

# Completion of Icon Program a Transformative Experience for Church of Our Savior in Rye

Continued from page 1

gregation, a feeling shared by all.

It was Father's Day, and the Archbishop also offered blessings to the fathers present and their families, and the Archbishop put the his sermon on the day's Gospel reading of Matthew 6:33, and the icon blessing, into the perspective of current events.

Christ offers hope to those who agonize over the necessities of daily life when He said, "But seek first the kingdom God and his Justice, and all these things will be given to you as well."

## PASSING DOWN THE FAITH

The Archbishop continued by touching upon another source of anxiety among Christians today, the inhuman and barbaric depredations of ISIS. He was the first of several people to note that as icons were being blessed in Rye, churches and icons were being destroyed in the Middle East.

"What is the Kingdom of God," the Archbishop asked. "Peace, truth and love," he said, and the Church is where the people learn about them. "People say the youth are the future of the Church," but it is better to declare "the Church is the future of the youth," he said, because that is where they will find the values and priorities they need to thrive in a dangerous world where priorities are being turned upside down.

Icons, it was then made clear, are where how people learned about their faith in more humble times. The Archbishop explained that "the tradition of icons saved the church during the four centuries of Turkish rule in Greece when education was suppressed."

"The people received information about their faith from worship and icons, which provided living teaching about everything, the life of Christ, the lives of the martyrs and saints," he continued.

The guests also learned that the clergy and laity had to fight for their icons against the persecutions of the iconoclast emperors of the 8th and 9th centuries. Indeed, the triumph of icon supporters was the triumph of Orthodoxy. But the Church of



Above: (L-R) PC President Robert Augustinos, Michael Psaros, Archbishop Demetrios, receiving a donation for St. Nicholas at Ground Zero, and Fr. Elias Villis, pastor of the Church of Our Savior. Left photo: Archbishop Demetrios thanks Marina Psaros for the gift of a cross of Waterford crystal.

love of his spiritual father unacknowledged and without effect.

The scaffolding which intruded on the nave for three years until 2014 was welcomed as the parishioners marveled at Mourlas' progress.

## THE JOY OF GIVING

His Eminence said it was also a special joy to welcome Fr. Nicholas Triantafyllou, who is Father Elias' father-in-law and is about to conclude a 15-year tenure as President of Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology.

The Archbishop said Fr. Triantafyllou's tenure was a worthy extension of the work of the Apostles, adding it was fitting that his final day of service would be June 30, the Feast of the Holy Apostles.

After the anointing, Parish Council President Robert Augustinos to address the congregation, followed by Fr. Elias who thanked the Archbishop for his presence and support.

The anointing was also the occasion for acknowledging the those supporting another great endeavor asserting the presence of Orthodoxy in America.

Heeding the call of the Archbishop for members of the church nationwide to participate in the rebuilding of St. Nicholas at Ground Zero, were three Rye parishioners who contributed a total of \$3 million. Fr. Elias said, "Michael and Robin Psaros were the first to give \$1 million... C. Dean and Mary Anne Metropoulos were the second, and Maria Alwin's family was the third."

He then evoked applause when he noted the parish is donating an additional \$65,000 to the cause.

In the church hall Psaros, Co-Founder and Managing Partner of KPS Capital Partners, LP, a family of private equity funds, introduced the creators of PISTEVO, Mark I. Brodie, of MiB Media Works, the Director, and Taryn Grimes-Herbert, Writer and Producer, and asked them to rise.

Psaros said he would skip reciting their professional credentials – which includes 60 Minutes credits – because the move speaks for itself, but he wanted to share with the guests about the emotional impact of the movie project on Brodie.

Psaros was told that parishioners reported seeing Brodie, "On Good Friday evening... carrying his camera all night with tears streaming down his face."

After again thanking the Archbishop for inspiring the project – Psaros' daughter Marina presented His Eminence with a cross of Waterford crystal – he turned to the pastor and said "Fr. Elias has been tireless...he has been the glue... and he leads with love."

Psaros, who is an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, underwrote the film because he and other believed it was a story that had to be told, concluded with an appeal to the guests to blast the link where the movie can be seen – [www.theartofbelief.org](http://www.theartofbelief.org) – to everyone they know by email and social networking.

Numerous speakers noted that the services of the Orthodox Church are designed to engage all the senses. Human hearing, not least among them, was engaged by the parish's choir, led by Dean of Music Petros Hatjopoulos, and the chanters, including guest chanter Antonios Papathanasiou, who was invited by Head Chanter and Pastoral Minister George Hazlaris.

The altar boys contributed greatly to the day's splendor, for which they were praised by the Archbishop.

the Savior was not a testament to the power of icons until recently.

The guests who came from afar and were lost in wonder at the icons could hardly believe that for many years the sanctuary's walls and ceilings were a stark white.

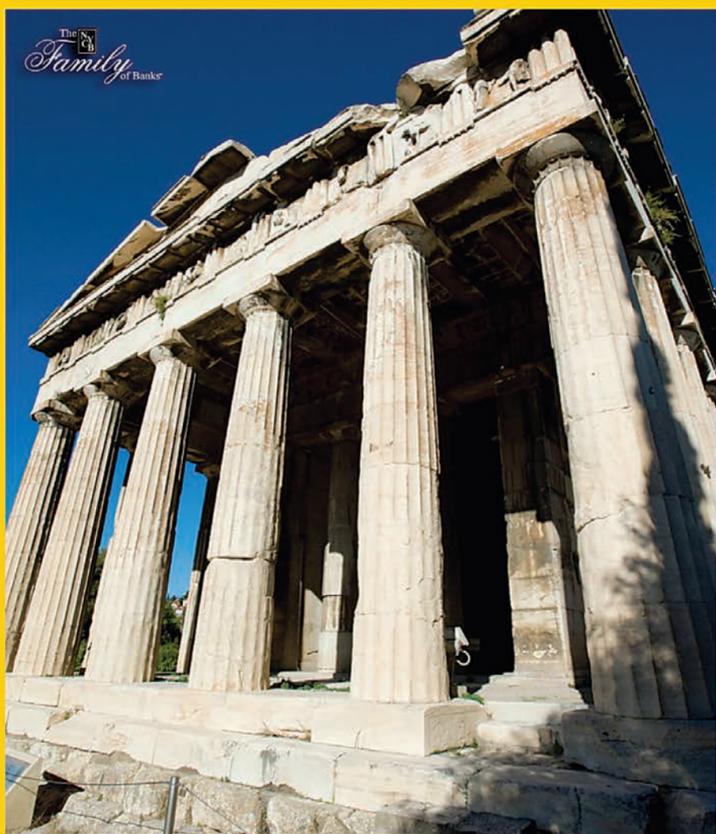
In the 1980s, the Platytera icon of the Theotokos was added above the altar, followed by the monumental Christ Pantocrator that crowns the dome.

Among the movers and shakers of the monumental project to complete the icon program

were Fr. Elias, the pastor, but when Michael Psaros, the Executive Producer of the movie, acknowledged the role of the Archbishop, he described a prime mover less ethereal but just as effective as Aristotle's.

"Four years ago in your very subtle way...looking out at all of us, you looked to the left and you looked to the right, and you observed that we had white walls...and more than 400 people are seated here at this luncheon, because of your subtle challenge."

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## GOINGS ON...

### THRU NOV. 1

TARPON SPRINGS, FL – Night in the Islands returns to the world-famous Sponge Docks of Tarpon Springs for 2015! Saturdays, 6-11PM: Jul. 11, Aug. 1, Sept. 12, and Oct. 3. A free event of Greek music, dancing, and dining! And we will offer an hour of free Greek dance lessons by the Leventia Dance Troupe from 6-7 PM. The festival is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Come join us for authentic island fun in the warm Florida sun and mark your calendar and make this a regular destination! And if you're just in town for a week or two, make sure to mark your calendar as you will not want to miss this! Tarpon Springs is a unique Greek experience in the United States, one unlike any other Greek community. Come be part of this one-of-a-kind American experience that will make you feel as if, truly, you are back in the homeland!

### JUNE 25-27

PORTLAND, ME — Yassou! Join us in a celebration of Greek culture at the Annual Greek Food Festival on Thursday, June 25 through Saturday, June 27, at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Portland, Maine (located on the corner of Pleasant and Park Street). This spectacular three-day Greek Festival is a wonderful family event that each year draws more than 10,000 visitors from around the greater Portland area. Along with the exquisite Greek cuisine, there will be live music and traditional dancing. Guests will dine on exceptional Greek food, cooked the old-fashioned way by hard-working members of the Holy Trinity parish, using authentic Greek recipes, all-natural ingredients and lots of tender, loving care.

### JUNE 26-28

CINCINNATI, OH – The St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church of Cincinnati, at 7000 Winton Road, is happy to present its annual Greek festival on the Weekend of June 26-28. Friday, June 26: 5-11PM; Saturday, June 27: 3-11PM; and Sunday, June 28: 1-8PM. Admission is \$2 per person and children under 12 may enter for free. For additional information, please contact the Church office at: you can contact our Church office at (513) 591-0030.

### IRVINE, CA

– St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, 4949 Alton Parkway in Irvine, celebrates its 36th Greek festival Friday-Sunday, June 26-28. Friday 5-10PM, Saturday Noon-10PM, Sunday Noon-9PM. Delicious Greek Food and Pastries, Greek Folk Dancing, Carnival Rides, Opportunity Drawing, Church Tours, Boutique and Gift Items from around the world, Carnival Rides, and Cooking Demonstrations await! \$3.00 per person, Children under 10 are free, Seniors 65+ are free Saturday 12-5 PM. For more information, please visit <http://irvinegreekfest.com> or call the Church at (949) 733-2366.

### SHEBOYGAN, WI

– The St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church, 1427 South Street in Sheboygan will hold its Greek festival Friday through Sunday, June 26-28 at the following times: Fri: 6-9 PM; Sat: 11AM-9PM; Sun: 11AM-6PM. Featuring authentic Greek food and dancing at Deland Park on the beautiful Sheboygan Lake Michigan shoreline. Free admission, ticket purchase for food, beverages and children's activities. Lots of free parking. Liturgy on the grounds at 9 AM. Sunday. Dine with us, or carry out available. For a complete list of entertainment and hours, call (920) 452-2296.

### RACINE, WI

– The Kimisis Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church, 1335 South Greek Bay Road in Racine, will celebrate its Greek Festival from June 26-28 (Friday through Sunday). Friday 5-10 PM, Saturday 12 Noon-10 PM, Sunday 12 Noon-8PM. Authentic Greek Food & Pastry, Greek Wines, Beer Tent, Carnival Rides, Greek Dancing & Music, Greek Coffee Bar, Agora Shopping, Church Tours, "Mysteries of Orthodox Christianity", Cooking Demos. etc., can you say "OPA!"? For more

information, please call: (262) 632-5682.

### JUNE 28

WINTER ISLAND. SALEM — On Sunday, Jun. 28 join us at St. Vasilios for the Greek Picnic. The picnic will take place, rain or shine, from 11AM to 9PM. There will be delicious Greek Food, Homemade Greek Pastries, Beer, Wine & Soft Drinks. The Divine Liturgy will take place at 10AM, followed by Children's Folk Dancing Performance at 4PM. There will also be Greek Music & Dancing Kid's Games ~ Beach Area Grand Raffle Prizes Admission \$5.00 per person. Everyone is welcome More Info: (978) 531 0777

### JUNE 29

MANHATTAN – Hellenic Professional Women and Hellenic American Women's Council present a special cultural event featuring Ioanna Lalaounis, Director of the Ilias Lalaounis Jewelry Museum Monday, Jun. 29 6-9PM at Hughes Hubbard and Reed, One Battery Park Plaza in Manhattan. The presentation will be illustrated with some of Lalaounis' most exquisite designs and will explain how history and the material remains of the past provided inspiration for modern Greek jewelry in the second half of the 20th century, while at the same time enabling the revival of a traditional craft. Greek goldsmith and jewelry designer, Ilias Lalaounis, found that ancient motifs and designs could become agents of the spirit of their times, as well as prove desirable adornments for a modern clientele. More than 25 of the 50 jewelry collections designed by Lalaounis draw their inspiration from the arts of the past: from prehistoric, classical and Byzantine Greece to the arts of ancient Persia and Scythia, and from London at the time of the Tudors to Istanbul under Suleiman the Magnificent.

Hellenic Professional Women Inc. (HPW) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring and supporting the advancement of Greek-American women at all professional levels. Founded in 2007 by Maria Frantzis to provide career development and mentorship, HPW's mission is to foster empowerment through relationship-building and programs for professional growth. HPW is committed to establishing a strong and vibrant community of Greek-American professional women. For more information, visit <http://www.lalaounis-jewelrymuseum.gr/en/default.asp>.

### JULY 10-12

LIBERTYVILLE, IL – The St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, 1400 N. O'Plaine Road in Libertyville will hold its annual Greek festival from Friday, Jul. 10 through Sunday, Jul. 12 from 11 AM – 11 PM on all three days. Our annual Greek Fest is one of the many ways that our parish hopes to share our beautiful Greek heritage and traditional Orthodox Faith with our entire Lake County community. When you are ready to sample a taste of Greek hospitality, we have prepared a number of traditional Greek delicacies for your dining pleasure! At the Food Booth, choose from succulent Souvlaki, Athenian Chicken, Roasted Lamb, Tasty Gyros, Spanakopita (Spinach Puff) or Tyropita (Cheese Puff). While you are dining on our assortment of Greek delicacies, be sure to save room for dessert! We offer a tempting variety of Greek Pastries and Loukoumathes (Honey Puffs) to satisfy your craving. Visit our Kidz Zone to entertain your children! Browse through our Greek Marketplace and shop for artwork, music, clothing, jewelry, religious items, books, and much more! Free parking and free admission. For more information, call (224) 513-5530.

### NOTE TO OUR READERS

This calendar of events section is a complimentary service to the Greek American community. All parishes, organizations and institutions are encouraged to e-mail their information regarding the event 3-4 weeks ahead of time, and no later than Monday of the week before the event, to [english.edition@thenationalherald.com](mailto:english.edition@thenationalherald.com)

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Does the crisis play a role as to whether or not you will visit Greece this summer?

Please email your response to [scaros@thenationalherald.com](mailto:scaros@thenationalherald.com)

We may publish some responses as Letters to the Editor in a future issue.



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