



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LAITY

24th Annual Program Meeting:
Remembering the work and leadership of the Council of
Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of the Americas: CEOYLA

The First National

Eastern Orthodox RELIGIOUS-CULTURAL FESTIVAL

AUGUST 31, 1963

Civic Arena - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Sponsored by C.E.O.Y.L.A. - Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of the Americas



WELCOME

Welcome to the 24th Orthodox Christian Laity Annual Meeting Program honoring the memory, vision and accomplishments of the Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of the Americas (CEOYLA) members and movement. The Orthodox Church today is working toward unity through the Assembly of Bishops. Examining the CEOYLA movement offers valuable insights that can assist the Bishops in the decision making process as they move forward.

The CEOYLA movement unified the young adults of the American Carpatho-Russian Youth, American Romanian Orthodox Youth, Eastern Orthodox Youth Association, Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs, Greek Orthodox Young Adults League, Serbian Singing Federation of America, and Ukrainian Orthodox League of the USA. They began the organizational process in 1950s and reached a highpoint bringing together 11,000 to 13,000 Orthodox Christian Faithful in Pittsburgh at the Mellon Center Labor Day weekend 1963. The 1967 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese yearbook states that CEOYLA membership that year numbered 50,000.

These young and passionate faithful Orthodox Christians accomplished so much together in spite of lukewarm support from most of the hierarchy. If you look through the primary resources of minutes, annual reports, and other sources you are impressed with their vision, projects, outreach. In 1959 they were formulating adoption practices for Orthodox orphans by working with welfare agencies on a national level and presenting their findings to their respective hierarchs. The vision was to develop a national foster home program to properly place Orthodox orphans in Orthodox homes. WOW! This is a far cry from ethnocentric insular attitudes stressing summer camps, ethnic village experiences, and ethnic dances. The impression was held by the young adults that the hierarchy was uneasy or even fearful of their passion, talent and numbers. Archbishop Iakovos's address to the 1963 CEOYLA convention reflects an attempt to slow down the pace of this growing movement. Unfortunately, ongoing obstacles were created that caused organizational fragmentation that hindered expansion and even led many to leave the Orthodox faith or become "marginal" followers.

For years OCL board members have met with hierarchs and clergy to discuss Orthodox Christian Unity in America. Time and again we have been told to work with the laity and let us develop this unity from the grassroots up. We, the hierarchy, need to know that we have the support of the laity as we move ahead to create a unified Orthodox Church. My research during this entire year shows me that the laity has

been ready for unity since the end of World War II when Orthodox Christian veterans came home and took over the stewardship of the Church from the immigrant founders who built the foundations of Orthodoxy in America literally and figuratively. The hard work, generosity and intelligence of the immigrant generation which utilized the ethos of American laws related to freedom of religion and not for profit incorporation helped them move forward to build our churches. Their children were ready and worked for Orthodox Christian Unity in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

These faithful were often rebuffed by the hierarchy, which went about the business of building up ethnic churches and archdioceses, looking at movements such as CEOYLA as Protestant or Congregationalism. The movement was marginalized to the point where we cannot even locate the Lamp Unto My Feet Documentary of the 1963 CEOYLA Festival at this time! Nevertheless these same faithful people stayed within the church providing their time and talent as choir members, Sunday school teachers, parish council officers, participants within the life of the church on all levels. They gave life to the foundation that their parents started and filled the Church with the light of Christ. *We pray that the Assembly of Bishops from the 14 Orthodox jurisdictions will take note of this historical period in the life of the Church here and move ahead earnestly to create a self-governing unified Orthodox Church in the USA.*

OCL thanks the Community of Holy Assumption and especially Father Patrick Carpenter and all those individuals who encouraged us to keep the memory of the CEOYLA movement alive. Special thanks are extended to His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, Ron Muresan, Kweilin Nassar and archivists of the OCA and Romanian Episcopate for keeping us on track with this program presentation. We thank the panelists for their insightful participation. **We are grateful to the OCL Angel supporters.** Without your support we could not develop these programs. The OCL Board and staff keep our mission alive. We are especially grateful to Andy Kartalis for his guidance as acting president these past six months while our president Bill Souvall continues to recuperate. OCL is grateful to God for providing comfort and strength to Bill and his devoted family.

George Matsoukas,
Executive Director

They Witnessed to North America with One Voice - CEOYLA

Between the Eisenhower and Reagan administrations (1954-1989), Orthodox lay leaders convened twice a year in a visionary Council, CEOYLA: seven, (later 8) national Youth Organizations in cooperation, learning from each other. A common vision and high goals energized their individual Archdioceses across the continent. That vision also strongly contributed to organizing the SCOBA bishops' forum in 1960.

The Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of The Americas. They were as true to Orthodoxy as they were to their American "can-do" spirit. Convinced that the indivisible Faith they'd inherited was deserving of concrete action, they proceeded to cut through inertia, rivalries, obstacles and criticism.

They gloried in knowing what Orthodoxy is, and they acted on it.

They very nearly succeeded. They never tried to mask Youth's desire that we be blessed with the same traditional, unitary "neighborhood" Orthodox Life as in other countries. Not everyone saw Orthodoxy as ready to start down that road together, so CEOYLA made the best of the situation, in those fields open to them:

- Worked so that U.S. Armed Forces adopted an "EO" designation on "dog tags" for Eastern Orthodox service personnel;
- Militated for the U.S. Chaplain's Corps to admit Orthodox priests, on a par with Protestants, Catholics and Jews;
- Helped organize Orthodox Fellowships on college campuses across North America;
- National campaign so that state adoption agencies place Orthodox orphans and foster children with Orthodox families, on the ideal that Holy Orthodoxy is a child's birthright;
- Assembled and donated entire libraries of Eastern Orthodox Religious Education materials;
- Researched & published the first authoritative Directory of Eastern Orthodox Churches;
- Active in the passing of legislation in over 30 states recognizing Orthodoxy as the 4th Major Faith in America;
- And on the two occasions in 1963 and 1977 when "the stars came into alignment," sponsored the glorious **Eastern Orthodox Religious-Cultural Festivals**, each a massive effort manifesting the desire and possibility of living and working together as Orthodox. To this day, the 1963 Great Vespers in the then-new Pittsburgh Mellon

Civic Arena stands as the largest gathering of Orthodox in American history: 7 Youth Conventions, 12 Orthodox hierarchs, plus 100 religious dignitaries, 150 priests, responses sung by 7 choirs totaling 1,000-voices; certified attendance 11-13,000.

Yet CEOYLA, if not actively written out of history, was allowed to languish and expire, its significance undocumented and unheralded. As of December last year, just one Orthodox jurisdictional website so much as mentions CEOYLA. And you could easily mistake that single reference as dismissive. It states that: "*CEOYLA failed to find a common purpose, beyond sponsoring ethnic festivals . . .*"

This kickoff to the 25th Anniversary year of OCL is dedicated to honoring and restoring the renown of both CEOYLA and the proper leadership role of American Orthodox Laity. Also, to recovering as much historical source material as can still be saved.

Four or more panelists, scheduled to include a recorded greeting from Bishop + Basil, Secretary of the new Assembly of Bishops, Archbishop + Nathaniel of Detroit in person, and laypersons from CEOYLA's various decades, will offer remembrances and reflections. The afternoon session will feature multi-media presentations including actual footage from the 1977 Festival (the 1963 film, that had been broadcast nationwide on CBS-TV's "*Lamp Unto My Feet*" program, remains un-located in any Archdiocesan or other archive). We will detail those thrilling years when Eastern Orthodoxy promised to coalesce along the same lines as Greece, Serbia, Romania, Cyprus. Open-Panel discussions will then focus on 2 points:

- Whether our legitimate authorities duly esteem and acclaim the profound Orthodoxy and potential of those lay leaders in their times.
- Given all that has passed over the intervening half-century, whether inertia, duplication of effort and rivalries leave sufficient room to recover that unitary Orthodox Life that is normal in every Orthodox country.

Ronald Andrei Muresan,
VP The Orthodox Brotherhood
Past Chairman, CEOYLA

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LAITY

24th ANNUAL MEETING

Business Meeting - Friday, October 7, 2011

4:00 pm OCL Annual Business Meeting,
Marriott Courtyard Hotel
5308 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Program Meeting

Parish Community Holy Assumption of St Mary Church
105 South 19th Street Pittsburgh, PA 15203
Igumen Patrick Carpenter, Pastor

Activities

Friday, October 7, 2011

6:30 pm Vespers/Memorial Service honoring the
memory of departed CEOYLA Members and
Pot Luck Supper.

Saturday, October 8, 2011

8:30 am Continental Breakfast
9:15am Overview of the History and Legacy of
CEOYLA Panel Discussion, power point
presentation and video presentation

PANELISTS

His Eminence, Archbishop NATHANIEL

Orthodox Christian Laity is fortunate to have as its spiritual advisor a hierarch who is truly a servant of God and to his flock, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, Primate of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America and member of The Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America. He was consecrated to the Episcopacy in 1980 and served as an Auxiliary Bishop until 1984. In 1984 he was enthroned as ruling Hierarch of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America. In 1999 the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) elevated him to Archbishop. *His Eminence has assisted us in many ways to put together this 24th Annual Program honoring CEOYLA. He made the excellent archives of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate available to the panelists and organizers. He has the vision that someday the Orthodox Christians in the USA will share a unified archive in one place. He laments the loss of so many documents related to our journey as Orthodox Christians in the USA. He has suggested topics and speakers for this program. We are happy to share his essay "Where have all the*

flowers gone about the decline of CEOYLA. He is an eloquent advocate for Orthodox Christian Jurisdictional Unity in North America. In addition to offering his prayers and guidance to OCL as spiritual advisor, he is Episcopal Moderator for the Pastoral Life Ministries Unit of the Orthodox Church in America, Chairman of the V D Trifa Romanian American Heritage Center in Grass Lake MI, organizer of the "Help Romania Fund" and co-founder of the "Help the Children of Romania" in 1990, Chairman of the Congress of Romanian American (CORA) since 1991, and President of the Board of The Center for Orthodox Christian Studies in Detroit. On the celebration of his 30th Anniversary to the Episcopacy he was honored with the publication of select sermons bound in a volume entitled **Servant of All** available at the Romanian Episcopacy P.O. Box 309 Grass Lake, MI 49249 call 517-522-4800.

Video Presentation: Reflections on the 1963 CEOYLA Festival – Pittsburgh, PA by a teenager – now His Grace **Bishop BASIL Essey** Bishop Diocese of Mid-America: Wichita, KS, Antiochian Archdiocese and elected Secretary of the Assembly of Bishops. His Grace graduated from St Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary with M.Div in 1973. He served as pastor in various parishes throughout the US. He was director of the Department of Youth Affairs of the Antiochian Archdiocese from 1975-86. He taught Contemporary Byzantine Chant at St Vladimir's 1980-86 and studied, taught and did research and translations at Balamand Theological School in Lebanon. He published *The Liturgikon: The book of Divine Services for the Priest and Deacon*. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1980, tonsured a monk 2003 and a bishop 1991. He was enthroned as Bishop of Wichita and the Diocese of Mid-America 2003.

Igumen Patrick Carpenter is the rector of our host parish community Holy Assumption Orthodox Church. He is a graduate of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary and the communications officer for the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. He was ordained to the priesthood on April 20, 1996, tonsured a monk on November 19, 2003 and elevated to the rank of Igumen on February 4, 2007. Igumen Patrick will extend his greeting and present an overview of Orthodox Unity in the Pittsburgh area.

Jim Demetrion Served in the Air Corps during World War II. Jim is a graduate of Ohio University. He was president of and CFO of Chester Swimming Pool Construction Company. He is active in the Orthodox Church on the local and district level. He participates in the work of his local AHEAP Senior Housing Projects in the Cincinnati Community. Jim was the National Treasurer of the Greek Orthodox Youth of America G.O.Y.A. from 1959-1961. *He represented GOYA at the first CEOYLA meeting that began organizing and planning the 1963 CEOYLA Festival in Pittsburgh, PA.* Jim is also a founding member of Orthodox Christian Laity OCL and has been chairman of the nominating committee. Jim and his wife Carol share many interests in the life of their local church and community. Jim is also a master rose gardener.

Ronald Andrei Muresan is the current Vice President of The Orthodox Brotherhood, lay leadership association of the Romanian Episcopate OCA. He is a lifelong member, repeat parish councilor, and for 24 years 1st cantor at his diocesan cathedral of St. George. Ron has taught Byzantine and Romanian chant at St. Raphael's in Detroit. He has served on his Diocesan Council of the Romanian Episcopate, as past legal and litigation counsel and on its Bylaws Revision Commission. *Ron is a two-term Past President of AROY diocesan youth and as delegate and then two-term Chairman of CEOYLA (1983-84).* Ron is also active in cultural affairs, as long-time president of ROHERA Romanian Heritage and Exchange. For 4 years he was president of the Langsford Men's Chorus. He was part of the first European Tour of the Chorus which captured 2nd in the World among male voice choirs.

Kweilin Nassar has been in Pittsburgh broadcasting for nearly four decades. Kweilin's broadcasting career started at WWSW Radio, then on to KDKA-TV where she developed the station's community relations activities, including the first nationwide television campaign on organ donation and transplantation. While at KDKA, *she produced a special program on the third Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of America (CEOYLA) Vespers held at Mellon Arena.* Her broadcasting career led her to WQED Multimedia, Western Pennsylvania's public television and radio stations. Kweilin held a number of increasingly-prestigious positions from corporate support to community affairs of course, the on-air pledge drives for WQED-TV and WQED-FM. Kweilin hosted WQEX's "Health Talk" and was a contributor to WQED-TV's "ON Q focusing on religion and ethnicity."

Kweilin has received the Antonian Silver Medal, the second highest award of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America for her service in public and

media relations for the Church and Cultural Activities. Her volunteer work presently includes producing a weekly half-hour cable television program, "Orthodoxy Now," along with an entire crew of professional volunteers. It airs on the Christian Associates channel.

Michael G. Herzak, President and CEO Insurance Systems Group, Inc. Active insurance professional and served as president of Professional Insurance Agents Association of Ohio (PIA) in 1983 to 1991 and a member of that board for 12 years; Served as member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Professional Insurance (PIA) for 10 ears; Was president of the American Insurance Sales and Marketing Society (AIMS) and board member; Was board member of the Society of Certified Insurance Counselors; Served on President's Advisory Boards of the Motorists Insurance Group, Utica National Insurance Group, Atlantic Mutual Insurance Companies, Grange Mutual Casualty Insurance Companies and presently serves on GuideOne Insurance. He received a citation from the Ohio House of Representatives for his work on behalf of the Ohio insurance industry 1995 and he has earned the honor of "Ohio Professional Agent of the Year" from the Professional Insurance Agents Association of Ohio. Civically, Michael was Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Myers University (formerly Dyke College, his alma mater for 11 years and a trustee for 28 years. He is a coach of youth basketball, baseball and softball. As an active Churchman Mike has served the Orthodox Church in a variety of capacities. President of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA, Formerly the FROC) from 1976-68, and Chairman of the Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of the Americas (CEOYLA) in the 70's and early 80's. He has served on two units of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA).

A few short weeks ago the collective organized youth groups of the Orthodox Churches in the Western Hemisphere, achieved what no other Orthodox group has been able to do – a successful and massive gathering of Orthodox faithful in a major American city.

On this date, a Religious Cultural Festival with participation of all “main line” Orthodox jurisdictions was held in Pittsburgh. It was the first of its kind ever to take place in America. It was a historic and unprecedented event. It was a gathering of nearly 14,000 Orthodox Christians massed together in Pittsburgh’s new Civic Arena, from all parts of the United States, Canada and Mexico. It was a Festival sponsored by the Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of the Americas (CEOYLA). It was a religious service with the highest ranking Orthodox prelates of the Orthodox Churches in America attending and participating in a Great Vesper Services.

Most Rev. Benjamin, Russian Orthodox Archbishop of Pittsburgh officiated, assisted by selected priests representing every national jurisdiction. Our own Archbishop Iakovos, chairman of the standing conference of Orthodox Bishops in America and a President of the World Council of Churches, addressed the huge throng of Orthodox faithful. Syrian Orthodox Richard G. Joseph of Toledo Ohio, Chairman of CEOYLA, was the only other speaker on the program.

Years of Planning

The gigantic Festival was the climax of the week-long series of simultaneous conferences and conventions of the seven national youth organizations meeting separately in Pittsburgh. These meetings of the member groups of CEOYLA, as well as the Festival itself, were the result of five years of hard work on the part of CEOYLA to bring about.

It took this time for the organizations to agree to hold their annual conventions simultaneously in Pittsburgh, and it took nearly as long to convince the hierarchy of the Church to agree to participate in the Festival. Once the major problems were resolved, CEOYLA wasted little time in effecting the hundreds of details pertinent to the staging of this mammoth event.

The entire spectacle was ably planned and executed, far out-shining any similar activity planned by the “senior” members of the churches. In this respect, it reflected the intensive and dedicated efforts of not only the chairman of CEOYLA and members of the various committees, but especially of veteran Ceoylans.

Disappointing Note

The only disappointing note of the entire Festival was the address of Archbishop Iakovos. Once again, in a major address he made no overt reference to the accomplishment of

the Church’s organized youth as reflected in the spectacle unveiled before him. Rather, as His Eminence has often done, he admonished the youth, this time that they should “submit to their elders.” And by submitting he did not mean only to respect and obey, but to submit in the full sense of the word.

What His Eminence had in mind or who he was trying to reach was not entirely clear. But so often and so emphatic did he repeat his phrase in his address that he gave the impression that the young people who were responsible for making the Festival a reality, were guilty of disobedience.

It was certainly not the proper address to be made at this tremendous and triumphal gathering of Orthodoxy. More in order would have been an exuberant declaration of the confidence of the hierarchy in the faith and progress of its youth as exemplified by the Festival itself.

Indeed, if the admonition of His Eminence had been taken literally during the last five years, there would not have been this event. For it was the hierarchy itself which placed the greatest obstacles in the path of the Festival. Especially the canonical issue which almost broke up the long-planned event which was saved by the compromise in the eleventh hour. As one prelate said “It is the youth who push us,” and at least he was candid about it.

For the Record

Let it be known that the youth have once again spoken and once again have acted. Despite the many obstacles in their path, the young people of the Orthodox Church, coming from diverse national backgrounds, but Americans all, have demonstrated to their “elders” by the Pittsburgh Festival that cooperation between the several national Orthodox jurisdictions is not only possible but desirable and indeed beneficial. Through the efforts of CEOYLA, organized in 1954 to help promote the general welfare of the Orthodox people and to mutually assist in the solution of common problems, the youth have achieved many tangible “firsts” with little if any assistance from the formal church organizations. And though the Festival represented the culmination of much effort, it was but one of the many projects that CEOYLA has successfully undertaken.

But while these projects are those of a “tangible” nature, the “intangible” values brought about by the youth through CEOYLA perhaps even exceed the value of its more permanent projects. The opportunity for young men and women of the Orthodox Faith, leaders in their respective organizations, to meet one another through an expression of common Faith and by an exchange of their diverse cultural backgrounds has had a far reaching effect in more fully expressing the unity of Orthodoxy in the Americas.

And this unity could not have been more eloquently voiced than the resounding choir of 1,000 voices at Pittsburgh who sang “O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to all Orthodox Christians over their adversaries. And by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.” Amen

"The CEOYLA struggled for years to please the hierarchs and the clergy, to be understood, to be accepted, to be messengers of a unified Church in North America, but to no avail. They didn't know what they were doing 'wrong' or what was considered 'acceptable.' The Church withdrew or let languish its support of the CEOYLA and the young of the various 'jurisdictions' stood apart, as though some form of invisible 'ecclesiastical Berlin Walls' had been erected between them."

(Solia – The Herald, April 2000)

Where Have All the Flowers Gone? Or, Where Lies CEOYLA?

by Archbishop Nathaniel (Popp)

As everyone knows, a flower has the potential to become fruit, which, in turn, bears seed that is a source of new life. An old German song entitled "Where have all the flowers gone?" referred to the young men who had been sent off to war. It was a verifiable assumption that many would not return to initiate new life in society. What a dismal future this foretold, youth nipped in the bud!

Do we have a similar situation in the Church today, not in context of political warfare but in the context of youth losing the warfare for their eternal salvation? No one knows the true number of those who have left or leave the Church in search of spiritual nourishment elsewhere or who abandon faith in the Divine. The attendance of young people at divine services and educational programs brings us to the real assumption that they do not hold Church worship as a priority. We all acknowledge that once they are out of the parish and family situations, they are not as involved with the Church as they ought to be. Does the Church recognize this, and is she also doing something about it?

A glance at the history of the Church in North America shows us that youth has fared poorly at our hands. Because of the unintelligibility of liturgical languages, a tendency to "Americanize" to accept that all beliefs are "the same" which caused a crisis of indifference and confusion in their minds, and because of other reasons, the Church has lost generations of young people.

Where is that tender flower, the "CEOYLA?" The Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of America once represented most young Orthodox of various ethnic jurisdictions. The CEOYLA began from a desire of the young people to be together; it was not the creation of an external authority but of a recognition of oneness of faith. The CEOYLA was strong, as strong as the groups of which it was composed, but this fertile ground was neglected. Instead of being filled with guidance, it went unattended by parish clergy and lay leaders, and the hierarchy.

What titanic measures these young leaders had to undertake to receive a modicum of permission (a blessing) to meet together, socialize together, pray together, witness together to their common Orthodox faith! Their good intentions, their innocent programs to know one another, to serve the Church in America, to create a working basis for the future, were overcome by the weeds of leadership - indifference.

The CEOYLA struggled for years to please the hierarchs and the clergy, to be understood, to be accepted, to be messengers of a unified Church in North America but to no avail. They didn't know what they were doing "wrong" or what was considered "acceptable." The Church withdrew or let languish its support of the CEOYLA and the young of various "jurisdictions" stood apart, as though some form of invisible "ecclesiastical Berlin Walls" had been erected between them. Today, the Church in North America is reaping the fruit of the death of the CEOYLA. Much of that "future" left the Church, frustrated, disappointed, angered, "turned-off", sidelined. Judging from the number of mixed marriages, indifference by local parishes to spouses who had converted to Orthodoxy was a major factor, and many of these good-intentioned neo-converts, and their Orthodox spouses, in frustration, left the Church for a church which embraced them and in which they felt their spiritual needs fulfilled. Instead of being fertilized with love and concern, respect and support, the CEOYLA was judged insignificant, brash, ill-timed, even "disobedient."

There are some CEOYLA people who reminisce about the programs and dreams they had formulated and who nourish the hope that "something" similar to the CEOYLA can still be created. They did not all leave the Church, although their hearts still ache and bear the scars of the indifference of the Church's leadership. They consider hierarchal withdrawal of support as the death blow dealt to the CEOYLA.

What concrete actions did the Church take for the youth? Which are examples over the decades of any united effort to guide the youth in its witness to the Lord? In the meanwhile, the new youth watch and wait; wait and are placated; placated and drift; drift and abandon, because the Church does not work together with the youth.

Christ never said that the “ethnic” planting of the Church in America would bear future fruit. He said that the powers of darkness would not prevail over the Church through the eons. A two hundred year old vine does not assure a fruitful plant; the leaders of the Church must tend the young people and cultivate them to produce the fruit of the Church today, let alone tomorrow. Indifference to youth is indifference to Christ.

In recent times, general support has come forth from all jurisdictions for the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), two activities which sprang up in response to pan-jurisdictional needs. Credit must be given to those who initiated the IOCC, which was then adopted by the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), and to the Greek Archdiocese as the foundation for the OCMC, which was also adopted by the SCOBA.

Is it not equally important to have all-out “jurisdictional” support for the youth in as “united” an effort as has been given for charity and mission? Admittedly, each “jurisdiction” may be doing its “own thing,” but is this not a terrible judgment on the entire Church? The Church is One Body, and no one can assume the luxury of not being concerned for the entire youth. “We’re doing our thing for our kids,” is not an acceptable, mature and Christian refrain. All kids, all young people, are members of the One Church and not of temporary “jurisdictions.” Does the hierarchy have a national youth organization on its docket?

Most Orthodox peoples around the globe have their own national Orthodox youth organizations. Not so, the Church in North America. We, this great nation, have no Orthodox youth representation neither as a witness here nor as a witness abroad (Just as we have no representation in the plans for the “Great Synod” which is yet to come.). After the skeleton CEOYLA was brought down, nothing else was erected in its place. How we laud and praise “Syndesmos,” but create no Orthodox American Youth Organization! Is it not unusual to praise what others have and neglect to do the same for oneself? To admire “Syndesmos” and to not be concerned for our own youth is unacceptable. It is time for the hierarchs

to act! It is time for unity of action with all diocesan and parish leaders! There needs to be a National Orthodox Youth Organization.

Where have all the flowers gone? Look around and see. Where have all the flowers gone? Pressed dry between the pages of the empty catalogues of our materialistic, consumer-based society, syncretism of belief, the screen of internet claims to “truth” and our own weak, inexcusable indifference. “Now is the time, says the Lord, I will grant them the safety they sigh for.”

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You Make a Difference!

(Contributions received by September, 23, 2011)

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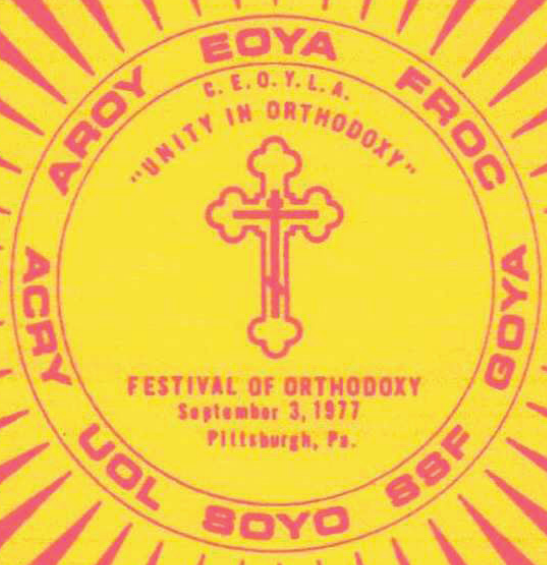
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Angelo P. Paspalas, St. Louis, MO
George & Loula Passes, Haddenfield, NJ
Eugenia Sakellriou, San Angeles, TX
Neophytos & Deanne Savide, Palos Park, IL
Vladimer & Sherry Solodkova, Germantown, MD
Virginia Toms, St. Paul, MN
M. Vasilakis, Pittsburgh, PA
Vasilikis Villas, Hingham, MA
John and Efthalia Walsh, Bethesda, MD
Steven Zaris, Park Ridge, IL
Peter and Dorothy Zikos, McMurray, PA



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**CIVIC ARENA-PITTSBURGH, PA.
SEPTEMBER 3, 1977**