

PHILOPTOCHOS

Daphne Papamichael, President

SEASON'S GREETINGS SAINT KATHERINE FAMILY! As we approach Christmas and the arrival of a New Year we reflect on the previous year and are grateful for all we have accomplished together.

The 2023 Maria Kalis Memorial Scholarships were awarded to Thalia Dimopoulos, a PhD candidate in Pharmacology and Physiology at Drexel University and Sophia Pelekasis a Bachelor of Music student at The Julliard School. We congratulate these young women and wish all the applicants the best of luck in pursuing their educational goals. Thank you to the Kalis Family.

On November 9 we held our annual Seniors Thanksgiving Luncheon with over 60 people gathered together in fellowship. Thank you to Peter Bota and John Kanellias of the Metro 29 for providing our delicious lunch. Being together and giving thanks was a wonderful way to spend an afternoon.

Our Christmas Luncheon is on Saturday, December 9 at the Westwood County Club in Vienna. The flyer is on the church website as well as in this issue of the *DOXA*. Proceeds from the luncheon will benefit Homestretch of Falls Church, which is our national "Chapter Challenge" project. We will hear from the Homestretch Executive Director as well as one of the clients who will share her story of how this organization changed her life. Please contact me at cyprusd@aol.com for reservations.

The Christmas Bake Sale will be on Sundays, December 10 and 17 with many delicious items perfect for the holidays, including Vasilopita. The flyer is on the church website and in this *DOXA*. Please feel free to contact me at cyprusd@aol.com for orders.

Last month we provided items for Thanksgiving dinner to Homestretch families as well as funds for the relief efforts in Greece for those affected by the storms and floods. As we do each year, we will provide 200 emergency sleeping bags, 200 pairs of gloves, 200 pairs of socks and 200 hats for the GOYA Christmas outreach project.

The 2024 Stewardship Form is also in this issue of the *DOXA*. We encourage you to join us in Philoptochos... your Stewardship is Philanthropy! The work we do on behalf of our brothers and sisters in need can only be accomplished with your support. We are incredibly blessed to have such faithful and generous stewards. We provide assistance to those facing food and housing insecurity, those fleeing situations of domestic violence, our military veterans, and those who need help getting to medical appointments.

All of these things and more we do with your love and support. Thank you and wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!

And there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them (Luke 2:8-9).

DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE

Kelly Ann Gull, President

STRENGTH THROUGH COMMUNITY & COMPASSION

HELLE CHAPTER WAS PROUD TO HOST their Sister chapters from around the DMV for the annual Founder's Day luncheon on November 11 at Seasons 52 in Tysons Corner. Thirty-six Sisters from Alcmene, Arion, Hermione, and Helle gathered together to celebrate the founding of the Daughters of Penelope on November 16, 1929 in San Francisco, California. Several honorable guests joined the luncheon including District Governor, Helen M. Dennie, Ph.D., who inspired everyone with her remarks. We also were joined by Past Grand President, Mary Boufis Filou (2005) and Chairperson of National Obligations, Kathy Matrakas. Arion was proud to welcome one of their original founding members of their chapter, Penny Manuel. Three lucky winners won baskets prepared by the chapters and raffled off to help cover luncheon expenses. Many warm wishes and thankful messages were received from the guests.

In November, the Chapter hosted memorial services on Sunday, November 19 in honor of our departed Sisters. We sat together during services and served koliva after church. May their memories be eternal. Sisters also collected children's Christmas pajamas and decorations for families at Homestretch and donated sweatshirts and pants in the amount of \$500 to the Metropolitan Washington DC Mission & Outreach Committee project to support Bailey's Shelter & Supportive Housings.

Sisters worked with their Philoptochos partners to administer the Maria Kalis Memorial Scholarship and selected two deserving young women to receive \$3,000 toward their education expenses. The recipients are Thalia Dimopoulos, a Ph.D. student at Drexel University's College of Medicine in the Department of Pharmacology & Physiology who is studying Alzheimer's Disease and Sophia Pelekasis, an undergraduate vocalist at The Julliard School, who aspires to perform at all the well known venues throughout the world. We appreciate the work done by the selection committee and the work put in by an impressive group of applicants.

We are preparing for two big events in the new year including an educational program and our biggest fundraiser, the *Tastes of Mediterranean*. On January 14, after Liturgy, Nicholas Tannous, MD will speak about promoting spine health and avoiding surgery. The *Tastes of the Mediterranean* which features Hellenic food, dancing, and philanthropy will be held on Friday, February 9. Please watch for ticket sales to open. Proceeds will support families in crisis internationally, nationally, and locally.

Please note that we will not have a December chapter meeting.

The Helle Chapter Board wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!