

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Not an agreement for agreement's sake.

Nikos Kotzias
Foreign Minister
Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1st Vas. Sofias Av.
106 71 Athens, Greece
Dear Mr. Kotzias,

As the time has come that Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) are close to signing a permanent treaty on the name of the latter, Greeks of Greece, but also the diaspora need your assurance that you are going to preserve Greece's present and future national interests in the form of inclusion in the treaty of all derivatives of the word "Macedonia" even as a composite name. One must discern the political, linguistic, and social norms in Yugoslavia, the parent state of the FYROM before proceeding to an agreement for agreement sake.

The Macedonian ethnicity was never explicitly recognized by the Marxist regime of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and later the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. The recognition was gradual and implicit primarily by the people of Yugoslavia and then by the federative government of the constitutive republic of "Macedonia," who did not belong to any of the other ethnic groups inhabiting the republic. It was the result of a simple default. All derivatives of the word Macedonia evolved similarly.

The expression "Slavs of Macedonia" developed to "Macedonian Slavs" to "Macedonians", since they were the only inhabitants of Macedonia deprived of an ethnic appellation (Misirkov 1974, 159). To avoid any confusion, the Comintern used the expression Macedonian people (Македонски народ) as meaning the people of Macedonia regardless of ethnicity (Hristo Andonov-Poljanski 1981). Regarding the Macedonian nation (Македонска нација), Comintern recognized a state governed by the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (Comintern Resolutions of 1924 and 1934). It follows the model of the United Nations. i.e., countries; Comintern never recognized a community of descent.

But we have to ask the question, what kind of a final name is in the Greek national interests — the dynamic, the stable, the solid one or the one struggling with all sorts of problems destabilizing the region? An unsuitable name could be the one struggling with all kinds of problems destabilizing the region. Another critical question is, what is the "new" Skopje is going do with the institutions its diaspora created and all of its past governments supported? This issue includes all institutions, not only within the country but especially abroad including but not limited those within Greece. It also requires a balanced and responsible approach.

Without the right approach, the current positive direction of the process of normalizing the relations between the two countries might turn into its contrary, leading to the undermining of regional stability. Existing instruments for supporting the balance must not be shattered but modified by the demands of the age. They must be utilized to strengthen security and stability and improve relations between states instead of being viewed as the veneer of a bad treaty. Greece has the normative leverage to enforce its final determination of a political or a practical decision with appropriate anticipatory consequences of a proposed course of action that would bear on concerns where the advantage is probably a factor.

Dear Sir,

The making of a stable self-controlling national culture and a peaceful region is undoubtedly a difficult task. Once the aftershock of the previous strategic culture begins to subside, the FYROM must start to reconsider the identity of its Slav populace and through public encouragement and education provided that the incentives become a top-down approach short and precise in no uncertain terms. In an eternal Macedonia, only one ethnicity can reside, the Greek.

Thank you for your time.

Marcus A. Templar
National Security Advisor
Macedonian League



Στην Δεξίωση του Συλλόγου Κωνσταντινοπολιτών η "Ο" έγινε μάρτυρας ενός διπλωματικού "πρώτου" την "συνύπαρξη" των δύο Γενικών Προξένων, την Γενική Πρόξενο της Ελλάδος κα. Πολυξένη Πετροπούλου και τον Γενικό Πρόξενο της Τουρκίας κ. Umut ACAR. Η "Ο" πιστεύει πως επικοινωνία των δυο κρατών σε οποιοδήποτε επίπεδο μόνο...καλοό κάνει. Εδώ Οι δυο Γενικοί πρόξενοι μετά των συζύγων τους και ο Νίκος Χαρισιάδης με την σύζυγό του Άννα και την πολυμελή οιογένειά τους.



Σε κάθε οργανωμένη κοινωνική ομάδα δυστυχώς πάντοντε μόνο λίγα είναι εκείνα τα άτομα που τελικά εργάζονται, οι πίο πολλοί απλά μιλάνε ή υποδεικνύουν. Εδώ οι "εργάτες": από Αρ.Τζέννη Αναλυτής, Αγγελική Στήφενσον, Έλενα Χρόνης, Πόλυ Γαλανός, Έλλεν Πόλαρντ, Άννα Χαρισιάδη.



‘Άλλο ένα φαινό παράδειγμα σιωπηράς "εργάτριας" χωρίς φανφάρφες: η Μάρθα Καρακίτσου, που το "μοτίβο" της είναι ένα αρχαίο ρητό "Μη γνώτω η δεξιά σου τι ποιεί η αριστερά σου", μεταφραζόμενο. "να μην γνωρίζει η δεξιά σου τι κάνει η αριστερά σου.

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1. To defend all who are unjustly attacked
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5. To extend the knowledge of Hellenism, Greek culture and traditions
6. To encourage all worthy community causes
7. To further the just causes of the people of Greece
8. To uphold the Greek Cypriot cause
9. To assist all Greek-American fraternal, cultural, patriotic and religious organizations
10. To install Americanism in the Greek-American community.

The Real Meaning Of Christmas



It's that time of year again. December has come and with it all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail, turkey dinners with family and friends, snow in the yard, stockings hanging in the living room, and shouts of "Merry Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets? Is this really Christmas?

For many people, Christmas is a time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends. Many are saddened at Christmastime when they think of their loved ones who will not be able to come home for various reasons. Turkey dinners may be only a wish and not a reality for some.

Yet, Christmas can be a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

Luke 2:4-19 (NIV) says:

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths. Jesus was born so one day the price could be paid for the things we have done that are wrong. The Bible says that all have sinned. We are all born with a sin nature. We do things that do not please God. Through the sins of Adam and Eve, we have all inherited that sin nature. We need to have that removed. The only way is through Jesus. Jesus came so He could die on the cross for ALL of our sins. If we believe that Jesus died for our sins, we can ask Him to come into our hearts and forgive us. Then, we are clean and made whole. We can know that heaven is a place where we can go to when this life is over.

"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness." 1 John 1:9 (NLT)

We can truly be happy at Christmas! No matter what may be happening, we can know that we are His children. We then become sons and daughters of God. Heaven will be our home one day.

Look at Christmas in a new way this year. This is the year to invite Jesus into your heart. You will then have a "Merry Christmas." The joy and peace you will receive will last all year as you look to God for all your needs to be met.



Στον χορό των Σπαρτιατών ο φακός της "Ο" εντόπισε γνωστούς και φίλους. Από Αρ.: Γιώργος Καλέργης, Πρόεδρος των Κρητών, Γιώργος Κατερίνης παραγωγός καλλιτεχνικών παραστάσεων, Κική και Κώστας Χανιωτάκης, Πρόεδρος Ένωσης, Κική και Γιώργος Πολυμενάκος, Ευδόξιος και Μαρίνα Μπαχάρης.



Από τον χορά των Σπαρτιατών. Εδώ ο Ομιλός Νεολαίας που μας διασκέδασε με άριστη εκτέλεση των παραδοσιακών χορών της γεννέθλιας γης των Σπαρτιατών. Ένα μεγάλο "εύγε" στα παιδιά της νέας γενιάς που κρατούν τις παραδόσεις.



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ΠΟΛΛΑ

Πολλές οικογένειες δεν νοιώθουν άνετα να συζητούν για θάνατο, αλλά δυστυχώς αργά ή γρήγορα όλοι μας θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπίσουμε αυτή την σκληρή πραγματικότητα στην ζωή μας. Αλλά, ο θάνατος δεν έρχεται πάντοτε στην προχωρήμενη ηλικία. Μερικές φορές έρχεται νωρίτερα λόγω διαφόρων ασθενειών.

Πολλοί άνθρωποι κατακτούν τον φυσικό φόβο του θανάτου με το να προσχεδιάζουν για τις ανάγκες ταφής τους. Ο προσχεδιασμός αυτός όχι μόνο απαλύνει στα παιδιά μας το ψυχικό τραύμα της απώλειας αγαπημένων προσώπων, αλλά και παγώνει το κόστος των εξόδων ταφής εξοικονομώντας πολλά χρήματα...

Η Ελληνοαμερικανίδα Ιφιγένεια (Λυνν) Πετράκου, εργάζεται για 15 χρόνια τώρα στο Memorial Park Cemetery, συμμετέχει ενεργά στην ζωή της Ελληνικής Κοινότητας και έχει βοηθήσει 100δες Ελληνικές οικογένειες να προσχεδιάσουν για το αναπόφευκτο, γλυτώνοντάς τες χιλιάδες δολάρια. Γνωρίζει πολύ καλά τις ταφικές σας ανάγκες και εργάζεται με σας να σας προσφέρει τις καλλίτερες τιμές και στο Memorial Park Cemetery και σε όλα τα νεκροταφεία του Σικάγου.

Τηλεφωνείστε λοιπόν στη Ιφιγένεια στο (847) 209-3241 για ένα ραντεβού στο Memorial Park, 9900 Gross Point Road, Skokie ή τηλεφωνείστε απ' ευθείας στην Λυνν στο (847) 677-4401.

THE "CHICAGO GREEK HOURS"

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"OMOGENEIA"

WISH

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!



AND THANK THEM FOR THEIR
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Ο άγνωστο στην "Ο" νεαρός της εικόνας που πήρε μια υποτροφία από τον Σπαρτιατικό Σύλλογο, είχε την ευγενική καλοσύνη να εκφράσει και γραπτά τις ευχαριστίες του για την τιμή που του έκανε ο Σύλλογος Σπαρτιατών. Η ευγνωμοσύνη είναι μια σπάνια αρετή σήμερα ιδίως μεταξύ των νεωτέρων.



Συνιθίζεται το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο να σέρνει τον πρώτο χορό τιμής ένεκεν. Μια ιδιάζουσα περίπτωση που την υφίστανται όλου οι εθνοτοπικοί Σύλλογοι είναι η έλλειψη νέων Ελληνοαμερικανών να αντικαταστήσουν τα προχωρημένης ηλικίας μέλη των Διοικητικών Συμβουλίων των εθνοτοπικών συλλόγων. Όλες οι προσπάθειες προσέλκυσης νέων μελών με διάφορους κι ποικίλους τρόπους έχει γενικά αποτύχει μέχρι στιγμής.



Από τον χορό του Σπαρτιακού Συλλόγου από Αρ.: το ζεύγος του κ. Γιάννη Πρίμπα του κ. Χαλκιά του Δρ.Τομ Άνταμς, του κ. Νίκου Φλώρου, η κα.Τζώτζολη. και η κα. Βεργάκη.



Κατατράχεται από μια σιερά από σοβαρές ασθένειες, αλλά έχει τέτοια δυνατή θέληση να φανεί χρήσιμη στους συνανθρώπους της που καθυποτάσσει την ύλη με το σπιθιροβόλο πνεύμα της. Είναι Η Μάρθα Καρακίτσου που εικονίζεται εδώ με την παρέα της στον Χορό των Σπαρτιατών. Συμπαράστατης της η Ρία.

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ΗΜΕΡΕΣ ΠΟΥ ΕΡΧΟΝΤΑΙ ΜΕ ΥΓΕΙΑ,
ΠΡΟΚΟΠΗ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΡΗΝΗ

**ΚΑΛΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ
ΕΥΤΥΧΕΣ ΤΟ ΝΕΟΝ ΕΤΟΣ**



19th Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum

The 19th Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum was organized at the Metropolitan Club in New York City on Monday, December 11, 2017 with huge success attracting more than 1350 participants. This is an International Summit about Greece in New York organized in cooperation with the New York Stock Exchange and major global investment banks.



from left to right Mrs. Lana Zochiou, Consul, Consulate General of Greece to New York-E Vasilis Philippou, Consul-General of the Republic of Cyprus in USA-Hon. Haris Lalacos , Ambassador of Greece to the USA-Ms. Sabina Dziurman, Director – Greece & Cyprus, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development-Hon. Geoffrey R. Pyatt , Ambassador of the United States in Greece -Mrs. Olga Bornozi, Managing Director of Capital Link-Dr. Konstantinos Koutras, Consulate General of Greece in New York-Mr. Nicolas Bornozis, President of Capital Link - mr. George Pitsilis,

The Forum featured government and business leaders from Greece, Europe and the United States, and top executives from the investment, financial and business communities. The forum attracts the elite of Wall Street and this year took place in a crucial time for Greece. After years of recession, Greece is slowly returning to a period of economic growth and aims to position itself as an attractive investment and business destination. The attraction of foreign investment is crucial for the recovery of the economy.

It's worth mentioning that this is the first time that the representatives of the 3 European Institutions participated all together in a conference taking place outside Greece to honor Greece, with 2 International Rating Agencies, leading US investors with active presence in Greece, 7 International Investment Banks, 4 Greek Systematic Banks and government representatives at the highest level.

The Forum offered a unique combination of information, marketing and networking opportunities. The participants this year had the opportunity to be informed about Greece from:

- 87 high - level speakers who addressed
- 1350 delegates who attended the forum
- 153 one-to-one meetings with listed and non- listed companies
- Separate meetings for the Greek Economy Ministers with Group of Institutional investors (funds) which are interested in investing in Greece
- Separate meetings with representatives of foreign media
- At the same time all the attendees had the opportunity for networking while various parallel events were taking place at the Forum

This year, the conference featured the developments and reforms in the Greek economy and the Greek government program for the economy and the investments. Also, the latest trends in the capital markets and specific sectors with topics such as Government and Corporate Bonds, energy, infrastructure development, real estate, tourism, banking, non-performing loans management, and global shipping.

The Forum was honored by the participation of the following guests:

- H.E. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic (via webcast)
- Hon. Euclid Tsakalotos, Minister of Finance
- Hon. Dimitris Papadimitriou, Minister of Economy & Development
- Hon. Elena Kountoura, Minister of Tourism
- Mr. George Tziallas, Secretary General for Tourism Policy and Development, Ministry of Tourism
- Mr. George Pitsilis, Governor, Independent Authority for Public Revenue
- The Ambassador of the United States in Greece, Hon. Geoffrey R. Pyatt
- The Ambassador of Greece to the USA, Hon. Haris Lalacos
- The Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, Mrs. Maria Theofili

The Consulate General of Greece in New York, Dr. Konstantinos Koutras

The Representatives of the European Institutions: Mr. Declan Costello, Mr. Nicola Giammarioli and Mr. Francesco Drudi

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

Listed Companies

As in previous years, the Forum provided foreign investors with unique networking through more than 153 one-to-one meetings with listed and non- listed

companies, as well as, with members of the Greek government delegation.

An “Economic Ministers Government Sit Down Meeting” session scheduled to address a Group of Institutional investors.

This meeting was organized between the Greek Economy Ministers and a Group of Institutional investors and funds with investment interest for Greece, among which we mention the following: Funds: Bluecrest - Cyrus Capital - Fir Tree - Knighthood Capital - Stonehill Capital - Waterwheel Capital - Graham Capital – Greylock - Hayman Capital – Oppenheimer – Serengeti - American Century – Caxton – Goldentree - Marathon Asset Management – Prudential - Smithcove Capital -Goldentree.

«Interviews to International Media»

Also, a series of interviews were organized for the Greek Government Officials with the International Media: Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, YAHOO, Reuters, New York Times, Tradewinds, Barrons, Institutional Investor etc.

Mr. Nicolas Bornozis, the President of Capital Link highlighted that the timing of the Forum is optimal. After years of recession, Europe’s hardest hit economy is showing signs of recovery. The conclusion of the Third Review is further enhancing Greece’s ability to attract foreign investment, which is of critical importance to put the country back on a sustainable growth trajectory. In addition to the financial sector, there is considerable interest in the sectors of energy, industry, transport, logistics, tourism and new technologies. While considerable progress has been achieved, significant challenges remain ahead. He stressed the need to continue with reforms and mentioned the need to inspire confidence to foreign investors for political and regulatory stability and visibility so they can proceed with their investments. The Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum delivers the proper message to a large audience of decision meAmbassador of Greece to the USA Haris Lalacos highlighted the new landscape in Greece-US economic and investment relations, following the official visit of the Prime Minister of Greece Alexis Tsipras to the United States and his meeting with the President of the United States Donald Trump, during which the two leaders announced the establishment of a working group between the Ministries directly concerned. At the same time, US investors expressed a renewed interest to invest in Greece, mainly in the sectors of energy, tourism, agri-food, digital technology, real estate and infrastructure. This new dynamic



from left to right Mr. Nicolas Bornozis, President of Capital Link-George Pitaoulis, Managing Director, Corporate & Institutional Banking, BNP Paribas-Hon. Euclid Tsakalotos, Minister of Finance -Mr. Emiliou Kyriacou, Managing Director / Citi Country Officer Greece & Cyprus, Citibank Europe Plc. - Greece Branch-Dr. Konstantinos Koutras, Consulate General of Greece in New York-Mrs. Olga Bornozi, Managing Director Capital Link

in the bilateral economic, trade and investment relations is also demonstrated by the fact that the United States will be the honored country at the 83rd Thessaloniki International Fair, in 2018. Ambassador Lalacos also emphasized the positive developments in the field of fiscal consolidation and structural changes, as well as the optimistic forecasts on macroeconomic indicators. He Greek economy, he concluded, is gradually moving from a state of prolonged economic crisis to a state

The Consul General of Greece in New York, Dr. Konstantinos Koutras stated: “As there is an increasing interest in doing business in Greece, it is imperative to enhance the dialogue on issues of contemporary financial and economic interest that will highlight the investment opportunities in Greece as well as the comparative and strategic advantages of the Greek Economy”.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Christmas

Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed most commonly on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world.[A feast central to the Christian liturgical year, it is preceded by the season of Advent or the Nativity Fast and initiates the season of Christmastide, which historically in the West lasts twelve days and culminates on



Twelfth Night in some traditions, Christmastide includes an Octave. Christmas Day is a public holiday in many of the world's nations,[is celebrated religiously by a majority of Christians, as well as culturally by many non-Christians, and forms an integral part of the holiday season. In several countries, celebrating Christmas Eve has the main focus rather than Christmas Day.

Although the month and date of Jesus' birth are unknown, by the early-to-mid fourth century the Western Christian Church had placed Christmas on December 25 a date that was later adopted in the East. Today, most Christians celebrate on December 25 in the Gregorian calendar, which has been adopted almost universally in the civil calendars used in countries throughout the world. However,

some Eastern Christian Churches celebrate Christmas on December 25 of the older Julian calendar, which currently corresponds to January 7 in the Gregorian calendar, the day after the Western Christian Church celebrates the Epiphany. This is not a disagreement over the date of Christmas as such, but rather a preference of which calendar should be used to determine the day that is December 25.

Although it is not known why December 25 became a date of celebration, there are several factors that may have influenced the choice. December 25 was the date the Romans marked as the winter solstice, the shortest and darkest day of the year, and the first day in which the days would begin to elongate and the Sun would have a longer presence in the sky. Jesus was identified with the Sun based on an Old Testament verse, and the date is exactly nine months following Annunciation, when the conception of Jesus is celebrated, which is one theory on what may have influenced the timing of the Christmas holiday. Also, Ancient Romans had a series of pagan festivals near the end of the year, and Christmas may have been scheduled at this time to appropriate, or compete with, one or more of these festivals. Some scholars disagree with this latter interpretation and state that the Roman Emperor Aurelian placed a pagan celebration on December 25 in order to compete with the growing rate of the Christian Church, which had already been celebrating Christmas on that date.

The celebratory customs associated in various countries with Christmas have a mix of pre-Christian, Christian, and secular themes and origins. Popular modern customs of the holiday include gift giving, completing an Advent calendar or Advent wreath, Christmas music and caroling, lighting a Christingle, viewing a Nativity play, an exchange of Christmas cards, church services, a special meal, and the display of various Christmas decorations, including Christmas trees, Christmas lights, nativity scenes, garlands, wreaths, mistletoe, and holly. In addition, several closely related and



often interchangeable figures, known as Santa Claus, Father Christmas, Saint Nicholas, and Christkind, are associated with bringing gifts to children during the Christmas season and have their own body of traditions and lore. Because gift-giving and many other aspects of the Christmas festival involve heightened economic activity, the holiday has become a significant event and a key sales period for retailers and businesses. The economic impact of Christmas has grown steadily over the past few centuries in many regions of the world.

Greeks crushed by tax burden



Tax authorities have confiscated the salaries, pensions and assets of more than 180,000 taxpayers since the start of the year, but expired debts to the state have continued to rise, reaching almost 100 billion euros, as the tax-paying capacity of the Greeks is all but exhausted. In the month of October, authorities made almost 1,000 confiscations a day from people with debts to the state of more than 500 euros. In the first 10 months of the year, the state confiscated some 4 billion euros, and the plans of the Independent Authority for Public Revenue provide for forced measures to be imposed on 1.7 million state debtors next year.

IAPR statistics show that in October alone, the unpaid tax obligations of households and enterprises came to 1.2 billion euros. Unpaid taxes from January to October amounted to 10.44 billion euros, which brings the total including unpaid debts from previous years to almost 100 billion euros (99.8 billion), or about 55 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

The inability of citizens and businesses to meet their obligations is also confirmed by the course of public revenues, which this year have declined by more than 2.5 billion euros. The same situation is expected to continue into next year, as the new tax burdens and increased social security contributions look set to send debts to the state soaring.

Notably, since 2014, there has been a consolidated trend of a 1-billion-euro increase each month in expired debts to the state. There are now 4.17 million taxpayers who owe the state money. This means that one in every two taxpayers is in arrears to the state, with 1,724,708 taxpayers facing the risk of forced collection measures.



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The Importance of Christmas

Many people celebrate Christmas yearly all over the world yet at the same time, many of these same people are just keeping traditions that were passed on to them by their ancestors.



When asked the importance of Christmas or why they celebrate, why they do the things they do, like giving gifts, it is hard to get a concrete answer. Many say we celebrate the birth of Jesus during



Christmas but if asked “why” the answers get a little fuzzy. In fact, the week leading up to this message we were able to interview people from

different religions, people who celebrate Christmas (winter holidays) in one form or the



other. we could not get a clear answer from a Muslim, Christian, Hindu, or Hebrew. They all agreed that they celebrate, most even said the birth of Jesus, but the why reason was absent from all, even from the Christian.

What is the significance of Christmas in your life? Why do you celebrate Christmas yearly? Is it a tradition that you received from your ancestors or does it really have practical meaning in your life? Do you just go through the motions or do you truly member an important event? Let’s see what the Bible says about the importance of the First Christmas.

The first and foremost miracle of the First Christmas was the fact that about 300 Old

Testament prophecies were fulfilled through the birth, life, and



death of Jesus Christ, which began to fall into place with His birth.



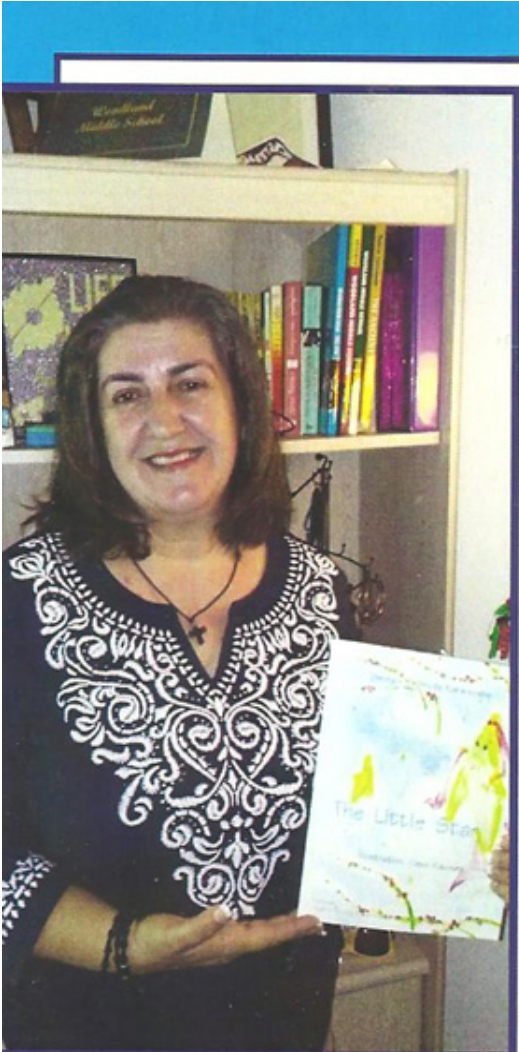
It was foretold through the prophets of old that the Messiah (Christ) would be born from the seed of woman (without the help of a man) or in other words, a virgin birth. When we refer to seed in the Bible, the seed always re-

fers to men yet in this case, in Genesis 3, God speaks plainly to Eve, that the male that will come through her will crush the head of the serpent. The seed of Adam, or help from a human father would not be needed for the birth of the Messiah. I do not want to cover all 300 of them but just a



few will be enough. Another prophecy was that the Messiah would be of the lineage of Abraham (from the Hebrews). Mary, the mother of Jesus, was of the nation of Israel, of Abraham’s lineage. Another prophecy is that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah and be born in the town of Bethlehem.

Jesus fulfilled all these requirements upon His birth. The prophet Isaiah is the last prophesies that we will speak about. He wrote his prophecies about half a millennium before the birth of Jesus.



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ΚΑΛΕΣ ΓΙΟΡΤΕΣ

Jesus is the Reason for the Season!

By Louis A. Palivos
Prophecies



In the fullness of time and in the “third heaven”, in a “place” or “state” where Almighty God dwells, as well as, the faithful angels, there was joy and glory, at the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ! God has gifted holy Fathers and Mothers to “see” the “third heaven.” II Cor. 12:2.

Prior to the fullness of time, Prophets would speak to the Messiah being born of a woman, Gen.3:1-5, and fulfilled Matt. 1:20, Gal.4:4; Be born in Bethlehem, Mic. 5:2 and fulfilled Matt. 2:1, Lk.2:4-6; Be borne by a virgin, Is.7:14 and fulfilled Matt.1:22-23, Lk. 1:26-31; Be called Immanuel, Is. 7:14 and fulfilled Matt. 1:23; A massacre of children would happen, Jer. 3:15 and fulfilled Matt. 2:16-18; Be called from Egypt, Hos. 11:1 and fulfilled Matt. 2:14-15; He would come from the line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah and would be heir to the throne of David, II Sam.7:12-13, Is. 9:7 and fulfilled Lk. 1:33, Heb. 1:8-12; A star shall rise out of Jacob, Num. 24:17 and fulfilled Matt. 2:2; and Gentiles would offer gifts *first* to the Messiah, Ps. 72:7-11, which were gold, frankincense and myrrh, Ps. 44:9 fulfilled Matt. 2:11. These numerous prophecies regarding the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ are a statistical improbability or were given by Divine Foreknowledge.

When was Jesus Born?

Many holy Fathers have attempted to determine the date and year of the Lord Jesus Christ’s birth, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ephraim the Syrian, St. Gregory and Epiphanius of Cyprus but with no exact consensus.

Few critical details can be ascertained from the Gospels:

1. The decree of Caesar Augustus, Lk.2:1;
2. Jesus was born when Herod was king, Lk. 1:5;
3. Zacharias of the division of Abijah was serving in the Temple of Jerusalem, Lk. 1:8;
4. Zacharias’ wife, Elizabeth, was six months pregnant when Mary (Theotokos) visited her, Lk. 1:36;
5. Mary (Theotokos) was three months pregnant, Lk.1:56;
6. There was a census when Quirinius was governor of Syria, Lk. 2:2;
7. Shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks, Lk. 2:8; and
8. Jesus was baptized in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Lk. 1:1, 21.

Given the above details and Josephus, a Jewish historian, writing that Herod was crowned king 38 B.C. and ruled for 34 years, to a high degree of historical probability Jesus was born 4 B.C., that is, Before Christ, (not trying to be funny).

Further, Josephus gives different dates for when the various divisions of priests served in the Temple of Jerusalem. ¹

Lastly, given all the above, and that the shepherds were out taking care of their flocks, the weather conditions in Israel, a reasonable inference may be that Jesus was born between late Sept. and Dec. 25. However, Dec. 25 is further corroborated by Josephus who wrote that in the month of Shebat, that is, December 25, was the birth of Jesus.

Who were the Magi?

“Magi from the east came to Jerusalem...” Matt. 2:1. At the time of the Lord Jesus Christ’s birth what country existed east of Judea? Historians state that the country was Persia, now called Iran. At these country areas Persia/Arabia Magi were called wise men. They were involved with science, medicine, astronomy (then called astrology), philosophy, dreams and mediums. Magi were advisors to kings.² However, others believe that the Magi were involved with magic and the dark spirit world.

The Magi that visited the Lord Jesus Christ presented Him with “gifts of gold, incense and myrrh.” Matt. 2:11. An inference can be made that there were three Magi and traditionally their names are Balthazar, Melchior and Gaspar.³ Tradition states that today these gifts are at the monastery of St. Paul at Mount Athos.⁴

Another critical inference is that the Magi must have known the Old Testament prophecies of the Prophets quoted above. The Magi must have had a thirst and a hunger to witness the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ! Almighty God honored their wishes by sending them His *uncreated star light* to guide them to Bethlehem.

This can be understood better by remembering that when Moses was with God, on the mountain, the bush was on fire but did not burn and the ground was holy. See Ex. 3:1-6. The Magi were wise both to seek the star and to worship the King!



What was the Star of Bethlehem?

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The Magi stated, “We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” Matt. 2:2. Amazingly, Magi, who were Gentiles, had seen a star in the east and desired to worship the Messiah! The star went “ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.” Matt. 2:9. A reasonable inference is the Magi knew of the prophecy of the star and followed it to Bethlehem, knowing the prophecies of the Messiah’s birthplace.

However, renowned scientists have attempted to explain this star phenomenon. They infer that an object passed by the earth. Kepler states it passed 4-5 B.C.; F.D. Occhieppo, 7 B.C.; and Drs. Clark and Stephenson, 5 B.C. These scientists further speculate that this object may have been the alignment of the planets Jupiter, Venus and Saturn. Furthermore, they speculate, the object may have been a comet, pieces of a meteorite or a super nova.⁵

How can this star quoted by Matthew move vertically and horizontally? How can the star appear and disappear? After offering their gifts, why were the Magi warned in a dream to leave through another route but were not led by the star? The Author believes, as stated above, the star was God’s *uncreated light* guiding the Magi and this also helps to explain how the star was fulfilled prophecy. Also, the star was not seen by Herod.

What is the Meaning of Christmas?

God’s dwelling place and the faithful angels rejoiced at the Lord Jesus Christ’s birth! The prophecies were being fulfilled! The *Incarnation* of Jesus Christ happened! God became man and took on matter! The Lord Jesus Christ would offer His life, for no greater love does any human have than to lay his/her life down for another! God Almighty was “pleased” with His only begotten Son! The Lord Jesus Christ “emptied (kenosis, ἐκένωσα) Himself taking the form of a bond servant in the likeness of men.” Phil. 2:7.

Beginning in 125 A.D. Pope Telesphoros attempted to memorialize the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Idol and pagan worship would be preempted by Christmas. Pope Julius I, in the year 335 A.D., replaced Saturnalia, instituting Christmas on December 25. The Orthodox Church in the east followed in 378 A.D. and Constantinople followed in 380 A.D. However, the Armenian Church and the Old Calendar Churches commemorate the Lord Jesus Christ’s birth on January 6. Fathers have given other dates, as well.

St. Basil wrote that the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ means:

1. The salvation of humanity;
2. The birthday of humanity; and
3. The common rejoicing of all creation.⁶

There are those who argue that Christmas should not be celebrated; that it has once again become pagan; that it has lost its Christmas meaning; that it has been commercialized; and that there is a different Christmas Spirit. Yet, have you, the Reader, visited children or special needs children or the elderly on Christmas? What did you observe? Did you observe laughter, joy, love and/or peace? Did your presence sanctify the time and the space?

The real meaning of Christmas is the *Incarnation* of the Lord Jesus Christ! Almighty God’s love for His humanity and for His creation to have given His only begotten Son, to offer His life as a “ransom”; so as to “pay the price” by which man could receive the forgiveness of sin; so as to complete the prophesied work of the Lord Jesus Christ; and as a one-time infinite expiatory sacrifice, in past, present and future, for all of humanity and creation. What greater hope, joy and fulfillment could humanity and creation have received? Christmas opens the path to one day, for those saved, to acquire their *Spiritual Body*, when body and soul reunite, and toward *Theosis*.

Christmas is a yearly opportunity to both share the joy of the Christmas Spirit and to share the Gospel, the Good News that the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, was crucified, after three days in the grave was resurrected, ascended to the “third heaven” and actualized humanity’s longing for redemption and salvation. Also, a yearly opportunity to have rebirth in our hearts. His birthday is less important than His sinless life; His total obedience; and His super human end on the cross. Lastly, unlike Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Confucius and Mohammed, who are all in their graves, Jesus Christ is in heaven. Death and decay have been defeated! Rejoice!

1. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities*, book 7, 14:7. 2. *Jesus Christ, The Gentile expectation*, www.ianos.gr, 2000. 3. *Three wise men: what were their names?* Bibleinfo.com

4. *Five plus One Matters that we do not know of Christmas*, periergos.gr, Dec. 25, 2013. 5. Louis Louloudis, *The Birth of Christ and the Star of Bethlehem*, Pure Line, Dec. 21, 2009. 6. *Ibid, Jesus Christ, The Gentile Expectation*.

Pontian Greek Society of Chicago holds elections



The Pontian Greek Society of Chicago held elections on Sunday, December 3rd, 2017 in Chicago, IL.
The new board consists of:
President - Anastasia Spiridis-Skoupas
Vice President – Sophia Mihalopoulos
Corresponding Secretary - Thomas Mantzakides
Recording Secretary – John Konstantinidis
Treasurer - Kyriakos Stergiou
Legal Advisor - Cathy Hareas
Board Members – George Mavropoulos, Adonis Stergiou, and Demetrios Varnasidis
Legal Advisor: Cathy Hareas
Anastasia Spiridis-Skoupas, was re-elected President of the Soci-

ety and addressed the members in attendance after the elections. “We are happy to have a young and energetic board that intends to remain active,” she said. “The Society is looking forward to celebrating its 40th anniversary in February 2018. We also look forward to continuing our mission of informing the American community of the genocidal events experienced by our ancestors nearly 100 years ago.”
George Mavropoulos, Director of the Asia Minor and Pontos Hellenic Research Center, and member of the Society’s board, reviewed the events that were coordinated between the Society and the Center. “Over the past two years with the assistance of members of the Society, the Center was able to open its new offices in the heart of Chicago’s historic Greektown neighborhood, host two lectures about the Greek Genocide at the National Hellenic Museum, and publish a book with articles drawn from the academic conferences of 2013.”
Other objectives of the Society are to develop fliers and educational material on Pontian Greek history, hold fund-raising activities, and help support its fellow associations by actively participating in cultural events held by both the Greek-American community of Chicago, and the Pan Pontian Federation of the USA-Canada.

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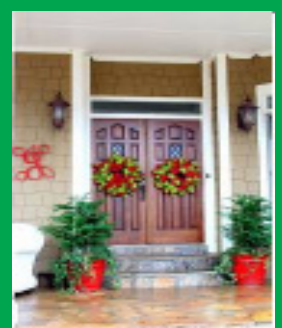


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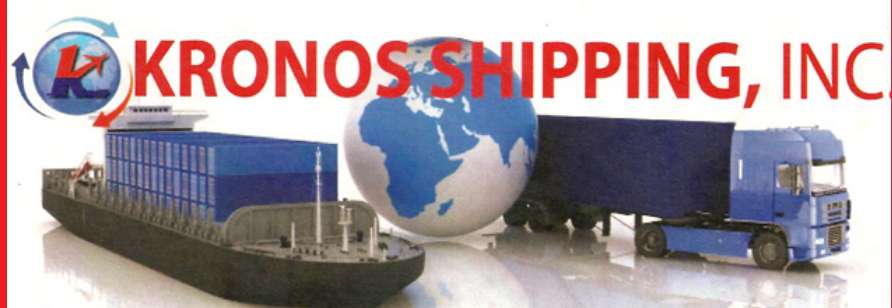
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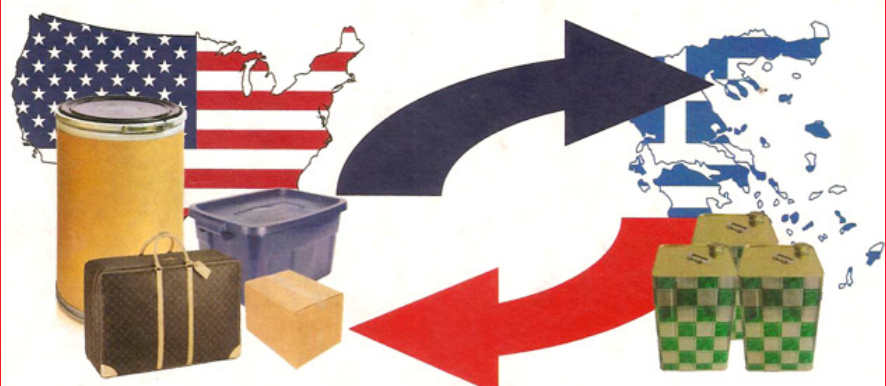
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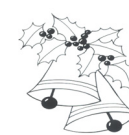
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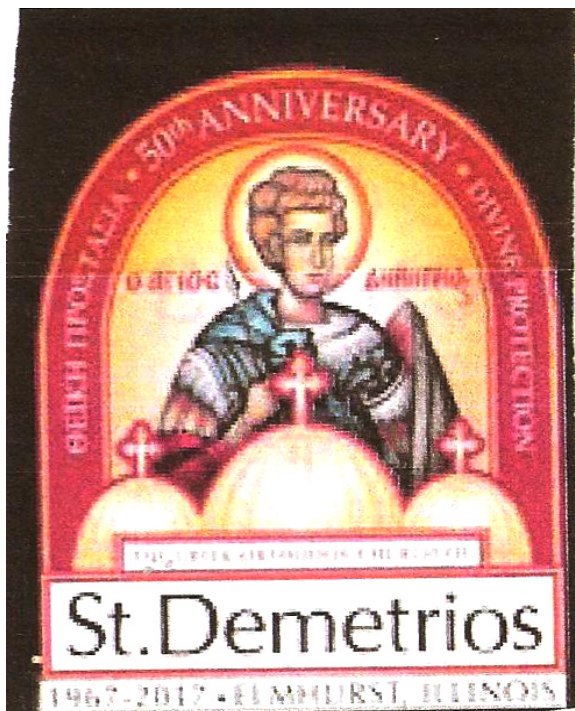
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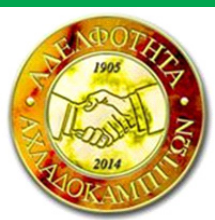


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*During the Holiday Season more than ever, our
thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our
progress possible, and in this spirit we say,
simply but sincerely*

*Thank You, Merry Christmas and
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