

Father Dean, Mr. Chairman of the fall general assembly, Mrs. Theresa Sampson president of the Philoptochos society, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the parish council, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to the fall general assembly and to thank you for the interest that you have shown for the cathedral. Before I say a few words about our community, I would like to thank some members that have helped me for the past year as president, they have made my job easier. First of all, I would like to thank the two spiritual leaders of our cathedral, Father Dean Paleologos and Father Nicholas Kromidas, for their advice, kind words, hard work, and the interest that they show for the future of the cathedral.

Secondly I would like to thank all of the parish council members for their understanding, co-operation, and the countless hours that they have devoted to solve many problems that concerned our community. Also I would like to thank our secretaries, Theresa Sampson, Alexandra Economou, and our new office administrator, Lisa Ayotte, for their hard work, understanding, and the behavior that they show to our parishioners.

I would like to send a big thank you to our Greek school teachers Mr. Tsoumbas, Mrs. Rubina Kiriakidis, Ms. Maria Troubala, and Mrs.

Helen Kantarelis for their hard work to teach our children the Greek language and the Greek heritage. Last but not least I would like to thank you all for your interest, participation, support, and understanding that you express for the future of our cathedral.

Beginning right after the spring general assembly, the entire community was devoted to working together for our famous Grecian festival. The festival that took place the last week of June once again showed the city of Worcester that the Greek community works together with harmony and unity to achieve their goals. As always, thanks to this unity and hard work our festival was a great success.

I hope that this unity will continue in the future of our cathedral, because our community has many needs and this is one way that we can continue to make ends meet for the new millenium.

I would like to thank everyone for their participation. I hope that God will give us the strength and health to have our festival in the year 2,000, and that it will be something unique for the new millenium. Hopefully this will be made possible with the strong participation of our community's youth that played a major role in our past festival, in conjunction with all our senior parishioners. Together the entire community made this festival a spectacular success.

The remaining summer months all appointed committees worked very hard to achieve their goals and solve different issues that concerned our cathedral. In the beginning of September, the parish council hired an additional teacher for the Greek school program, Mrs. Helen Kantarelis. This was a result of the recent changes with the structure of the Greek School. Students are no longer grouped by their ages or classes, but rather by their skill and knowledge of the Greek language. This allows students to learn and grow from their already existing knowledge of Greek or no knowledge at all. Thanks to Mr. Tsoumbas and Mrs. Rubina Kiriakidis in conjunction with the Greek school committee, chaired by Penny Ann McLaren, for their ideas and hard work, this program is a great success. The students and parents are extremely pleased with this new program, and as a result the Greek School enrollment has increased.

Beginning our new fiscal year, our secretary Theresa Sampson, that has worked and devoted herself for over forty-five years of service to our cathedral, decided on her own to retire. On behalf of the parish council and the whole community, I would like to thank Theresa for her hard work and devotion that she expressed throughout her entire

career. We would like to wish her a happy and healthy retirement. We will miss her greatly.

The parish council in conjunction with our spiritual leader, Father Dean Paleologos, after many interviews with a number of applicants interested in the position, the decision was made that Lisa Ayotte was the only candidate suited for our cathedral as office administrator. As of December first, Lisa with the co-operation of Theresa Sampson and Alexandra Economou, assumed responsibility as office administrator. Everyone that has met Lisa has been pleased with her polite behavior and professional manor. At this time I would like to introduce to you Lisa Ayotte and wish her good luck and much success in her new career.

In the spring general assembly I had mentioned to you, and you should all know by now, that our cathedral is undertaking two major projects. One is the air condition system and the other project is the restoration of the church. They both are in the process of getting off ground, and you will hear a progress report of the individuals in charge of these projects.

One of our parishioners, who passed away recently, has left a small amount of money in her will to be used for any need in our

cathedral. Her name was Thelma Stetson and we pray to God that her memory will be eternal. The parish council voted unanimously that this money be used to improve the sound system in our Cotsidas auditorium. This project is currently in the process of completion.

Under the special events of our cathedral we had a successful Thanksgiving dance and a New Years Eve family dinner dance that was also a success. I would like to thank all of those who supported these events.

One thing that is really sad for our community and something we should work together to improve is the issue of our parish council elections. Not enough people run for the parish council. Unfortunately, although we have 1,200 members, there is not much interest among our parishioners to participate and serve as parish council members. This has been the example of the past couple elections of the parish council. Most recently only three people applied for the seven available positions for the parish council. In the future, I suggest that the new parish council with everyone's co-operation should try to change the by-laws of the election of our parish council, to correct this problem. I hope that all of us will try to continue to keep our cathedral as a model for the whole archdiocese of the United States.

For the future, some of our parishioners have showed great interest in helping and putting together a golf tournament for the benefit for our cathedral. This is a new idea for our parish and if this tournament is a success we would like to make it an annual event. The golf tournament for this year will take place at the Holden Hills Country Club, August 15, 1999. More details, of course, will follow in the near future.

Last but not least, I would like once again to thank you for giving me the honor to serve you as president of the parish council for the year of 1998. It was a great honor to me and if I by any means I offended anyone unwillingly in the past I ask for their forgiveness. Thank you and I wish every one of you a happy and prosperous New Year. Also I would like to wish best of luck to the new parish council, and let them know that I am available and willing to help them if they need me.

Thank you very much. ☺