

# PRESIDENTIAL NEWSLETTER

FALL 2016 | Volume II, Issue 8



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

I pray that all of you are rejuvenated from summer rest and relaxation.

On the Holy Hill, the staff and I have been hard at work preparing to welcome our students with helping hands and open hearts.

National religious and academic research centers tell us that Christianity in our country is declining and that the national average student debt and jobless rate in many fields of study are rising.

Hellenic College Holy Cross can be proud to stand in contrast to these trends. Ninety-nine percent of our entire student body is Orthodox Christian! Admissions to our school are increasing 8% year over year! Over 95% of our students receive financial aid! The average student loan default rate for our students is 0% versus a national average of 11.8%! Over 80% of 2015 graduates of both Hellenic College and Holy Cross were gainfully employed within six months of graduation!

These statistics provide a strong foundation for the promotion of a new and bold strategic vision for this year – one that not only increases our enrollment, but also our visibility to the Orthodox Christian faithful in North America and throughout the world.

As we prepare in the next year to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Holy Cross in 2017 and the 50th anniversary of Hellenic College in 2018, now is the time to provide a greater academic and student life experience to attract students both through our gates and beyond them through innovative online learning opportunities.

In the upcoming year, my office will focus on academic excellence. We will renew our commitment to strengthen our current faculty, support existing programs, and develop new programs of exceptional quality informed by a rigorous review process.

Of course, we cannot accomplish these and other strategic initiatives alone. The contribution of your time, talent, and treasure, along with your continued prayers, are a necessary partnership in the success of our institution – the only Orthodox Christian college and Greek Orthodox school of theology of its kind in North America.

As I enter my second academic year as President, I pray that Our Lord will continue to bless you and our sacred school, and grant us all the health and grace to accomplish great achievements for His Church in His Name.

In Christ,



**Rev. Fr. Christopher T. Metropulos, DMin**  
 President

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## THANK YOU!

### #HonorSeptember14

We offer heartfelt thanks to all who supported our **#HonorSeptember14** Day of Giving Campaign! In celebration of the Great Feast of the Holy Cross—our school's Feast Day—you have joined us to strengthen HCHC and thereby help secure the future of our Orthodox faith.

Watch our Day of Giving video at [www.hchc.edu/honorseptember14](http://www.hchc.edu/honorseptember14)

## STARTING THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR AT HCHC

It's hard to say who celebrates the arrival of first-year students at Hellenic College and Holy Cross more eagerly—the students themselves or all those on campus who embrace them as the newest members of our HCHC family. | See more photos on page 4.



Rev. Fr. Nicholas Belcher, Dean of Students, says, “This is one of my favorite times of the school year. It’s a great joy to watch our returning students welcome a new group into the really beautiful way of life we have here.”

On August 24, move-in day, Rev. Fr. Christopher T. Metropulos, HCHC President, officially welcomed first-year students and their families, blending humor, practical advice, and serious reflection on what it means to be a member of this unique academic community. “The important thing is that you always dream,” he said, “but you have to learn how to direct that dream towards Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Several days of orientation activities followed, ranging from small-group discussions to meetings and meals with the President, faculty, and leaders of student organizations, each day beginning and ending with worship in the Chapel. Off-campus outings included retreats, an excursion to the Museum of Russian Icons, and the ever-popular Boston “T” Party – a fun exploration of the city by T, the oldest public transit system in the country.

Orientation ended with a splash – literally – at a Waterpark Extravaganza, featuring a water slide, obstacle course, and barbecue.



## CONVOCATION AND FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS

On September 13, the eve of the school's feast day, HCHC students and faculty processed in the warm September sunshine to Convocation, where they joined staff and friends to hear Dr. Demetrios Katos, Dean of Hellenic College, deliver an address on "Orthodox Christian Higher Education." | See more photos on page 5.

Dean Katos recalled arriving at HCHC as a student some years ago to find "the most vibrant Christian community I had ever experienced" and he urged current students to "exert every effort to grow morally, spiritually, and intellectually" during their years on the Holy Hill.

Following Convocation, the community gathered in Holy Cross Chapel for Great Vespers, presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, who presented the school cross to each second-year seminarian and gave the blessing to each senior seminarian to wear the exorasson. This moving ceremony, known as Stavroforia/Rassoforia, has taken place every year since the founding of the school in 1937 and is unique among American Orthodox seminaries.

The entire HCHC community gathered once again the next morning to celebrate Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for the Great Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Holy and Precious Cross. During the Liturgy, Dr. Anton Vrame, longtime Director of the Department of Religious Education, was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Demetrios, and paid tribute to His Eminence for setting the most inspiring example possible of service to the Church and the faithful.

To Rev. Dn. Vrame, and to all the seminarians newly blessed, we say "Axios!"





# NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

August 24-27, 2016





# FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS

September 13-14, 2016



## MEET HCHC'S NEW STUDENT LEADERS

### Antonios A. Papathanasiou, SGA President

I am from Ioannina, Greece, where my home parish is St. Athanasios, and I am in my final year of the Master of Divinity program. What inspires me is our wonderful HCHC family, and especially those students, faculty, and staff who never miss a chance to make a positive impact on the lives of the people who surround them. The role of the Student Government Association is to be the organized voice of the student body. I hope that all students will invest more time this year in leading, in following, but above all in making a meaningful impact on the life and policies of our community. In the words of an African proverb, "If you think you're too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a closed room with a mosquito!"



### Brian Stefanovic, Ecclesiarch

I am a seminarian in my final year of the Master of Divinity program at Holy Cross, and I am from the parish of St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church in sunny Loveland, Colorado. Every student who has passed through this campus has experienced Holy Cross Chapel as the heart of our spiritual, educational, and communal lives. I feel very fortunate to be working with an extremely talented and dedicated group of students this year, including the sexton, chant leaders, and altar captains. I hope that this year, as in years past, we will continue to foster a welcoming presence for all those who come to the Chapel seeking spiritual nourishment in their lives.



### Bailie Henry, CAB Director

I am a junior in the college's Elementary Education program. I was born and raised in Owasso, Oklahoma. My home parish is Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Tulsa. For the 2016-2017 school year, I will be serving as the Campus Activities Board's Director. I am very excited to have a role in helping to build our beautiful HCHC community through events. I am inspired to serve in this position based on the joy I see when our students, staff, and families all come together and form a community unlike any other. I am really looking forward to the coming school year and all the great things CAB will bring to our community.



## NEW CHAIR OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



After an extensive search, Athina-Eleni Mavroudis, MS, LMHC, PhD (Candidate), has been appointed the new Director of the Human Development Program at Hellenic College. She succeeds Dr. John Chirban, who founded the program forty years ago and directed it until his recent retirement.

Although new to this role, Ms. Mavroudis has been part of the HCHC family for over a decade,

serving as Psychological Care Co-Director since 2006 and teaching in the Human Development Program since 2008. Over the years she has proven herself to be a highly effective and popular instructor, according to Dean Demetrios Katos, "helping students engage their faith with their learning by virtue of her teaching, her research, and her personal example."

About her new appointment, Ms. Mavroudis says, "I am greatly humbled and excited to begin this new vocational endeavor, working closely with our students to enhance their progressive integration of faith, service, and psychological processes through lifespan development curriculum and internship experiences."

## HOUSTON'S ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL EXTENDS ITS GENEROSITY TO HCHC

Hellenic College Holy Cross offers its sincerest gratitude to Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Houston, TX, for its donation of \$50,000.



Rev. Economos Michael J. Lambakis (MDiv '06), Cathedral Dean, made the announcement and presentation to HCHC President Rev. Fr. Christopher T. Metropulos, (DMin, MDiv '80) at the 43rd biennial Clergy-Laity Congress.

"I personally feel a great, close connection to the school, so I'm more than happy to promote it and give back," said Rev. Economos Lambakis.

A parish with 1200 families, Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral had a '100 x 100' plan: to have an operating budget funded 100% by stewardship in time for the parish's 100th anniversary in 2017. This five-year goal was realized in only four years, and because of this, they decided to use a portion of the proceeds from their annual festival as an opportunity to give back to the Church on a national level. Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology was the clear choice.

Martha Stefanidakis, National Philoptochos Board Treasurer and Annunciation Cathedral parishioner, was instrumental in making the donation happen. "We were so pleased to be able

to make that donation. We really believe the festival proceeds are a gift. The festival is our way to share our culture and faith with the people of Houston and the proceeds with the Church's most important ministries. We can't have a church without our priests or without our school. That's where our future lies."

Annunciation Cathedral has always had a strong connection to HCHC. Former HCHC president Rev. Fr. Nicholas C. Triantafylou (MDiv '63) served there for 23 years. During that time, he was active in expanding the parish and was instrumental in starting the Annunciation Orthodox School. Today, the school has 700 students and the presence of Orthodoxy remains strong in Houston. When Fr. Nicholas became HCHC President, the generosity of his former parishioners in Houston followed. In 2015 Annunciation Cathedral generously donated \$25,000 to the Presidential Scholarship Fund, in honor of Fr. Nicholas' years of service.

Of the parish's latest and most generous gift, Rev. Economos Lambakis says, "We thought HCHC is an important ministry and would be the best place to put the money."

With Rev. Economos Lambakis, HCHC Alumni Rev. Economos Demetrios Tagaropoulos (ThM '07) - Associate Priest, Rev. Presbyter Christopher Xanthos (MDiv '10) - Associate Priest, and Rev. Presbyter Gabriel Gadah (MDiv '08) - Associate Priest, serve at the Cathedral.

## DENVER PRESIDENTIAL ENGAGEMENT GATHERING



Rev. Fr. Christopher T. Metropulos, HCHC President, was invited to the Metropolis of Denver by His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah to serve at the Assumption of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Denver, CO on Sunday, September 18. Following Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, Rev. Fr. Metropulos spoke about HCHC and its bright future. Pictured here with His Eminence and Rev. Fr. Metropulos are: Marshall Monsell and Gus Anotonopoulos, AHEPA Chapter 145; Fr. Lou Christopoulos, Head Priest at St. Catherine Greek Orthodox Church in Greenwood Village, CO; Fr. Chris Margaritis, Dean of the Cathedral; Dino Ioannides, Cathedral Parish Council President; John Xikes, St. Catherine Parish Council Secretary; Dianne Sweeney, Cathedral Philoptochos President; and Elaine Cladis, St. Catherine Philoptochos. An accompanying article on the visit and additional photos of the weekend's events may be viewed at [www.hchc.edu](http://www.hchc.edu).

# FACULTY UPDATES

**DR. BRUCE BECK** completed an article, "Reading Scripture in the Orthodox Church," which was requested by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Center for Family Care for its forthcoming *Bible for the Family*. He also taught three courses during the summer: "Scripture and the Lectionary in the Orthodox Church" for CrossRoad's second session; "Scripture in the Orthodox Church" for the Diaconate Program; and "Reading Scripture with the Fathers," which was one of twelve courses offered during the Pappas Patristic Institute's tenth annual summer program (July 17-22), which he also directed.

**REV. DR. EUGEN J. PENTIUC** has just completed his research work at École Biblique et Archéologique Française (EBAF) in Jerusalem. For four summers (2010, '13, '15, '16), Fr. Pentiuic has been working assiduously on his contribution (Book of Hosea) to the first digital Study Bible. Launched in 2008, "La Bible en ses traditions" (B.E.S.T.)/"The Bible in Its Traditions" continues a long tradition of EBAF, the creator of the first Study Bible, *La Bible de Jerusalem* (1956), known also as *The New Jerusalem Bible*. By the end of 2016, Fr. Pentiuic's work will be embedded into a pre-designed template on the official B.E.S.T website ([www.bibest.org](http://www.bibest.org)).

**REV. DR. PHILIP ZYMARIS** has been finishing the book that he is editing, which is a compilation of the papers given at the International Conference on Liturgical Renewal that he organized in March 2013. This should result in a special volume published by Holy Cross Orthodox Press and an issue of *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* devoted solely to this major conference. He also was able to visit the Byzantine town of Monemvasia in July and photographed the thirteenth-century church of Hagia Sophia to enrich the slide-show that he presents to students in the Liturgics core course offered in the spring.

**DR. MATA DOVA** is on sabbatical for AY 2016-17, working on her third book, *The Poetics of Failure in Ancient Greece* (Taylor & Francis Publishing).

**DR. ALICE MCINTYRE** is implementing a year-long mindfulness project with a 5th grade class at the Hennigan School in Jamaica Plain in September. The *Mind Your Mind* is a mindfulness-based program that provides strategies for young people to focus their attention, familiarize themselves with their thoughts and emotions, develop effective skills for addressing various forms of stress, and connect them with others to improve individual and collective well-being. Bailie Henry, a student in the Elementary Education program, will participate in the project, as will Christina Randol, who will be engaging in her full-time student teaching with Marcia Knowles, the classroom teacher.

**DR. IOANA POPA** is now a counselor in the Office of Spiritual Formation and Counseling Services. This summer, she offered two presentations: "Unity in Diversity, Parenting and Our Inner Psychological System" at the Workshop for Orthodox Families, St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center, Contoocook, NH, July 2016; and "On Science and Faith," for CrossRoad in June and July 2016. She was also invited to present at the PEACE Christian Therapist Organization conference *Foundation of Faith and Spirituality in Therapy*. Her presentation "In the Image of God: True Self and the Internal Family Systems Model."

For additional updates and to learn more about our faculty, please visit [www.hchc.edu](http://www.hchc.edu).

## HELLENIC COLLEGE HOLY CROSS

# FALL OPEN HOUSE

[www.hchc.edu/openhouse](http://www.hchc.edu/openhouse)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2016 | 9AM-2PM

### HELLENIC COLLEGE HOLY CROSS

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