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St. Catherine's Newsletter

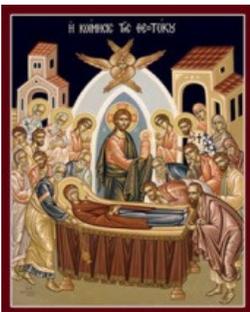
Assumption Greek
Orthodox Church

September, 2010



CONTRIBUTORS

Eleni Caprio
George Dervis
Niko Lakerdas
Marika Maggos
Christos Panos



Mississippi Mission by Niko Lakerdas

This summer I went on a service trip with my classmates from St. Ignatius College Prep. We rode in a greyhound bus, and went to the poorest county, in the poorest state, Mississippi. Our mission was to help repair homes for disadvantaged people in this area.

My specific group remodeled a home for a veteran. The house had holes in its roof and floors. The owner of the house was a veteran that had lost his leg in the war. He was living on a small disability check, and food stamps. The house was rundown, and unlike any home I have ever seen.

We worked from morning to night. The average temperature that summer was over 100 degrees. On a black-top roof, you can imagine it was much hotter. We were also responsible for preparing all our own meals. There was no TV, no cell-phones, and no snacks. When we weren't working we entertained ourselves by talking to each other and singing songs. One time, we did take a road trip to the Civil Rights Museum, which showed how African American people were discriminated against in the sixties and how the civil rights movement improved their life by giving them the same opportunities as everyone else.

The trip was very rewarding, and fun, but physically demanding. We did get an opportunity to see how people, who live below the poverty line, actually exist. I believe it is nothing that any of you have ever seen. It certainly was a first for me. The individual whose house we repaired was very grateful, and cried when we left. Despite having nothing he appeared to be thankful for what little he did have. We also got the opportunity to perform manual labor, and work within a group. Despite being hard dirty work, I actually found it to be fun.

Often when you live a certain life style, you are not aware of how other people live. This gave me an opportunity to go outside my comfort zone, and, it taught me a lot about other people, and myself. The service trip was a life-changing experience, and if you are ever given the opportunity, I encourage everyone to partake in one.



It's a New Year!

By Marika Maggos

5...4...3...2...1! Fireworks light up the sky, noisemakers sound, and people cheer "Happy New Year!" Most of us know and celebrate New Year's on January first. Did you know, though, that the church celebrates its own new year? The Ecclesiastical New Year, or New Year of the church, is celebrated on September first with a special ceremony. Now, you might be wondering why the New Year is in September. This is because the harvest of crops and planting new crops takes place about now. Long ago crops were people's main source of livelihood. It made sense to them to start the New Year with the new crops, to pray to God for good weather, plenty of rain, and abundance of fruits of the earth. It has also been custom in Constantinople, since before 1453.

When you think about it, lots of events occur around the ecclesiastical New Year of the church-like a new school year, new Sunday School year, etc. Therefore, we can really take the opportunity to remember the church's New Year and pray for personal things like a good school year, good Sunday school year, and healthy, fulfilling year. As we all know, with new years come changes and fresh starts. For example, our church has undergone a few new changes. St. Catherine's has just been freshly renovated and is a beautiful place for us to hold liturgy on Sundays.

In addition, we are starting the new Sunday School year without Fr. Athanasios, but are blessed to have Fr. Timothy and Fr. Treantafeles. Take this moment to really think about the New Year, make some goals, and give thanks and pray to God.

See p. 3
for all
the
Sunday
Church
School
News

A Royal Voyage

by George Dervis



Assumption parishioners George and Ann Dervis traveled to England this summer as guests of His Royal Highness Prince of Wales and visited with Prince Charles at Highgrove House on July 29, 2010. They were invited as part of a delegation of members of The Friends of Mount Athos (FoMA) to a reception hosted by HRH Prince Charles to celebrate its twenty years as an organization. This group has about 650 members internationally, with about 10 of them in the Metropolis of Chicago. Four members are stewards of The Assumption Church of Chicago. Our very own George Dervis shares the details of this voyage.

The Friends of Mount Athos (FoMA) is an international organization, which was established in 1990, whose primary goal is to support the monasteries on Mount Athos in northern Greece. They organize programs to develop footpaths, building facilities and infrastructure on the Holy Mountain. A secondary goal is to plan pilgrimages to Orthodox monasteries in various locations within and outside of Greece in order to further develop awareness of monastic history and daily religious life within the monastic community.

The origin of Mount Athos, in brief, is traced back to tradition, when the Theotokos was being escorted by her caregiver, St. John the Apostle, to the island of Cyprus to visit St. Lazarus who had relocated there from Bethany where Our Lord Jesus Christ had raised him from the dead. Their boat, however, was caught up in a storm and blown off course northward until it reached land on the eastern peninsula of Halkidiki in northeastern Greece. The Theotokos was so enamored by this land that she prayed to her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, to bequeath this place to her. From that time, Mount Athos has come to be known as The Garden of Panaghia.

In April 2010 I successfully completed an application process to attend a special reception for FoMA to be held at Highgrove, the country house of HRH Prince Charles, located about 1-1/2 hours west of London by train. The guest list was limited to 100 people. A few days before our departure to England, we received a formal invitation via Royal Mail, postmarked Buckingham Palace, which included special passes to enter the Security Gate at Highgrove. Special mention on the invitation noted, "Dress: Lounge Suit." We wondered, "What is a Lounge Suit?" I went to our local library and with the help of the Reference Section; they e-mailed some friends in England and soon learned that such dress was more commonly known to us as a business suit.

On July 29, 2010, once we arrived we took a taxi from the train station and arrived about one-half hour early. The police at the Security Gate would not allow us to enter. They were very apologetic but we had to backtrack to the local town, Tetbury, which was very pleasant and luckily, the shops were still open. When we returned to Highgrove, guests were beginning to arrive and we were escorted into a reception room. Its walls displayed collections of watercolors painted by Prince Charles, copies of which are sold to support his charities, including monasteries of Mount Athos. Within minutes, small groups of about a dozen people were escorted out to the gardens and given a comprehensive tour that lasted about an hour. The gardens, which cover fifteen acres, are free of pesticides and herbicides—i.e. totally organic. Aside from a variety of trees, hedges and assorted flowerbeds, the tour also included the tree houses where Princes William and Harry played when they were young children.

We returned to the house to join the Reception and mixed among the guests and chatted, discovering an Assumption couple we were acquainted with, Steven and Stacy Papagiannopoulos. As the warmth of the late, sunny afternoon faded into a cool and clear early evening, the guests had fully gathered on Highgrove's patio. We soon caught sight of Prince Charles mingling among the guests at some distance. While we chatted amongst one another, the catering staff began circulating, offering champagne and locally produced apple juice along with an assortment of appetizers. Within moments, we were approached by a gentleman who identified himself as one of Prince Charles' staff who asked that we stay together because he was going to guide HRH toward us. The gentleman had already informed the Prince that each of us was from Chicago. The Prince was soft-spoken and very easy to talk with. Ann congratulated him on his work with charities. Our conversation eventually expanded to the monasteries of Mount Athos. The Prince expressed his concern that the monks offer free lodging and food to pilgrims and visitors, and yet what is offered in return is not adequate. Our conversation lasted for about five minutes and yet, looking back, it was hard to recall all that we had discussed. That time seemed like a blur. Before we knew it, the reception began to wind down by 8:00 pm. The three to four hours that we visited at Highgrove soon came to a close. On our train ride back to London we were joined by a handful of familiar guests, which made it, seem like an extension of the Highgrove Reception.

The Sunday Church School Team

Spiritual Guidance: Very Reverend Fr. Timothy Bakakos
 Sunday Church School Director: Mrs. Christina Arvanites
 Pre-School :Mrs. Tina Kozil Teacher
 Mrs. Jette Georgopoulos Assistant
 Ms. Mary Ellen Woods Assistant
 Kindergarten: Ms. Katherine Kott Teacher
 Mrs. Erin Godellas Assistant
 First Grade: Mrs. Lynn Voulgarakis Teacher
 Mrs. Georgia Geib Assistant
 Second Grade: Mrs. Christina Gilroy Teacher
 Third Grade: Mrs. Demetra Spyropoulos Teacher
 Fourth Grade: Mrs. Anna Woods
 Fifth Grade: Mrs. Georgia Tsaganos Teacher
 Sixth Grade: Mary & George Maniatis Teacher
 Seventh/Eighth Grade: Mrs. Tina Sarantos Teacher

We welcome several new families to the Sunday Church School program. They are Nick & Michelle Kanel and daughter Christina (Little Lambs); Jim & Nicole Kaemerer and son Jack (Preschool) and daughter Emily (Little Lambs); Loucas & Jahna Louca and daughter Melina (Preschool); and Peter & Alayna Vlagos and daughter Alethia (Little Lambs).

Spotlight on Sunday Church School



Farewell to Father Athanasios

Our community said goodbye to Father Athanasios in August. He is now at Holy Cross Church. Above, the altar boys pose. Below, Sunday Church School children sing "God Grant You Many Years."

Photos by Christos Panos

Poetry

Eleni Caprio shares this inspiring poem that was written by a teenager with cancer in a New York Hospital.

SLOW DANCE

Have you ever watched kids on a merry-go-round?
 Or listened to the rain slapping on the ground?
 Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight?
 Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?

You'd better slow down.

Don't dance so fast.

Time is short.

The music won't last.

Do you run through each day on the fly?
 When you ask 'How are you?' Do you hear the reply?
 When the day is done do you lie in your bed
 With the next hundred chores running through your head?

You'd better slow down

Don't dance so fast.

Time is short.

The music won't last.

Ever told your child, we'll do it tomorrow?
 And in your haste, not see his sorrow?
 Ever lost touch, let a good friendship die
 Cause you never had time to call and say, 'Hi'

You'd better slow down.

Don't dance so fast.

Time is short.

The music won't last..

When you run so fast to get somewhere
 You miss half the fun of getting there.
 When you worry and hurry through your day,
 It is like an unopened gift....thrown away.

Life is not a race.

Do take it slower

Hear the music



contest

St. Catherine's Chapel, Narthex and Meeting Room were renovated over the summer. Can you spot ten things that are new or different? List ten things below and return your form to the Narthex next Sunday. A winner will be drawn from all correct entries for a gift card.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Name: _____

INFO

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
601 S. Central Avenue
Chicago, IL 60644

Phone: 773-626-3113
Fax: 773-626-3141

HOURS

MATINS — 8:30 AM
DIVINE LITURGY—10:00 AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL LITURGY—
9:45 AM

We're on the web!

www.assumptionchicago.org

The St. Catherine's Newsletter was created in 2007 by a Sunday School student. It serves to inform, educate, and entertain the children of the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church community. All are welcome and encouraged to contribute to the newsletter.

If you are interested in writing an article, sending in a self written piece of work, or just for more information... PLEASE CONTACT: Very Rev. Fr. Timothy Bakakos — FrTimothy@assumptionchicago.org or Dr. Evie Maggos — demags@aol.com

SAVE THE DATE
Harvest Day Celebration
Saturday, November 6
Plato Hall

MAIL TO:

Assumption Church
Invites you to
Johansen's Farm
for an afternoon of fall fun!!
Saturday, October 23rd 2PM -5PM
*Group will meet at main entrance



- Hayrides
- Pony rides
- Petting zoo
- Rides
- Corn Maze

Admission: *\$9.50 per person w/\$1.00 off coupon available online at Johansen's website

Children under 2: Free

*All rides and attractions are included with your paid admission and the fun is unlimited.

*Price does not include dinner, location of dinner TBD

Something for everyone!!



Johansen's Farm
710 W Boughton Rd
Bolingbrook
www.Johansensfarm.com
Call the church office
773-626-3114 by 10/22 to
confirm your attendance

