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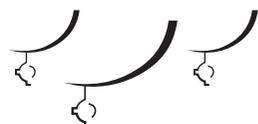
Our Mission

Our Mission is to become faithful followers of Christ and thus active Greek Orthodox Christians by accepting and submitting to the Will of our Lord so that we may realize salvation and enter into the Kingdom of God.

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE....

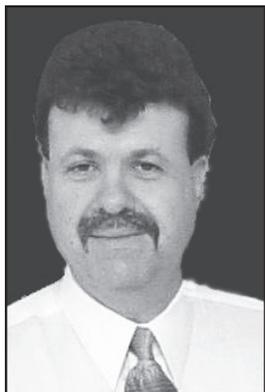
Farewell Message - by Father Michael	3
The Devil - by Father Tommy	4
Youth News	10
Around CharlotteTown	11
Preschool News	12
Greek School News	14, 15

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A Message From The Editor



This will be a short and sweet article. Wishing everyone a Great Summer, and more about our New Priest in the next issue.

Everybody, be safe,
Angelo Pete Politis

Hello again everybody,

I hope everyone had a Happy Easter. Congratulations to all students graduating from Sunday School, Greek School, and Preschool. More about the Seniors in the next issue.



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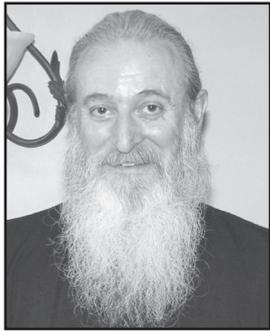
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Remarks From Father Michael



by **Father Michael Varvarelis**
Dean of the Cathedral

Dear Friends, Christos Anesti!!

I greet you with all my love and appreciation of serving and being your Priest for the last ten years. Thank you for your kindness, support, encouragement, love and respect, as well as, your patience for putting up with me all these years.

My friends, my heart is sad as I am relating to you that I will be leaving my position as Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Charlotte on May 31st. As you know my daughter, Aggeliki, lost her husband last year from cancer when he was 33 years old and she was 32. They were able to raise 3 wonderful children who are now without a father or a grandfather as he passed away 3 years prior to his son leaving this earthly life.

Since the children do not have a father or a grandfather, Presvytera and I visit as often as we can, and my daughter and her children also visit, but we are nine – ten hours away by car. This past year I was battling with how we could offer better support for my daughter in her time of significant need. This was an obvious crossroad, to move away from our Holy Trinity and my blessed parishioners and request for an opportunity to serve in a vacancy with a Community close to my children, or continue with the current state of

affairs of visits every 2 or 3 months up to Pennsylvania and Aggeliki visiting here with her children typically twice a year.

After much prayer and trust in the Will of God, I made myself available to the Metropolis of Pittsburgh; my request was that if a vacancy would arise there, then I wished to be considered.

Recently I was informed that a vacancy existed close to my daughter and it was offered to me; I took it as a sign from the Lord and accepted the position. Now I needed to communicate this in an orderly fashion with our Parish Council and with all of you and of course with our Metropolitan Alexios.

I allowed for the rest of Great Lent to come to its conclusion and for Holy Week to pass. Last Tuesday, April 14th, I called a special Parish Council Meeting and I presented the hard and difficult news. It was tough for all of us there. The councilmen while understanding the reason and the need for me to move to Pennsylvania attempted to present options and solutions. I deeply appreciated their moving comments. Their insight of changing my decision and their wish to see another direction to develop was moving. They had tears and I could not hold mine back, either. They are part of my life and it became obvious that I am part of their lives.

I do feel that Holy Trinity is a very strong, progressive, faithful and appreciative Community and I am humbled to witness and be part of this blessed family.

I discussed at the meeting that I would see Metropolitan Alexios the next day and present to Him what is developing and ask His permission and blessing.

Also I mentioned that my last day as your official Priest will be Pentecost Sunday, May 31st, the day of our Panegeri and Nameday Celebration.

I went on Wednesday, April 15th, in the morning to our Metropolitan Alexios in Atlanta and discussed with

Him my condition and what is happening and asked for His understanding. I also conveyed to Him the love of our Parish Council members and our Parish. Also I mentioned to His Eminence the great concern of our Parish Council for the future of our Cathedral. I requested for a talented, experienced, dedicated and successful Priest to take over my responsibilities. He once more mentioned His love and respect for Holy Trinity and discussed with me whom should be considered as my successor.

His Eminence asked for the cell phone numbers of the Parish Council President and Vice President. I, of course provided this to Him. Later on that same day He called and talked to them.

I would also like to mention that Fr. Gregory Georgiou will serve as the Interim Proistamenos for the month of June and until the arrival of the new Proistamenos. Fr.

Gregory has always been kind, gracious and an ideal co-celebrant that has helped the Community the last few years being with us Sunday after Sunday and of course the

past three Holy Weeks and Paschal Seasons. I have been honored to have him and I am very grateful to him.

I believe that I have briefly mentioned all the facts surrounding my departure. In conclusion, I would like to express Presvytera's and my deep gratitude to our Parish Council, Philoptochos, Holy Trinity Foundation, all the different Boards, Committees, groups, families and each and every one of our Parishioners of our beloved Holy Trinity Cathedral for your thoughtfulness, love, friendship, devotion and deep care you have always shown to us. You have given us much pride to have served in such a great Community. I also would like to ask for your prayers, understanding and forgiveness in this very difficult decision that has been made. You will always be in my thoughts and prayers.

In the Resurrected Christ, I remain eternally grateful to all,

Fr. Michael Varvarelis

You have given us much pride to have served in such a great Community. I also would like to ask for your prayers, understanding and forgiveness in this very difficult decision that has been made. You will always be in my thoughts and prayers.

Αγαπητοί Φίλοι, Χριστός Ανέστη!!!

Σας χαιρετώ με όλη την αγάπη και την εκτίμησή μου από την Διακονία μου σαν Ιερέυ σας τα τελευταία δέκα χρόνια. Σας ευχαριστώ για την καλοσύνη σας, την υποστήριξη, την ενθάρρυνση, την αγάπη και το σεβασμό, καθώς και την υπομονή σας που είχατε όλα αυτά τα χρόνια.

Φίλοι μου, η καρδιά μου είναι λυπημένη, καθώς σας ενημερώνω ότι θα αποχωρήσω από τη θέση μου ως Προϊστάμενος του Καθεδρικού Ναού της Αγίας Τριάδος στο Charlotte στις 31 Μαΐου. Όπως γνωρίζετε η κόρη μου, η Αγγελική, έχασε το σύζυγό της τον περασμένο χρόνο από καρκίνο όταν ήταν 33 ετών και αυτή 32 ετών. Τους χάρισε ο Θεός τρία υπέροχα παιδιά που είναι τώρα χωρίς πατέρα και χωρίς άλλο παππού, αφού ο άλλος παππούς απεβίωσε τρία χρόνια πριν από το γιο του, τον γαμπρό μου.

Δεδομένου ότι τα παιδιά δεν έχουν πατέρα ή άλλον παππού, εγώ μαζί με την Πρεσβυτέρα μου τους επισκεπτόμαστε όσο πιο συχνά μπορούμε, και η κόρη μου με τα παιδιά της μας επισκέπτονται, επίσης, αλλά είμαστε 9-10 ώρες

μακριά με το αυτοκίνητο. Αυτό το περασμένο έτος ήμουν ανήσυχος διερρωτώμενος με το πώς θα μπορούσαμε να προσφέρουμε καλύτερη στήριξη στην κόρη μας τώρα που διέρχεται αυτή την κρίση και έχει τεράστια ανάγκη. Αυτό ήταν ένα σταυροδρόμι για να αποφασίσουμε η να αποχωρήσουμε από την Αγία Τριάδα και τους ευλογημένους ενορίτες μας με το να παρακαλέσουμε όταν η ευκαιρία παρουσιαστεί με μια κενή θέση σε Κοινότητα κοντά στα παιδιά μου, ή να συνεχίσουμε με την τρέχουσα πρακτική των επισκέψεων κάθε δύο με τρεις μήνες στην Πενσυλβάνια και με την Αγγελική να μας επισκέπτεται με τα παιδιά της δύο φορές το χρόνο.

Μετά από πολύ προσευχή και την εμπιστοσύνη στο Θέλημα του Θεού, έκανα τον εαυτό μου διαθέσιμο στη Μητρόπολη του Πίτσμπουργκ. Το αίτημά μου ήταν ότι αν θα δημιουργηθεί μια κενή θέση εκεί, τότε θα ήθελα να με λάβουν υπ' όψιν.

Πρόσφατα πληροφορήθηκα ότι μια κενή θέση δημιουργήθηκε κοντά στην κόρη μου και προσφέρθηκε σε μένα. Το πήρα ως σημάδι από τον Κύριο και δέχτηκα τη θέση. Τώρα

χρειάζονταν να επικοινωνήσω αυτό κατά εύρυθμο τρόπο με το Κοινοτικό Συμβούλιο μας και με όλους στην Ενορία μας και φυσικά με τον Μητροπολίτη Αλέξιο .

Άφησα το υπόλοιπο της Μεγάλης Σαρακοστής να φθάσει στο τέλος της και την Μεγάλη Εβδομάδα να περάσει. Την περασμένη Τρίτη, 14 Απριλίου, έκανα έκτακτη συνάντηση του Κοινοτικού Συμβουλίου και παρουσίασα το σκληρό και δύσκολο νέο. Ήταν σφικτές οι καρδιές σε όλους μας εκεί. Τα Μέλη του Συμβουλίου, ενώ καταλάβαν την αιτία και την ανάγκη για μένα να μετατεθώ στην Πενσυλβάνια προσπάθησαν να παρουσιάσουν άλλες επιλογές και λύσεις. Εκτίμησα βαθιά τα συγκινητικά λόγια τους. Την προσπάθειά τους να αλλάξουν την απόφασή μου και την επιθυμία τους να δουν ότι θα μπορούσε να βρεθεί κάτι άλλο από αυτό που έλεγα εγώ. Είχαν δάκρυα και εγώ φυσικά δεν μπορούσα να κρατήσω τα δικά μου. Έχουν γίνει μέρος της ζωής μου και κατέστη προφανές ότι και εγώ είμαι μέρος της δικής τους ζωής.

Fr. Michael Continued on page 5

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THE DEVIL

Fr. Tommy D. Vlahos

Ο ΔΙΑΒΟΛΟΣ - 1 -

Διάβολος είναι ο ποιών διαβουλάς . Είναι ο διαβάλλων, ο συκοφαντών . Γενικά σστή Θρησκευολογία ο όρος διάβολος σημαίνει τον πονηρόν δαίμονα, ή τον σατανάν , ή αλλιώς τό πνεύμα του κακού .

Περί των δαιμόνων η Ορθόδοξος Χριστιανική Εκκλησία στηρίζεται στην Αγία Γραφή . Στην Επιστολή του Ιούδα στίχ. 6 , καθώς και στην Επιστολή Πέτρου Β΄, κεφ. 2.στίχ. 4 , φαίνεται καθαρά η μαρτυρία των αμαρτησάντων αγγέλων που έγιναν δαίμονες . Στην Ιούδα Επιστολή (60 μάς λέγει : Τους αγγέλους που δέν φύλαξαν τό υψηλό τους αξίωμα , αλλά εγκατέλειπον την εν ουρανοίς κατοικίαν των και ζώην , τούς έχει φυλάξει διά νά δικαστούν , κατά τή μεγάλη ημέρα τής Κρίσεως , δεμένους στό πνευματικό σκοτάδι και παντελή άγνοια τής Θείας Χάριτος και αληθείας μέ δεσμά αιώνια , που δέν θά συντριβούν ποτέ . Και στην Επιστολή του Πέτρου διαβάζουμε : Ο Θεός τούς αγγέλους όταν αμαρτήσανε , δέν λογάριασε , αλλά αλυσοδεμένους στό σκοτάδι τούς έρριξε και τούς παρέδωκε νά φυλάσσωνται διά νά δικαστούν κατά την ημέρα τής κρίσεως . Ο θείος Παύλος χαρακτηρίζει τό διάβολο ως : τόν βελίαρ, ή τόν σατανάν , ως θεόν του αιώνος τούτου , που σπρώχνει τόν άνθρωπον είς την αμαρτίαν γιατί πολύ εύκολα * μετασηματίζεται είς άγγελον

φωτός * (Β. Κορινθ. 11.14) Δηλ. Και αυτός ο σατανάς μεταβάλλεται , κατά τό εξωτερικόν του σχήμα σέ άγγελον φωτός . Πειράζει και απολπανά τούς ανθρώπους . Μόνο τόν Ιησούν δέν αποπλάνησε , και τούτο γιατί από Αυτόν τόν Θεόν λαμβάνει την άδειαν , πώς είναι δυνατόν νά Τόν αποπλανήσει ; Εναντίον του διαβόλου , σύμφωνα μέ την Ορθόδοξη πίστη , μπορεί νά αντισταθεί κάθε πιστός Χριστιανός , όταν στή ζωή του κάνει τό θέλημα του Θεού και ζητάει τή βοήθειά Του , όπως

φαίνεται από την ανωτέρα όλων των προσευχών , τής Κυριακής προσευχής , που όλοι μας λέμε τό : * Μή εισενέγκεις ημάς είς πειρασμόν , αλλά ρύσαι ημάς εκ του πονηρού * .

Όλα τά πλήθη του Χριστιανικού κόσμου φαντάζονται , παραστατικά , τό διάβολο, δηλ. μέ ανθρώπινη μορφή , αλλά τερατώδη και αποκρουστική . Είναι μαύρος στό σώμα και στό πρόσωπο , φέρνει κέρατα , ουρά , πτέρυγας , κατά κανόνα δέ έχει πόδια τράγου , είναι κουτσός και έχει μακρυνά νύχια κ.λ.π..... Τό μαύρο παρωμαρίζει την κόλαση .. Έτσι φαντάζονται κατά τόπους οι Χριστιανοί τό διάβολο .

Μέ τό όνομα του σατανά , που θά πεί αντίπαλος , ή του διαβόλου που θά πεί συκοφάντης , η Αγία Γραφή εννοεί ένα προσωπικό όν , άόρατο αυτό καθ'εαυτό του οποίου η ενέργειες φανερώνονται στόν κόσμο σαν πειρασμοί .

Διαβάζοντας ο κάθε αναγνώστης τήν Αγία Γραφή , καταλαβαίνει ότι κάποιον μυστηριώδες όν έπαιξε μεγάλο ρόλο από

τήν αρχή τής ανθρώπινης ιστορίας . Από τότε αρχίζει νά φθονεί τόν άνθρωπο και χρησιμοποιεί όλες του τίς πανουργίες και τό ψέμα για νά καταστρέψει τόν άνθρωπο και την ευτυχία αυτού . Στην Καινή Διαθήκη φαίνεται ότι πειράζει τόν Κύριο , γιατί η δημόσια ζωή του Κυρίου ήταν ένας αγώνας κατά του διαβόλου , και συνεχίζεται και σήμερα ως πόλεμος κατά του διαβόλου από τούς πιστούς Χριστιανούς . Αμήν .

Ιερέας π. Ταξιάρχης Δ. Βλάχος .

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Continued from page 3

Πιστεύω ότι η Αγία Τριάδα είναι μια πολύ ισχυρή, προοδευτική, πιστή και ευγενέστατη Κοινότητα και είμαι ευγνώμων που είμαι μέρος αυτής της ευλογημένης οικογένειας.

Συζήτησα κατά τη συνεδρίαση ότι θα πήγαινα να δω τον Μητροπολίτη Αλέξιο την επόμενη μέρα και να παρουσιάσω σ' Αυτόν τις εξελίξεις και να ζητήσω την άδεια και την ευλογία Του.

Επίσης ανέφερα ότι η τελευταία μου μέρα ως Προϊστάμενος του Καθεδρικού Ναού της Αγίας Τριάδος θα είναι η Πεντηκοστή, Κυριακή 31 Μαΐου, η ημέρα της εορτής και Πανηγύρεως της Εκκλησίας μας.

Το πρωί της Τετάρτης 15 Απριλίου, πήγα στον Μητροπολίτη Αλέξιο στην Ατλάντα και συζήτησα μαζί Του την κατάστασή μου και τι συμβαίνει και παρακάλεσα για την κατανόησή Του. Επίσης μετέφερα την αγάπη του Κοινοτικού Συμβουλίου και της Ενορίας μας. Επίσης ανέφερα στον Μητροπολίτη μας τη μεγάλη ανησυχία της Ενορίας μας για το μέλλον του Καθεδρικού Ναού μας. Συγκεκριμένα

παρακάλεσα για έναν ταλαντούχο, έμπειρο, αφοσιωμένο και επιτυχημένο Ιερέα να αναλάβει την θέση και τις ευθύνες μου στον Καθεδρικό. Ο ίδιος για μια ακόμη φορά αναφέρθηκε για την αγάπη και το σεβασμό Του για την Αγία Τριάδα και συζήτησε μαζί μου τους υποψηφίους για να βρεθεί ο κατάλληλος διάδοχός μου.

Ο Σεβασμιότατος ζήτησε τους αριθμούς κινητού τηλεφώνου του Προέδρου και Αντιπροέδρου του Συμβουλίου. Τα έδωσα αμέσως. Αργότερα την ίδια ημέρα τους

τηλεφώνησε και τους μίλησε.

Θα ήθελα επίσης να αναφέρω ότι π. Γρηγόριος Γεωργίου θα είναι ο ενδιαμέσος Προϊστάμενος για το μήνα Ιούνιο και μέχρι την άφιξη του νέου Προϊσταμένου. Ο π. Γρηγόριος ήταν πάντα ευγενικός και ιδανικός συν-ιερουργός που βοήθησε την Κοινότητα τα τελευταία χρόνια που είναι μαζί μας κάθε Κυριακή και φυσικά τις τελευταίες τρείς Μεγάλες Εβδομάδες και Πασχαλιές. Έχω την τιμή να είναι μαζί μου όλο αυτό το διάστημα και του είμαι πολύ ευγνώμων.

Πιστεύω ότι έχω αναφέρει όλα τα γεγονότα γύρω από την αναχώρησή μου. Εν κατακλείδι, θα ήθελα να εκφράσω της Πρεσβυτέρας μου και την δικιά μου βαθιά ευγνωμοσύνη στο Κοινοτικό μας Συμβούλιο, στη Φιλόπρωχο, στο Ίδρυμα της Αγίας Τριάδος, στις Χορωδίες, στους Ιεροψάλτες, στο προσωπικό που εργάζεται, στις κυρίες που επιμελούνται την καθαριότητα της Εκκλησίας, όλα τα διαφορετικά διοικητικά

Μας έχετε προσφέρει πολύ χαρά και ικανοποίηση. Θα ήθελα επίσης να παρακαλέσω για τις προσευχές σας, την κατανόηση και ιδιαίτερα για την συγχώρησή σας γι' αυτή την πολύ δύσκολη απόφαση που έχουμε πάρει. Θα είσαστε πάντα στις σκέψεις μας και στις προσευχές μας.

συμβούλια και επιτροπές, στις οικογένειες και σε κάθε ένα μέλος του αγαπημένου μας Καθεδρικού Ναού της Αγίας Τριάδος για την ευγένεια, την αγάπη, τη φιλία, την

αφοσίωση και τη βαθιά φροντίδα που έχετε δείξει πάντα για μας και για τον Καθεδρικό μας. Μας έχετε προσφέρει πολύ χαρά και ικανοποίηση. Θα ήθελα επίσης να παρακαλέσω για τις προσευχές σας, την κατανόηση και ιδιαίτερα για την συγχώρησή σας γι' αυτή την πολύ δύσκολη απόφαση που έχουμε πάρει. Θα είσαστε πάντα στις σκέψεις μας και στις προσευχές μας.

Θα είμαι πάντα ευγνώμων σε όλους,
Εν Χριστώ Αναστάσι,
π. Μιχαήλ Βαρβαρέλης

Stewardship Committee Updates

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- We collected an average of **\$1,558 a day** in 2014?
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- Our annual expense budget for 2015 is **\$907,677** which is **\$2,494** needed per day?

A father once took his little daughter to see the Statue of Liberty. She was awed by the sight and size of it. She gazed in wonder at the great arm holding up the torch. That night she was restless and couldn't sleep. Her mother asked her, "What's wrong, sweetheart?" I keep thinking of the lady with the torch," she said. "Don't you think someone should help her hold it up?"

Today, the Lord Jesus holds the only light that can dispel the world's darkness. The call of Stewardship is for us to help Him keep holding up that light.

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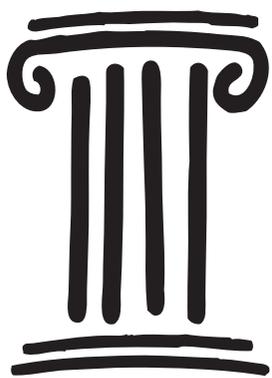
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ΠΕΝΘΗ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΙΚΑ

Nikolaos Groumbas CHARLOTTE - Mr. Groumbas, 74, of Charlotte, NC, passed away Tuesday, the 10th of March 2015, at his home surrounded by his family. He was born the 6th of December 1940 in Episkopi, Naousis, Greece, one of four brothers to the late Ioannis Groumbas and Triantafilia Zarras Groumbas. Nikolaos served in the Greek Army and worked as an agent with Asteras Insurance/realty company in Greece before he and his wife, Despoina, came to the United States in 1985. He and his wife owned and operated Tanners Snack Bar on North Tryon St. for 25 years. He was an avid soccer fan and always cheered for his favorite team Panathenaikos in Greece and was a member of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral. The funeral service was held 11:00 AM, Thursday, the 12th of March 2015, at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral with the Reverend Father Michael Varvarelis officiating. Interment followed at Evergreen Cemetery. Nikolaos is survived by his beloved wife of 40 years, Despoina Groumbas; two daughters, Helen Groumbas and husband, Aris Mamalis of Thessaloniki, Greece and Maria Hadley and husband, Robert Hadley of Charlotte, NC; four grandchildren: Despoina and Georgia of Greece and Elisavet of Charlotte, NC; two brothers: Angelo Groumbas of Greece and Apostolos Groumbas of Germany. In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by a brother, Constantine Groumbas of Greece. Memorials may be made in remembrance of Nikolaos Groumbas to the Renovation Fund of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral or to the Panagia Prousiotissa Chapel, at Elatos Park, Weddington, NC, all in c/o Holy

Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 600 East Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28203. Please specify which fund on the memo line of check. Notes of encouragement and condolences can be made to the family by visiting www.ellingtonfuneralservices.com. Serving the Groumbas family is Ellington Funeral Services, "The Historic Morehead St. Chapel", 727 E. Morehead St., Charlotte, NC 28202. (704)334.6700. Family owned since 1944.

Helen Cottros Polemides CHARLOTTE - Mrs. Polemides, 92, of Charlotte, NC, passed away early Saturday, the 7th of March, 2015, at Carolinas Medical Center Pineville. She was born the 10th of July, 1922, in Charlotte, one of six children to the late Constantine "Gus" Cottros and Joanna Kiritse Cottros. Helen, her mother and sister went to visit Greece during World War II and just the day before returning to the states the war brought the city of Athens, Greece, to a standstill. The three were stranded for five years, during which time she met her future husband, John Polemides. Helen and John corresponded for two years until John was able to move to America. Helen and John returned to Greece to be married and returned back to Charlotte where the two of them enjoyed being active members of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral and the Greek Community. After 16 years of marriage John and Helen had their first child, Milton. She enjoyed being a wife, mother and devoted grandmother who loved to cook for her family. The family greeted friends from 12:30 PM until 1:00 PM Monday, the 9th of March, 2015, at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral. The funeral service followed at 1:00 PM in the sanctuary with the Reverend Father Michael Varvarelis officiating. Burial followed at Evergreen Cemetery where she was laid to rest beside her beloved John. Mrs. Polemides is survived by her son, Milton Polemides and his wife, Denice of Weddington, NC; her three grandchildren: Lena, Yianni and

Nicholas Polemides; and her nephews and nieces, Gus Cottros and wife, Judy of Wilmington, NC, Cecelia Kotsipias of Charlotte, NC, Anna Maria Martin and husband, Kenny of Wilmington, NC, and John Chantis of Virginia. In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by her husband, John Polemides, and brothers and sisters, Nick Cottros, Demitrios Cottros, John Cottros, Mary Kotsipias and Nita Chantis. Memorials may be made in remembrance of Helen Cottros Polemides to the Renovation Fund of Holy Trinity Cathedral, the Philoptochos Society or to the Hellenic Dance Festival, all in c/o Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 600 East Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28203. Notes of encouragement and condolences can be made to the family by visiting www.ellingtonfuneralservices.com. Serving the Polemides family is Ellington Funeral Services, "The Historic Morehead St. Chapel," 727 E. Morehead St., Charlotte, NC 28202; (704) 334-6700. Family owned since 1944.

Sofia Liras Politis CHARLOTTE - Sofia Liras Politis, 75, died suddenly on March 26, 2015, at her home. She was the beloved daughter of the late Andreas Liras and Alexandria Tasios Liras. Sofia worked in several of her family restaurants in the Charlotte area.

She was a member of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral since 1960. Sofia was actively involved in her church and with the annual Greek "Yiasou" Festival. She was a member of Evrytarian Association. Sofia is survived by her husband of 56 years Angelo Politis, her son Andy Politis and his wife Gwen Politis, her two granddaughters Sophia and Eva Politis. In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by her beloved son Louie A. Politis, her sister Maria Liras Hondros and her brother Jimmy Liras. Above all Sofia will be remembered as a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister and aunt. A Trisagion and Funeral Service was held at 12:30 pm on Saturday, March 28, 2015, at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 600 East Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28203, with interment following immediately at Evergreen Cemetery. Pallbearers for her service were Paul Lazarou, Dimitri Kourakos, Nick Hondros, George Kourakos, Steve Bisbikis, Scott Hefner and Pete L. Politis. Memorials may be made to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Renovation Fund, 600 East Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28203. May her memory be eternal. Arrangements are in care of Hankins and Whittington Funeral Service, Charlotte, NC. Please share online condolences at www.hankinsandwhittington.com.

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Cemetery worker, CMPD officer rush to woman's aid

Holy Week in the Orthodox faith, as in other faiths, is a time of reflection, prayer and remembrance. After stopping to purchase some flowers for family and friends, I drove to Evergreen Cemetery.

The cemetery typically is a serene setting for those paying respects to loved ones, walkers – just a calm place to take a break. It consistently is patrolled by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. Even if you are there alone, it's not for long.

The day I was there was no different. I had noticed a walker, a worker in the distance and a car that cruised through slowly. Not an unusual scene.

The man cruised through again shortly after I was walking back to the car to get more flowers. He stopped to ask if I knew the location of the funeral of someone. I told him I didn't and that I was sorry for his loss. He thanked me and then

lingered in the car, which gave me an uneasy feeling, so I made my way back to my car to leave.

As I got into my car and before I could hit the lock button, he had opened my passenger door and was getting into my car. I immediately got out and ran across the cemetery toward the worker I had noticed. I was hitting the alarm button on my key and yelling for help the whole way!

Will, a young man doing his work, called the police and stayed with me until the officer arrived. Will thanked Officer Brandon Sykes, the first responder, for his service.

Will was my angel that day and showed such kindness and compassion. I thanked him and told him he was my new best friend! I'm sorry I didn't get Will's last name. He is in my daily prayers, and the same goes for Officer Sykes and his fellow responders.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

—DEBBIE STATHAKIS, CHARLOTTE

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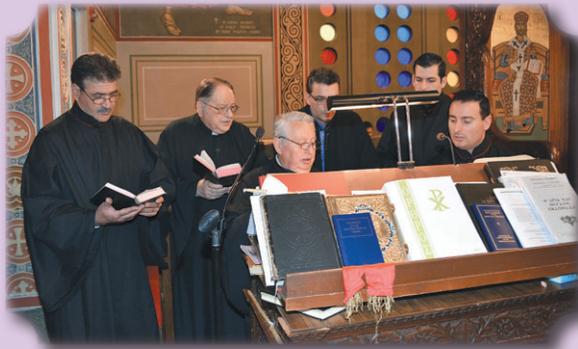
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GOYA-HOPE/JOY News By John Georgopoulos

ANOIXI Greek Dance Weekend 2015 April 24-26 Charlotte, NC)

This year's ANOIXI took place on the weekend of April 24-26th. We are happy to announce that the event was quite successful. It was a full weekend event with guests attending from New York and various dancers from the Metropolis of San Francisco.

On Friday a Greek night was held to welcome our guests. On Saturday workshops took place where professional instructors, who have done hands-on research of customary traditions in various villages of Greece, taught Greek Folk Dance to the dancers from our own community and other dance enthusiasts from surrounding areas in our metropolis. Our instructors this year were **Jordan Elrod** (a previous Hellenic Dance Festival Judge) from Hollywood, Florida and **Mr. Kyriakos Moisidis** (world renowned researcher and former FDF Judge) who joined us from Thessaloniki, Greece. Workshops were held during the day with 100 participants taking part in the learning

sessions. On Saturday night we had a "Paschaliatiko Glendi" featuring Live Music from **Endasi**. Endasi is a band that plays traditional music from all parts of Greece. They play at the annual Metropolis of Atlanta Hellenic Dance Festival and Metropolis of San Francisco Folk Dance Festival, you may have also seen them playing for our annual Panigiri the past two years. In addition to the ANOIXI participants, parishioners from Charlotte and surrounding communities came out to a night of great food, music, and of course lots of dancing!

On Sunday, our Dance Program hosted a farewell luncheon with a great meal cooked by the fathers, uncles, and grandfathers of our dancers. Three of our dedicated groups performed for parishioners and out-of-town guests. On behalf of the Holy Trinity Dance Program and the ANOIXI committee, we would like to thank all the families that donated food and goods for both the "Paschaliatiko Glendi" and the farewell luncheon. We would not be able to put on such a successful weekend without the help and support of our community!

Please join us next year for an Apokriatiko weekend! March 4-6.

Sunday School By Vicki Exarhos

We would like to congratulate, Constantine Boardman (junior division) and Margarita Margiotis (senior division) for winning the North East Conference Level Competition of the 2015 St. John

Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.

They now advance to Alabama where they will represent our community and our District. We wish them all the best!



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Around CharlotteTown By Kathy Xyrafakis

A second chance on the field by Zach Demopoulos

This past summer, I received a once in a lifetime opportunity that I will never forget. For those who may not know, I have had a history of concussions that unfortunately forced me out of playing football as well as other contact sports. Football has always been my passion; so to unwillingly give up the sport I love was very difficult for me. It seemed as if nothing was going my way. Months after this decision, I received a call from my football coach. He told me that a movie was being shot at our school and wondered whether I would be interested in taking the role of a stunt/photo double, as a wide receiver, for actor, Nat Wolff, in the movie *Ashby*. I later found out that this movie includes some well known actors/actresses such as Nat Wolff (*Fault in our Stars*), Emma Roberts (*We're the Millers*), Sarah Silverman, and Mickey Rourke (*Iron Man 2*).

Ashby is an independent comedy/drama that focuses on the character development and relationship between Mickey Rourke's and Nat Wolff's character. My coach said he had referred me to the directors because he believed I would be a perfect fit for the person they needed. Fortunately, they only needed me for the route running as well as the catching. As for the big game time hits, they had another stunt double for that. This was a true gift from God, because not only would I have a chance to be in a movie, but I also had the opportunity of reliving my dream once more. There was nothing more I could ask for in this

world but a second chance to be back on that field.

As Nat's stunt double, I got to be in his active fieldwork scenes, which included workouts in his backyard, football practices, as well as the games. My most memorable moment from this surreal experience was the game scene. I got to make the game winning catch and run it in for a touchdown with a live crowd going absolutely nuts. At that



point, I realized there was nothing more that I could ask for as this was already too much for me to take in. Shortly after the stunt scenes, the producer asked whether I would be interested in being an extra for a few other scenes. I, along with a handful of South Meck football players got to be classmates as well as teammates in the locker room and classroom scenes. If that wasn't enough to take in, they gave me a three word line (one that I would rather not share in this article) as a teammate.

About a month ago, my mother and I had the pleasure of attending the world premiere of *Ashby*, at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City. Throughout this short trip, I was completely in awe as everything felt as if it were too good to be true. In my opinion, I thoroughly enjoyed the movie and felt that it had a nice ending as it brought all of the pieces together and delivered a great message. More often than not, movies that go into this festival do not usually make it to the big screen; however, *Ashby* may be one of the few movies that go against the odds. Just recently, in a multi-million dollar deal, Paramount Home Media Distribution bought the movie, stating

that it may be released this upcoming fall. I really hope for the best with the future of this film but regardless of the outcome, I will always be thankful for this wonderful and unique experience as it will be something that I'll cherish for the rest of my life. Now as I look back, I am truly thankful for everything that God has done and provided for me. Even through all of the hardships that I faced, **God unveiled his answer to me in a very unique way. I really feel that through this experience, he was teaching me to trust him and understand that he will lead the way; all I have to do is follow his path.**

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Preschool By Preschool Staff



Whoos in the News at the Preschool?

Christos Anesti to our Holy Trinity Community.

March and April have been busy months at the preschool. The 2015-2016 Preschool registration began in February and is on-going throughout the year according to class availability. Spaces are limited, please be sure to contact us if you are interested in registering your child or if you would like to schedule a tour. We would love to have you join our preschool family.

Our annual **World's Finest Chocolate candy bar** fundraiser was a huge success. We usually start this fundraiser in



March 25, 2015 Four Year Old Class

February to kick off the start of preschool registration for the coming school year. This year we started the candy bars sales a little earlier than we normally do. We began selling the candy bars in December for stocking stuffers and also sold them at the Hellenic Dance Festival 2015 that Holy Trinity hosted in mid-January. Thank you to all our preschool families and our parishioners who purchased candy bars and also to those families that picked up boxes of candy bars to sell. As we wrapped up the candy bar sales, we started on another one of our annual fundraisers, the **Holy Friday Luminary**



Fr. Michael talking to the children about Greek Independence Day

sales. The luminaries are purchased in "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" a loved one and all the names of the living and the deceased are given to the priest to be blessed. Weather permitting, the luminaries line the sidewalk on East Boulevard during the Holy Friday procession or are placed under the covered walkway in front of the Fr "C" hall in the case of rain. The Luminary fundraiser was also a huge success and again we thank everyone for your support of our preschool fundraising projects.

During the month of March we had

several big celebrations. Our biggest celebration was on March 25th and the children attended church for the **Annunciation of the Theotokos**. After church, the children wearing their blue and white, gathered around the flagpole in the courtyard for a parade. They marched around the flagpole waving their Greek flags and singing the Greek National Anthem in honor of Greek Independence



March 25, 2015

Day. The classes also celebrated Dr. Seuss' Birthday and had special activities and crafts related to some of our favorite Dr. Seuss stories like the "Cat in the Hat" and "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish Blue Fish". On March 17th, we talked about St. Patrick's Day and how the three leaves on the shamrock represent the three aspects of the Holy Trinity... The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. And of course with the blowing in of the March winds, the



The Easter Bunny with the Three Year Old Class

children learned about the windy spring weather and flying "diamond shaped" kites. Our main colors we focused on this month were blue, white and green, and the shapes were the diamond and shamrock. As we continued to travel through the Lenten Season from Clean Monday to Easter Sunday, the teachers centered their religious lessons on the journey towards Pascha. Some of those lessons included the Entrance into Jerusalem, Jesus washing the Disciples feet, the Last Supper, and Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection. The children practiced saying Kalo Pascha, Kali Anastasi, Christos Anesti, Alithos Anesti and learning the Christos Anesti song.

As the April showers rolled in, it brought with it the arrival of the warmer weather and spring fever. The children looked forward to being able to spend more time out on the playground enjoying the beautiful spring weather and taking

nature walks. Along with the outdoor time, the teachers took the opportunity to also use it as teaching time discussing the reawakening of spring, life cycles, April showers and rainbows. The preschool was closed April 6 – 13 for Spring Break which happened to be our Orthodox Holy Week. When we returned after the break, the classes each had their Easter Parties and the Easter egg hunt. We also had a special visitor come to the Easter egg hunt...the Easter Bunny. Unfortunately



The Two Year Old Class rests after the Easter egg hunt

we had to delay the Easter egg hunt a few days due to those April showers. The children seemed to enjoy the delay because they got to have an Easter celebration on two different days. The three and four year old classes had an in-house field trip on April 17th to Atomz Lab. The topic was "It's Camo Time" teaching the children about how animals use camouflage and pigment change. They participated in some fun color change experiments and created beaded bracelets that change colors in the sunlight. It was educational and a



Atomz Lab In-House Field Trip

lot of fun for the children. Some of the other topics covered in April included continuing on the journey to Pascha, baby bird and bird's nests, baby chicks and bunnies, insects, and caring for our

planet. Our main colors for April were purple and yellow and the shapes were the cross and the oval.



Atomz Lab In-House Field Trip

The following are just a few of the things the children work on throughout the year...sharing, taking turns, following directions and the class rules, the alphabet, counting, the months, the days of the week, sorting, matching and sequencing with the goal of being academically, emotionally and socially ready for the coming year. These are just a few of the preschool highlights from this school year and for the months of March and April. Again, we thank all of our parishioners for your continued support of the preschool program and for always supporting our fundraisers. Happy Spring Everyone!

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Philoptochos By Tula Kourakos

On March 10, Philoptochos held their Lenten Covered Dish Dinner Meeting in the Social Room. Over 30 ladies attended. After a brief meeting, the ladies shared their delicious Lenten dishes with each other. Father Michael was our guest speaker. He spoke to us about the Lenten Season and the many ways we can prepare ourselves for it.

The Annual Philoptochos Attic Sale was held on March 14 in Father C Hall. It ran from 8 am until 2:00 pm. Philoptochos sold tables to different vendors and to our parishioners. Many thanks to the people that donated their items to Philoptochos. We had 5 tables! We sold homemade bread and loukoumades made by Ekatirini Georgiou. We also served hotdogs and

fasolada. Our Attic Sale was a huge success again this year. Please keep us in mind for next year when you begin to clean out your closets!! We will be glad to reserve a table for you.

We were busy with Easter Preparations during Holy Week. Philoptochos sold 150 Tsourekia on Palm Sunday. On Holy Wednesday, we dyed over 1000 eggs red. We wrapped the eggs in touile and tied a ribbon on them. We had new white bows donated for the Cathedral and Father C Hall this year. The beautiful Easter flowers were donated by a Philoptochos member. Some of our Philoptochos members helped decorate the Epitaphios. Easter is a beautiful time at Holy Trinity.

Our next meeting will be held on May 12. We will have Elections that night.

Daughters of Penelope

The Daughters hosted their April meeting (a preview meeting at Ballantyne Resort) to explore possibilities of hosting the annual Queen of Hearts Tea and Fashion Show at that property. A few members had a delightful High Tea and decided to have their Christmas meeting there with the High Tea presentation. It was also decided that the February event will remain at Carmel Country Club on February 20, 2016. In addition to the many door prizes, there will be two (2) mink coats offered in the raffle event.

Many tables have already been sold. For those interested in purchasing a table of ten (10) @ \$400 please contact Dianne Leventis at daleventis@bellsouth.net.

The organization voted to contribute \$500 to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral for the use of its facilities for some of its meetings.

The Levine Cancer Institute thanked the Daughters for its generous donation of \$11,000 it raised from its 2015 Queen of Hearts High Tea and Fashion Show held in February at Carmel Country Club.

The May meeting, to elect officers for the next year, took place at the Open Kitchen. No officers were elected.

The Daughters re-printed the Holiday Classics Greek Desserts Cookbook and has it available at any of its upcoming meetings or by contacting Pat Economides at patricia99@bellsouth.net. Price is \$5.00. These make wonderful hostess or birthday gifts or stocking stuffers.

Eleni Livas Bingham

www.dopvenus.org

Choir News By Olga Yamalis

“Humble yourselves, then, under God’s mighty hand, so that he will lift you up in his own good time...”
1 Peter 5:6

Upon our preparatory time before Easter, the Lenten season is the time to reflect repentance, fast and prayer. This Lenten season, the Adult HTC choir rehearsed and chanted a most beautiful musical arrangement by the late Presbytera Anna Gallos on the final Friday Salutations to the Virgin Mary on Friday, March 27. This 15-page Kanon in the Fourth Mode’s melodic line was chanted by her late father, the Reverend Father John Gerotheou.

Our SouthEastern Federation (SFGOCM) recognized Anna’s service and past accomplishments in our Federation and saddened of her passing February 4, 2015. Under the choral direction of Dr. Philip Thevaos, our Adult HTC Choir chanted and dedicated this Kanon to her on the final Salutations of Great Lent which was about the time of her 40 day memorial. May her memory be eternal.

On Holy Friday, the Adult HTC Choir teamed up with the Byzantine Chantors and chanter Dimitri Petropoulos to chant the Lamentations, in addition to our Lord’s Resurrection service, and will continue with Pentecost service in late May.

If any of the Liturgical music of our Faith touches you in anyway, please consider joining one of our HTC Choir Groups—First Service Choir or Second Service Choir—we would love for you to join us.

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NEWSLETTER

March 2015

Remembering March 25, 1821

Greek Independence Day

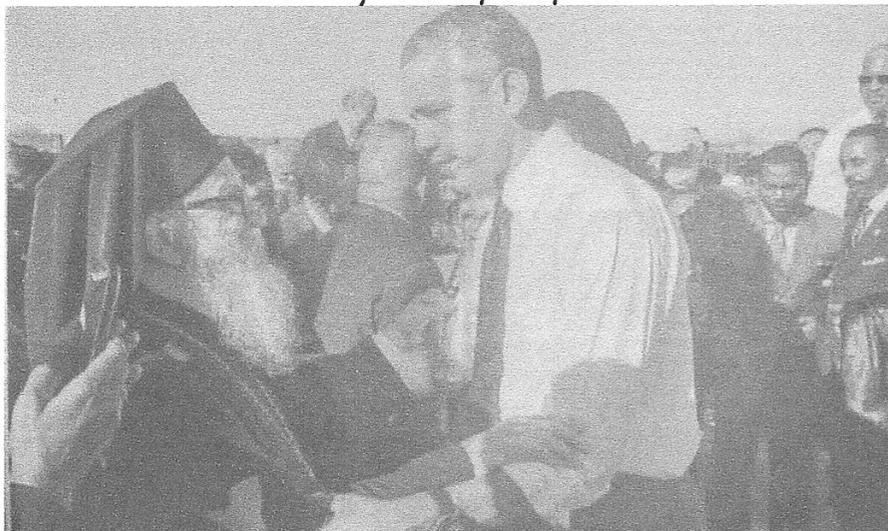


As we celebrate Greece's Independence Day, we are also reminded of the thousands of American Philhellenes who supported Greece's struggle, inspired not only by a just cause but also by the magnitude of Greece's history and its impact on modern society. Today Greek-American relations are stronger than ever and both our countries and nations share the same values and vision for a safe and prosperous world.

Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos



Στιγμιότυπο από τον πρόσφατο εναγκαλισμό
του Αρχ/που Δημητρίου με τον Πρόεδρο
Μπαράκ Ομπάμα



ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ/ΔΗΜΗΤΡΗΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΣ

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY A NATIONAL DAY OF CELEBRATION OF GREEK AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, 2015 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A PROCLAMATION

March 24, 2015

Since the dawn of our Nation, the United States and Greece have shared a bond forged through common struggle and deeply rooted in mutual beliefs. Greek principles guided our Founders as they declared America's independence, and nearly half a century later, as Greek revolutionaries fought to throw off the yoke of an empire, they renewed the creed that unites free people everywhere: ordinary citizens can govern themselves. Today, we celebrate the Hellenic spirit that has inspired our two great nations — separated by an ocean but linked by a shared destiny written not for us, but by us.

It was the democratic example of ancient Greece from which the founding generation of Americans drew strength. In our Nation's earliest days, we sought wisdom from Greek history and philosophy, and we found hope within the pages of timeless Greek texts. Mindful of the lessons of the Hellenic story, courageous patriots undertook a bold experiment, securing the blessings of liberty and laying the foundation for more than two centuries of progress.

But even in the cradle of democracy, the promise of freedom was not preordained. More than 2,000 years after the values of self-determination first found expression in a small group of Hellenic city-states, the Greek people stood up against tyranny and sacrificed to restore democracy to its birthplace. They met brutal hardship with unbreakable character, drew inspiration from America's revolution, and never lost faith in the ideals Greece has always represented.

As Americans and Greeks, we are heirs to a long legacy of hard-won freedom and justice — values which we must not only preserve, but renew and refresh in our own time. Generations of Greek Americans have enriched the United States and strengthened our communities. Their heritage and vibrant culture are reflected in our story of achievement and constant striving; their voices are among the chorus of citizens who have driven this country inexorably forward. Today, as Greece works to lay a foundation for long-term prosperity, our Nation continues to support our friend and NATO ally and to help the Greek people reach for the future so many have sought — one where all women and men are free to pursue their dreams, realize their potential, and secure a brighter tomorrow for their children.

Together, we continue the righteous task of perfecting our two nations. On the 194th anniversary of Greek independence, let us celebrate the enduring ties between our peoples and stand with those around the world who long for liberty and the chance to join in the noble work of building a democracy.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 25, 2015, as Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand fifteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-ninth.

BARACK OBAMA

Νέα & Φωνές του Ελληνικού Σχολείου Αγίας Τριάδος

Remembering March 25, 1821 - Greek Independence Day

Με λαμπρότητα και ιδιαίτερη υπερηφάνεια γιορτάσαμε και φέτος την 25^η Μαρτίου 1821 Σβήνοντας ένα κομμάτι από το παρελθόν είναι σαν να σβήνεις αντίστοιχα ένα κομμάτι από το μέλλον
(Γ.Σεφέρης)

Ελληνικό Σχολείο Αγίας Τριάδας



Στην κατάμεστη αίθουσα πολλαπλών εκδηλώσεων του Καθεδρικού Ναού Αγίας Τριάδος, οι περίπου 100 μαθητές και εκατοντάδες γονείς, συγγενείς και συμπάροικοι γιόρτασαν με λαμπρότητα τη διπλή τρανή ελληνοχριστιανική γιορτή του Ευαγγελισμού της Θεοτόκου και της εθνικής μας παλληγενεσίας. Οι μαθητές παρήλασαν με υπερηφάνεια και με την ευλογία του προϊσταμένου του Καθεδρικού Ναού πρωτ. Μιχαήλ Βαρβαρέλη έψαλαν τον ακάθιστο ύμνο «Τη Υπερμάχω Στρατηγώ», τους εθνικούς ύμνους Ελλάδας και Αμερικής, τραγούδησαν παραδοσιακά τραγούδια και χόρεψαν πατριωτικούς χορούς.

Αμέσως μετά τη γλαφυρότατη και λίαν περιγραφική πανηγυρική ομιλία του π. Μιχαήλ, οι μαθητές όλων των τάξεων είχαν την ευκαιρία να κάνουν μια ιστορική αναδρομή στα ηρωικά γεγονότα του Έπους του '21 με απαγγελίες ποιημάτων και παρουσίαση πατριωτικών σκετσ. Κι αυτό γιατί «ό,τι δε γιορτάζεται ξεχνιέται, φθείρεται στο πέρασμα του χρόνου και πεθαίνει».

Κατά τη διάρκεια της εκδήλωσης έγινε και η απονομή των βραβείων και των εκ 50 δολαρίων 6 δωροεπιταγών του ζεύγους Αθανασίου και Ελευθερίας Νικοπούλου και μιας του ζεύγους Λυκούργου και Μαρίας Μηνακάκη στους 7 μαθητές και μαθήτριες που πρώτευσαν στο διαγωνισμό ζωγραφικής «25^η ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ – Πριν και Μετά», τον οποίον οργάνωσαν, όπως κάνουν κάθε χρόνο, με εξαιρετική επιτυχία και καθολική συμμετοχή των μαθητών, η διεύθυνση και οι εκπαιδευτικοί του σχολείου δυο εβδομάδες νωρίτερα. Στο διαγωνισμό ζητήθηκε από τους μαθητές να απεικονίσουν σε χαρτί, με δημιουργική φαντασία και ζωγραφική επιδεξιότητα, τα ανάμεικτα συναισθήματά τους για τα 400 χρόνια σκλαβιάς και φυλακής καθώς και για τα αγαθά της ελευθερίας που χάρισε στους Έλληνες προγόνους τους η ηρωική επανάσταση του 1821.



Αξίζουν θερμότατα συγχαρητήρια στους πρωτεύσαντες Αλεξάνδρα Δεμέστιχα (ΝΗΠΙΑΓΩΓΕΙΟ), Δανιήλ Φιόρε (ΠΡΩΤΗ ΤΑΞΗ), Ανδρέα Καρύγιαννη (ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ ΤΑΞΗ), Μαρία Συπούκη (ΤΡΙΤΗ ΤΑΞΗ), Κυριάκο Ευριπίδη (ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ ΤΑΞΗ), Γαβριέλλα Μελετίου (ΠΕΜΠΤΗ ΤΑΞΗ) και Παναγιώτα Μηνακάκη (ΕΚΤΗ ΤΑΞΗ) αλλά και σε όλους τους μαθητές που πήραν μέρος στο διαγωνισμό και είχαν την ευκαιρία να εναισθητοποιηθούν και να μάθουν περισσότερο για το ηρωικό έπος του '21 και να αναπτύξουν μεταξύ τους την ευγενή άμιλλα προς διάκριση.

Ο διευθυντής του σχολείου, Ελευθ. Περούλας, είπε μετά την θαυμάσια αυτή εκδήλωση: «Η εκδήλωση αυτή θα μείνει χαραγμένη στις καρδιές των παιδιών και τις δικές μας. Τέτοιες εκδηλώσεις μας δυναμώνουν και μας θεριεύουν την πίστη μας προς τα ελληνοχριστιανικά μας ιδεώδη, μας ενισχύουν την ελληνική μας συνείδηση και μας εμπνυχώνουν στο θεάρεστο αγώνα μας για ελευθερία, δημοκρατία και ειρήνη».

Οι γονείς, παππούδες, γιαγιάδες και φίλοι δεν χόρταιναν να καμαρώνουν τα βλαστάρια τους, τους αυριανούς ηγέτες της ελληνικής κοινότητας Αγίας Τριάδος. Ιδιαίτερα συγχαρητήρια αξίζουν στους μαθητές, τους εκπαιδευτικούς, τους γονείς και τις άοκνες κυρίες του Συλλόγου Γονέων και Διδασκάλων και στον πανταχού παρόντα σεβαστό μας π. Μιχαήλ. Και του χρόνου!



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