often the entire family will be helped by some professional assistance.

- Marital Difficulties:

Counseling can often assist a couple in establishing a more satisfying and growing relationship.

- Ministry Related Concerns:

Personal problems, which may occur as a result of the demands of the ministry, can be addressed.

- Drug Abuse:

Professional assistance is available if you or a family member are experiencing problems with illegal drugs or prescription medications.

- Alcohol Abuse:

Problem Drinking can be defined if drinking causes problems, it is a problem.

- Stress or Emotional Problems:

Depression, anxiety or stress can create serious difficulties in both personal and pastoral life. Utilization of the CAP can help resolve these situations at an early stage before they become major concerns.

Other concerns include:

- Health Issues
- Grief
- Retirement Issues
- Resource Issues-
Such as locating appropriate community resources, (i.e., nursing homes, support groups)
- Financial Issues -
Such as knowing when and how to seek legal assistance
- Crisis intervention for family violence
- Crime victim counseling
- Sexual dysfunction
- Relocation adjustment
- Gambling

The CAP Counselors

Counselors used by the CAP are chosen for their professional training and because they are easy to talk to. Their primary job is to assess the problem and provide short-term counseling or a referral to address the problem or issue.

The CAP Hotline

Have a concern? Simply call the toll free hotline. Your call will be answered. Access of the CAP should begin with a call to the toll free Hotline at 1-800-531-0200. **Calls can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.** The caller will talk with a trained counselor who, while maintaining confidentiality, will ask for some personal information including the nature of the problem or issue. The caller may be given the name and number of a local counselor, referred to a local service provider to address the problem or issue, or given the information needed to help the caller.

Cost

There are no charges to Pension Plan Participants or members of their household for using the CAP services. There may be charges however, should they be referred to, and choose to utilize, the services of other professional resources. If a referral beyond the CAP is decided upon, every effort will be made to find the best resource at the lowest cost to the participant. Certain costs may be offset, at least partially, by the Orthodox Health Insurance Program.

Confidentiality

All records kept by the CAP will be maintained by Charles Nechtem Associates and will never be released without the participant's written consent. Confidentiality is strictly maintained, even if a hierarch or chancellor makes a referral.

Any situation that may be causing disruptions in a participant's life.

**The CAP can be of assistance whether the problem is that of the priest or of a family member!
Information or records kept by the CAP will NOT become part of the participant's personnel file!**

- Being Content -

I awoke this morning to a very beautiful sight, a blanket of newly fallen snow completely covered my lawn as well as the outlying trees. For some that may be an everyday occurrence. But in my area, this is uncommon. How peaceful it is to see newly fallen snow. There is a sweet stillness in the air. A peace and a comfort. The ugliness of sin and wickedness suddenly shines with the purity of God. It now possesses a sense of peace, like the peace that only God can give. As the day has continued I am constantly reminded of days gone by. Times in my past in which I spent many hours playing in the snow or just sitting by a fire watching the snowflakes gently fall to the ground.

During my lifetime I have moved several times. It seems as though, with a couple of exceptions, I have never stayed in one place more than a few years. One thought which has always remained with me, however, was to never take anything for granted.

As a presvytera, I do not know what God has in store for me over the next year, let alone the years to come. Will he move me to the flat plains of Kansas, the extreme heat of Arizona, the stifling valleys of Georgia, or the swamplands of Florida? I do not know. Only God knows the plans for my life.

How many times have we looked back on places we have been and thought, "I wish that I had appreciated more what I had while I was there, then I might have enjoyed my time more." I admit that I have thought this myself. The year I spent in one parish was wonderful, but how much better it would have been if I hadn't pondered so much about the mountains I was missing, and the friends I had left behind in order to go there.

By being a part of the clergy family, we experience good times and bad. There are times in our lives when we feel our hearts are going to break from sorrow. There are also times when we are so blessed. These are times in our lives that bring about much emotion. Times that we will think about for a long time. However, they are just that, times. Segments of our lives. They are not our whole lives, just portions, tiny little blips in respect to a whole lifetime.

We do not know what tomorrow holds. We do not know where the Lord will take us. God may move us on from our churches or He may keep us where we are at for several years. Make the most of everyday. Understand that you will probably not be here forever. Whether you are in hard times or good, He will show you things that you have never seen before. Be thankful in whatever state you are in. For today there may be newly fallen snow while tomorrow may hold a tropical beach or a scorching desert. (Philippians 4:11)

- Presvyteres' Pamphlet -

submitted by Angela Gavrilos

It is hoped that the Presvyteres Pamphlet, which was first proposed at the 1994 Clergy-Laity Congress held in Chicago, will be presented for your final approval at our forthcoming convention in Orlando, FL.

The purpose, of our pamphlet, is not to present a set of "rules about what to do or not to do." Rather, as it is explained in the preface, it is:

1. To promote thought and discussion between you [as a potential presvytera] and your fiancee/husband on the subject of Holy Priesthood and the life you will share as a married couple.
2. To encourage you to maintain an active spiritual life and to participate frequently in the Sacraments.
3. To direct you to resources such as, the National Sisterhood of Presvyteres, Diocesan Sisterhoods and printed material.

A preliminary draft of the pamphlet was reviewed by the members of the NSP National Board at their meeting held in Chicago last November. If you are interested in seeing the latest changes, you may request a copy by writing me at: 3009 NW 28th Avenue, Boca Raton, FL 33434.



The Clergy Laity Committee recently met with Archbishop Spyridon at our Archdiocese to complete plans for the forthcoming Conference in Orlando.

From left: NSP President Margaret Orfanakos from Wayne, New Jersey, His Grace Bishop Alexios, Host Bishop from Atlanta, Archbishop Spyridon, Father Dean & Presvytera Elaine Gigicos, Host Coordinators from Orlando, Florida.

Clergy-Laity News

Dear Sister Presvyteres,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to tell you a little about the upcoming 34th Clergy-Laity Congress to be held in Orlando, July 4 - 9, 1998.

We look forward to this Clergy-Laity being remembered as "The FAMILY Clergy-Laity" and are planning events in keeping with the general theme of the Congress...

"One Faith, One Family, One Future: Together to the New Millennium"

For our Sisterhood, plans are underway to make this an exceptionally informative and enriching gathering during our week together. It will be a time to renew old friendships and make new ones as well as attend Awareness Sessions addressing topics & issues unique to the Clergy Family. Suggested topics include:

- Clergy Family Relocation
- Encountering the Joy of Prayer
- The Power of Forgiveness
- Dual Careers of the Clergy Couple
- Marriage Encounter
- Raising Happy P.K.'s
- Health & Fitness
- Financial Planning
- The Stages of Our Life
- Time Management

Our opening event & outing will be on Monday to the top of the Contemporary Hotel's California Grill overlooking The Magic Kingdom. A special part of this luncheon-program will be to honor our beloved widowed and retired Presvyteres. Archbishop Spyridon will be in attendance and address our group at this time. This will be a memorable occasion for all Presvyteres.

The Clergy Family Event will be on Tuesday evening and focus on an evening of fun, fellowship and entertainment by our precious P.K.'s, who will be featured in a program "Voices of Our Hearts".

In keeping with our theme, attention is being given to events for children attending the conference this year, for as Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me for to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven"... Matthew 19:14. Their main event will be on Wednesday with a full day YOUTH RALLY beginning with a Doxology & time with Archbishop Spyridon. The Rally will feature youth speakers and musical appearances by some of our talented Orthodox musicians. Encourage your group to create Diocese & Parish banners and join in on a day of spiritual and social enrichment.

Registration information is forthcoming from the Archdiocese. A discounted non-delegate package of \$295.00 has been set for the Presvyteres with complimentary packages for our widowed & retired Sisters. Child care needs are in the plans for your convenience and will be announced at a later date.

It is a pleasure to serve as the Host Coordinator and I look forward to welcoming you to Orlando this summer!

With kindest regards,

Presvytera Elaine Gigicos

Voices Of Our Hearts



34th Clergy-Laity Congress Clergy Family Event Tuesday, July 7th

Join in for an evening of fun and fellowship with our Clergy Families!

Special entertainment will feature our "P.K.'s" (grades K-12) under the direction of Alexander Constantine of Orlando.

Rehearsals will be held on Monday and Tuesday, July 6 & 7 while the Priests and Presbyteres are attending events and workshops.

Theme t-shirts will be provided for the children to wear during the performance. All they will need is dark slacks or a dark skirt. *(No jeans, please.)*

Please register your children by returning the form provided in this newsletter so that t-shirts may be ordered.

For more information call, Presvytera Elaine Gigicos at:
1-407-321-9683 or E-mail: EleniREI@aol.com

Please mail your registration form to:
112 Red Sky Court
Lake Mary, Florida 32746

"A new heart I will give to you and a new spirit I will put within you." Ez. 36:26

-Book Review-

submitted by Irene Rallis, Des Plaines, IL

PILGRIMAGE TO DZHVARI

A Woman's Journey of Spiritual Awakening
by Valeria Alfeyeva
Bell Tower, New York 1993

Prepare yourself for a journey. A vicarious journey geographically, but hopefully, a true inward pilgrimage. Veronica and her son, Dmitri, will be your travelling companions through the Georgian Caucasus, as you set out to learn the mysteries and truths of the Orthodox Church.

Veronica, a journalist, was raised in atheistic Russia, and after the death of her physicist husband, sets out to find the true faith and Church which the Communist regime had tried to stifle. Their journey starts out as intellectual, but becomes increasingly more and more spiritual as the truths of the Church are expounded and made personal. Veronica starts to feel driven by her heart and soul instead of by her intellect alone, as she searches the cold, dark places of her inward being. As she admits early on, "I have found answers to all the questions, which [they] separated me from my faith."

The places where Veronica and Dmitri find true Orthodoxy are in the monasteries which managed to survive Communism - the great storehouses of spirituality and theological wisdom, love and care. Veronica tell us that at first she felt as an alien in the monastic world, but begins to feel as if she was not a foreigner because of a common homeland in heaven. Every page is packed with spiritual insights and wisdom from the Fathers, but we also learn that the monastics do not mince their words or sugarcoat them, and they have no need to be politically correct, as long as they are living a life that glorifies God. "Every day ought to be a staircase of large and small selfless deeds," leading to the Kingdom.

Within the story is also the quest for understanding of, and proficiency in, the Jesus Prayer. The pilgrims are instructed in how to pray and about repentance, and how the two are so closely related. But when Veronica begins to intellectualize, the wise abbot tells her that the monks are simple people seeking humility, who know only how to live a daily life in order to be saved. We can truly learn from this that only one thing is needful, and if we attain it, we inherit everything.

There is also a discussion on the priesthood: "We'd got used to the fact that it was worth listening when we met a priest - everything would turn out well." "Fr. David told us that we could not even begin to imagine how physically difficult it is and what total self-giving it requires to be on duty for a whole week in Church, baptizing, marrying, singing the Liturgy - but what a peace descends afterward." "Any human occupation is of doubtful value, but a priest unites heaven and earth, God and mankind in the mystery of the Eucharist."

Towards the end of the book, when Veronica reflects on where she has been, where she is, and where the Lord will want her next, she says the following, which struck me deeply as a Presvytera: "I've been granted so much, on sea and on land, along every path, all earth's roads, along which You lead me to Yourself, my God ... Could I really have lived in any other way, or have had any more than I have now?"

This is an incredible book, one of my favorites, to which I return again and again for its pearls. I pray it will teach and enlighten you on your personal God-given journey as it has me. KALO TAXIDI! (*available from St. Vladimir's Bookstore*)

-The Listening Connection-

submitted by Tina Patitsas

Throughout our busy lives as presvyteres, many of us seek someone who can be a friend, but we don't always know where to turn. The purpose of having the TLC, The Listening Connection, is to let us know which of our presvyteres would be available to listen to our struggles or joys or whatever else it is we want to talk about.

Although, a list is not available for callers yet, we are looking for listening volunteers. If you are someone who has the time, is interested in being a listener and you are a non professional in the fields of law, counseling, medicine or nursing, please contact me, Tina Patitsas. Once the listeners are determined, the green light will be given for callers. The TLC is not to be confused with the Confidential Assistance Program (CAP), which is explained in detail elsewhere in our Newsletter.

-What Would You Do If?-

Have you ever had a situation that conflicted with Church activities and you didn't know what to do? The following are a couple of those possible scenarios that were shared by PearlAnn Bithos. We would love hearing from you to find out what you would do. The hope is that this column will promote discussion and participation from our fellow sisters. Answers to these and sharing of other possible scenarios can be sent to:

Presvytera Goldie Doukas
58 Rankin
Road Snyder, NY 14226.

They will be printed in our next issue of the NSP Newsletter.

Senerio #1

Your child has been chosen to participate in an "all-star" band that will march at Walt Disney World. You and your husband have already given permission for the child to participate in this all-expense paid honor. Final confirmation has been sent to you with dates of this program, and when does this take place? During Holy Week! You make the call!!!

Senerio #2

You have been promoted to a supervisory role in your firm, which you travel extensively. You are sent to another state for a week for a big deal that you need to close for your company- when does this happen??? Why of course, it's during Holy Week!! How do you handle this? How does your husband and your family handle this?



Voices Of Our Hearts

Registration

**Clergy Family
Event**

Tuesday, July 7th

Please mail this registration form to:

Presvytera Elaine Gigicos
112 Red Sky Court
Lake Mary, Florida 32746

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Children	Age	Grade	Tee Shirt Size

“A new heart I will give to you and a new spirit I will put within you.” Ez. 36:26

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- New Website Address -
<http://ww2.goarch.org/goa/institutions/ntp>

1998 Clergy-Laity



Power Walks

RISE AND SHINE.....

....each morning at 6:30a.m. for a power walk around the Marriott Hotel Golf Course. Each day will begin with a short inspirational devotional and then you can walk at your own pace. Commemorative T-Shirts will be available.

Watch for more details in the Orthodox Observer!

Presvytera Goldie Doukas, Editor
National Sisterhood of Presbyteres
58 Rankin Road
Snyder, New York 14226