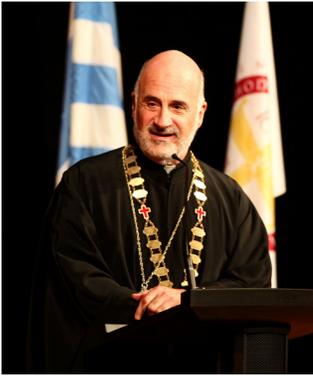


# PRESIDENTIAL NEWSLETTER

FALL 2018 | Volume IV, Issue 7



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are not far into the new academic year, but so many noteworthy things have already happened that we could barely fit them all in this issue! Let me tell you, my friends, it's been quite a whirlwind here on the Holy Hill since the students arrived not much more than a month ago.

When I became President of HCHC, I started saying "It's all about the students" at every opportunity because that is my firm belief and that of every dedicated member of our administration, staff, and

faculty. So I'd like to share with you part of the personal message from me to our new students before they arrived in late August:

*I greet you not only as President of this unique institution but also as a grateful graduate of both schools. Take it from me: you are about to embark on a journey of academic and spiritual exploration like nothing you could experience anywhere else. Congratulations on making the perfect choice for furthering your education while enriching your Orthodox Faith and discerning who God wants you to be.*

*Some things have changed at HCHC—for the better—since my student days. We are now a much more diverse community, with people from all over the country and many other nations interacting dynamically in the classroom, in Chapel, on the athletic fields, and in every other venue on our beautiful campus.*

*But our students also love to venture beyond these 52 acres—and not just to take advantage of cross-registration opportunities at other fine schools. They hop the T into Boston and go to Red Sox games, concerts of every kind, shops, restaurants, the Charles River, the harbor, and so much more. They also engage with the larger community through volunteer service to the less fortunate.*

*You see, although a lot has changed at HCHC, our sacred mission has not. It can be summed up in three words: faith, education, and service. Banners with those words line the roadway that will bring you up the Holy Hill to begin your new life among us.*

I hope that reading this issue will give you a new sense of pride in our school—your school—and that you will keep us in your prayers as we always remember you in ours.

In His Name,



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

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## NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION 2018



Our new students were welcomed enthusiastically on Wednesday, August 22—move-in day—by current students in t-shirts printed with a passage from the Gospel of Luke: "What is impossible with man is possible with God." Torrential rain for the first part of the day could not dampen the spirits of the new students, their parents, or the welcome crew, who achieved the near-impossible by helping with everything from directions to heavy lifting.

HCHC's President, Rev. Fr. Christopher Metropulos, opened the formal welcome session that afternoon, speaking to the new students as a graduate of both Hellenic College and Holy Cross and to their parents as the father of six children. After sharing highlights of what the school has to offer academically, spiritually, and socially, Fr. Christopher told the incoming classes, "I can guarantee that your years here will fly by—and that the amount of change and growth you see in yourselves will be astonishing."

The next few days, which began and ended with worship in Holy Cross Chapel, were full of activities on and off campus, such as tours, discussions, meetings with faculty and leaders of student organizations, and opportunities to get better acquainted. After the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, orientation ended with a barbeque and fun activities for the entire HCHC community.



## A GLORIOUS FEAST DAY

September 14th is always a memorable day at Hellenic College Holy Cross, being the Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross, but this year's observance was exceptional for several reasons.



Before presiding over Great Vespers on the eve of the Feast, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, and HCHC President Rev. Fr. Christopher Metropulos accompanied a special visitor, John Dos Santos, up the Holy Hill. That short walk marked the end of a very long one: 220 miles to raise funds and awareness for our school [read the full story in this issue]. A large and enthusiastic group of students, faculty, and staff was waiting at the Chapel entrance to greet Mr. Dos Santos and his family, which includes two current Hellenic College students.

During the service, His Eminence presented the school cross to each second-year seminarian and gave his blessing to each senior seminarian to wear the exorasson. This ceremony of Stavroforia/Rassoforia has taken place every year since the school's founding in 1937 and is unique among American Orthodox seminaries. His Eminence also bestowed his blessing upon each of the new Hellenic College and Holy Cross students.

The entire HCHC community, joined by a throng of many faithful from beyond our campus, gathered once again the next morning for an Archieratical Divine Liturgy to celebrate the Feast. During the Liturgy, Rev. Dr. Grammenos Karanos, Assistant Professor of Byzantine Liturgical Music at Hellenic College Holy Cross, was ordained to the Holy Priesthood, having been ordained to the Holy Diaconate in Greece in July. Fr. Karanos addressed His Eminence and all those present with gratitude and thought-provoking insights on the priestly calling. AXIOS!



## JOHN DOS SANTOS WALKS 220 MILES FOR HCHC



Parents of Hellenic College Holy Cross students are a proud group of people—proud of their children and of the choice they made in deciding to enroll here. John Dos Santos, father of Hellenic College sophomore Niko and freshman Ariana, is no exception, but he is unique in the school's long history for the incredible way he has demonstrated his pride and support.

On August 31, Mr. Dos Santos set off on foot from his church, Holy Trinity in New Rochelle, New York, on an epic walk of 220 miles to raise funds for and awareness of our school, where he arrived to a hero's welcome on September 13, the eve of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, having raised \$35,000 in donations.

### Here is an account of the journey in his own words:

My goal was to walk ten hours a day, mostly along the Boston Post Road, because it has the amenities I needed, like places to eat and stay. I had trained for and expected to cover twenty miles a day, but the first day ended up being about five miles longer and extremely hilly. That was actually the toughest day.

After that, most of the surprises were good ones, first and foremost the unbelievable people I met throughout the journey—everyone

from the innkeepers to a homeless man named David. I found him eating out of a garbage can in New London, Connecticut. I tried to offer him money for a meal, but he refused, saying that God would provide for him. After about a twenty-minute conversation, he shook my hand, did his cross, and thanked me for treating him like a human being. It really made me feel like I'd done something to touch another person that day.

I am so happy that I had a chance to raise some resources for the school and am very hopeful that we also raised awareness that will result in increased enrollment. If everyone does just a little, together we can achieve astronomical success. HCHC students will be the future clergy and lay leaders that the Church and our society need, so we need to support the school that prepares them for lives of service in the name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Besides thanking everyone who contributed, I want to thank His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios for the most heartwarming reception that anyone could imagine when I finally arrived on campus. It truly brought tears to my eyes. I am also very grateful to His Grace Bishop Andonios of Phasiane and my pastor, Fr. Nicholas Antcil—who was there at the beginning and the end of my walk—for allowing me the opportunity to serve our Church.

## FR. PENTIUC TEACHES IN THE HOLY LAND

Rev. Dr. Eugen J. Pentiu, Archbishop Demetrios Professor of Biblical Studies and Christian Origins at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, organized and led a three-week course this summer in the Holy Land. The course, *In the Footsteps of Jesus*, was offered by Boston College School of Theology and Ministry in conjunction with École Biblique et Archéologique Française (EBAF) in Jerusalem, and was funded in part by a generous grant from the Lilly Foundation through the Association of Theological Schools.

Fifteen students from several schools of theology, including Holy Cross, studied and explored Jesus Christ's life as narrated in the Gospels and foreshadowed by Old Testament messianic prophecies. Classroom meetings were interwoven with visits in Jerusalem and field trips throughout the Holy Land, creating a fully immersive learning experience.

"For me," remarked Fr. Eugen, "the greatest joy I experienced teaching this course, besides being back at my dear *alma mater*, was to see young women and men representing three main branches of Christianity...united around the sheer joy of learning in the footsteps of Jesus the Messiah who, in the Garden of Gethsemane, prayed that we all 'may be one' (John 17:11)."



Elias Diamond, one of the Holy Cross students who took the course, says that "studying the Bible within the context of the Holy Land was truly profound, as we got to visit so many of the crucial sites mentioned in the Bible, as well as take classes with some of the greatest biblical scholars."

## HCHC HOSTS NATIONAL OISM RETREAT



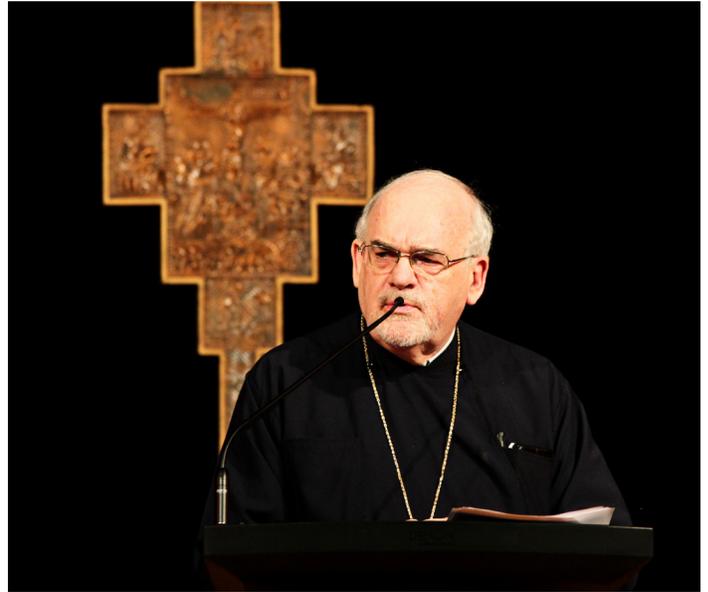
The HCHC chapter of the Orthodox Inter-Seminary Movement hosted the organization's national retreat September 28-30. The retreat drew participants from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, and Christ the Saviour Seminary, as well as Holy Cross. More than fifty people from many Orthodox jurisdictions attended a broad range of programs connected to the theme of the retreat: "Witnesses of the Gospel Today: Vocation and Martyrdom of Orthodox Christian Leaders in the World."

The keynote address was delivered by V. Rev. Dr. Maximos Constas, Senior Research Scholar at Holy Cross and a graduate of both Hellenic College and Holy Cross. His topic was "Mary Greeted Elizabeth: Witnessing Christ in the World Today." Dr. Timothy Patitsas, Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics at Holy Cross and an alumnus of the school, offered a lecture on "The Orthodox Christian Leader and the Poor." Another highlight of the retreat was the first public screening of a new documentary on Mother Maria of Paris titled "Love to the End." It was created and directed by Anberin Pasha, a student at Holy Cross and seasoned filmmaker. Look for a feature story on Anberin in a future issue.

Reflecting on the weekend, Despina Wilson, a Master of Divinity student at Holy Cross and National Secretary of OISM, said, "I am so thankful for the opportunity that OISM and this retreat gave for not only seminarians but also graduate and undergraduate students to interact with others from different Orthodox backgrounds and grow together."

## HCHC CELEBRATES ACADEMIC CONVOCATION

Convocation is an annual event at many schools, including Hellenic College Holy Cross, at which the faculty, administration, and staff formally welcome new and returning students to campus early in the academic year. As HCHC's President, Rev. Fr. Christopher Metropulos, says, "Convocation commends and honors our students' success and affirms the mission of Hellenic College Holy Cross to develop their vocation for service to the Church and society."



2018 Convocation took place on Wednesday, September 26, beginning with a procession of faculty and students to the Maliotis Cultural Center. The varied and colorful academic regalia of our professors was not only visually impressive but also a reminder of the many great universities here and abroad where their wearers earned their credentials.

The highlight of the program in Maliotis was the inspiring and thought-provoking keynote address delivered by Rev. Dr. Thomas FitzGerald on the topic of "Life Together." Fr. FitzGerald is Professor of Church History and Historical Theology at Holy Cross, of which he is an alumnus. The Dean of Holy Cross from 2006 to 2013, he is currently serving as interim Dean.

Fr. FitzGerald is a Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and frequently represents the Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America at theological conferences and ecumenical consultations. He is the Orthodox Executive Secretary of the Orthodox-Catholic Bilateral Theological Consultation in North America.

Fr. FitzGerald represented the Ecumenical Patriarchate as the senior Orthodox theologian on the executive staff of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1994 to 2006. A prolific author and editor, he most recently co-edited *Journey Toward Unity* (2017), a two-volume work containing the documents of the dialogue between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches.



## REV. DR. FITZGERALD'S CONVOCATION ADDRESS: "LIFE TOGETHER"

I want to welcome all of you to our community. Some of you are returning to a familiar place where you will reacquire yourselves with old friends and classmates and teachers. Others among you are newcomers. You are still getting used to this community and its values and its rhythm. This is not always an easy process. It takes time and patience.

Some years ago, my students from Uganda taught me a simple African adage: "Because you are, I am and because of this, we are!" This simple statement emphasizes the importance of healthy relationships. It points to the value of Life Together. We are formed through mature relationships not only with God but also with others. We become authentic persons through a matrix of healthy personal relationships. The Jewish theologian Martin Buber also affirmed this truth in his classic book *I Thou*. His title emphasized the value of personal and authentic relationships. Let us remember that Jesus points to this truth when He says, "I am the vine and you are the branches." And elsewhere He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in the midst of them." Authentic relationships are essential to our true identity.

Living in community, such as this community, is not always easy. It is a challenge. We need to adapt ourselves to numerous rhythms and disciplines. We follow a schedule for Chapel. We follow a schedule for the cafeteria. We follow a schedule for classes. Most importantly, we need to learn to live in close contact with others. We need to learn to honor and respect the other members of the community.

I would now like to turn our attention to the witness of one person who had rich insight into both the Holy Trinity and to the value of community: St. Basil the Great. St. Basil lived at a turbulent and yet very creative time of the early Church. Basil was born in 330 and died in 379. He was the bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. With the end of persecution, the Church was confronted with many opportunities and challenges. We remember Basil for his Liturgy, prayers, and theological insights. We see him opposing heresies and advocating reconciliation of divided Christians. We hear him advising students to be like a bee in their studies of classical literature. We are moved by his profound concern for the poor and less fortunate.

Basil offers us a number of valuable insights on the value of membership in a healthy community. These insights are contained primarily in his collection of monastic rules, which are words of admonition (in Greek known as the *Asketikon*.) Basil's primary concern was the development of healthy cenobitic monasticism. He had visited the monasteries of Syria and Mesopotamia and was troubled by their individualistic practices. He was a firm supporter of cenobitic monasticism and established a cenobitic

monastic community in 358. While affirming the importance of monastic community, Basil also presents us with insights which are applicable to other healthy communities. Here we could speak of the family, the parish, and even this Hellenic Holy Cross community. He wisely speaks about the value of healthy relationships not simply for monastics but for all believers.

Basil has a firm understanding of the philanthropic God and the theocentric person. With this in mind, Basil affirms that the life together is more advantageous than solitary living. God has made us for healthy relationships.

He says: "Nothing is so compatible with our nature as life together (in society), depending upon one another, and loving our fellow human persons."

These affirmations underlie all of Basil's subsequent insights. It is part of our very identity as human persons to have healthy relationships with others, to need the assistance of others and to love others. I would like to mention three observations that Basil makes about the value of being part of a healthy community.

First, Basil tells us this: "If each of us should choose to live in solitude, we would not serve the common good in the ministry according to God's good pleasure, but would be satisfying our own passion for self-gratification."

What he is saying is that we have an obligation to contribute to the common good. Healthy relationships help us see beyond the borders of our own lives and reach out to others. He reminds us of the story of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. It is a powerful story of humility and service. After telling the story, Basil asks the powerful rhetorical question: If you live a solitary life...whose feet will you wash? And, of course Basil could stretch this further: Whom will you forgive, whom will you help, whom will you love if you live in isolation?

Second, Basil tells us that life together is good for our correction, for our improvement. Most of us do not like to be corrected. We do not easily recognize our weaknesses or our sins. We do not easily recognize our unhealthy attachments. We do not easily recognize our brokenness or the times where we have hurt others. Basil reminds us that life together in a healthy community can be an agent of healing and of growth. Our life together can help to refine us. We mature in our healthy relationships with others. The Lord works through the healthy community. If we wish, our life together can be a means through which the Lord smooths out our rough spots and heals our weakness. St. Basil says, "A person living in solitary withdrawal will not readily discern his own defects, since he has no one to admonish and

correct him with mildness and compassion. In fact, admonition even from an enemy often produces in a prudent person the desire for amendment."

So, students and friends, Basil advises us to be open to correction. Living in a community can help us raise a mirror to ourselves. We need to see ourselves as we truly are. The healthy community can help us see our weaknesses and provide us with guidance to improve.

Third, Basil tells us that in community the personal gift becomes the common possession of all. He tells us: "No one has the capacity to receive all spiritual gifts, but the grace of the Spirit is given in proportion to the faith of each. When one is living in association with others, the grace privately given to each person becomes the common possession of his fellows." Then, echoing St. Paul, Basil says, "To one, indeed, is given the word of wisdom; and to another, the word of knowledge; to another, faith, to another, prophecy, to another, the grace of healing, and so on. The one who receives any of these gifts does not possess them for his own sake but rather for the sake of others...When life is lived with others, the operation of the Holy Spirit in the person is at the same time necessarily transmitted to all. As a consequence, he who lives alone and has, perhaps, one gift renders it ineffectual by leaving it in disuse, since it lies buried within him."

Basil also reminds us that no one is self-sufficient with regard to our material needs, but we require one another's aid in supplying our needs. And, we have an obligation to be of assistance to others. Basil says, "The teaching of love by Christ does not permit the individual to be concerned solely with his own private interests. Charity, says the Apostle, "seeks not its own." But a life passed in isolation is concerned only with the private service of individual needs. This is exactly opposed to the law of Love."

So, students and friends, remember that you have been blessed with gifts and talents from God. You are not the owners of the gifts—you are the stewards. Are you keeping your gifts and talents to yourselves, or are you sharing them with others?

St. Basil recognized the dignity and value of each person. Each person is unique and unrepeatable. Yet he reminds us that the full development of our personhood takes place in and through healthy relationships in community. These are relationships of love, compassion, and generosity. Here are some final words of his for us all to ponder:

*In the very nature of every human person has been sown the seed of the ability to love. You and I ought to welcome this seed, cultivate it carefully, nourish it attentively, and foster its growth by going to the school of God's commandments with the help of His grace.*

# HCHC STUDENTS AGAIN PARTICIPATE IN CONCORDIA ANNUAL SUMMIT

For the second year in a row, a group of Hellenic College and Holy Cross students joined Rev. Fr. Christopher Metropulos, HCHC President, at the Concordia Annual Summit, which was held in New York City September 24-26. The Hellenic students were Magdelini Drivas, Diana Khalil, Nicholas Metropulos, and Evangelia Zampeti. Representing Holy Cross were Irene Haji-Georgi, Harold Jacobsen, and Adam Murphy.

Concordia is a highly influential nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that seeks to build effective partnerships between governments, NGOs, and the private sector. Its co-founder and chairman, Nicholas Logothetis, spoke at HCHC last year and his brother George received an honorary doctorate at Commencement a few months later. They subsequently invited Fr. Christopher to bring some of our students to the Annual Summit, at which the world's most prominent leaders in all spheres examine pressing global challenges and identify avenues for collaboration. This year's Summit, which coincided with the United Nations General Assembly, covered a host of issues, from the refugee crisis to the future of the workforce.

"The students and I are so grateful to Nicholas and George Logothetis for the opportunity to participate in such an extraordinary event," says Fr. Christopher. "This experience will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on them and their future service to the Church and society."



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