

Tsipras Will Meet With Putin: PM Pushes Up Moscow Trip to Apr. 8

ATHENS – Forced by the country's international lenders to renege on campaign promises and back away from debt relief, Greek Prime Minister and Radical Left SYRIZA leader Alexis Tsipras has pushed up a visit to Moscow to meet President Vladimir Putin.

Tsipras, a Communist Youth leader who rose from obscurity to become Greece's leader in Jan. 25 snap elections on the back of his promise to reverse austerity, instead ran into a stone wall from European Union leaders who demanded he impose more reforms or risk losing the loans keeping the country's economy from collapsing.

While he has said he won't turn to Russia for financial help, Tsipras nonetheless said he would see Putin on April 8, a month earlier than first planned, as Greece seeks to avoid bankruptcy and is hunting for cash anywhere.

Tsipras, whose party is full of



AP PHOTO/PETROS GIANNAKOURIS
Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras in Parliament.

Communist sympathizers, is leaning toward Moscow at the same time Greece's relations with Germany, the biggest contributor to two bailouts of 240 billion euros (\$272.5 billion) from the troika of the European Union-International Monetary Fund-European Central Bank (EU-IMF-ECB) are sagging amid a dispute over undone reforms.

Unless it can get the troika and Eurozone to release a delayed 7.2-billion euro loan that Tsipras said he didn't want, Greece could be in big financial trouble as it's locked out of international markets and tax revenues are plummeting at the same time the country's banks are teetering with customers yanking out 20 billion euros in the last three months, fearing an exit from the Eurozone.

Tsipras on Feb. 20 was forced to accept a four-month extension to two rescue packages but so far has failed to come up with any credible reforms the creditors have demanded, putting the country in financial peril. He hasn't said if Russia, suffering a decline as well with falling oil prices, is an alternative for him.

The visit to Moscow, confirmed by officials, was initially reported by Ta Nea newspaper, which said that the Athens government had sought to bring forward the meeting, originally planned for May 9, because of "stifling economic conditions" set by Europe's creditors.

If he can't make any headway with the troika or Eurozone, there is speculation that Russia could be a backup for Greece because of SYRIZA's bent for Communism and its anti-Capitalist stance.

Tsipras could use the Russian trip as leverage against German Chancellor Angela Merkel, whose country is the biggest

Continued on page 11

New Grexodus to America: a Five-Year Report



AP PHOTO/PETROS GIANNAKOURIS

People queue outside the Church-run soup kitchen in Athens on March 19, the day after the Greek Parliament approved an anti-poverty bill, that would provide assistance worth some \$212.7 million to mostly jobless households considered to be in "extreme poverty."

Slow but Consistent Rise in Immigration Related to Crisis

By Constantinos E. Scaras

As the word "Grexit" has resurfaced over the past couple of months, indicating the latest speculation that Greece might leave the Eurozone or be ousted from it, another phenomenon likely to endure for the foreseeable future regardless of Greece's Euro position is "Grexodus": the immigration of Greeks, in hopes of a more stable and promising future, to the United States and other parts of the world.

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which shortly after 9/11 became the government agency responsible for immigration to the United States, displacing the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), U.S. "Grimmigration" has grown consistently if not overwhelmingly over the past five years, coinciding with the onset and persistence of the Greek crisis.

TERMINOLOGY

To understand the nature of the recent Grexodus to America, it is important to know what the various categories of immigration are, according to U.S. law. Persons who have come to the United States from other countries are often, erroneously all referred to as "immigrants," when U.S. Immigration Law clearly defines an "immigrant" as someone who has been granted lawful permanent residence (commonly known as having a "green card"). Such persons may then opt to become U.S. citizens at a later date – the window of time they must wait between being Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) and citizens depending on the nature of their LPR status (i.e., whether it was based on marriage to a U.S. citizen or through some other manner, such as employer sponsorship).

Moreover, anyone actually present in the United States who is not a citizen – either natural-born or naturalized – is by law defined as an "alien," even though many – including politicians and members of the press – shy away from using that term, considering it derogatory.

Continued on page 9

AGAPW Recognizes Paulette Poulos

NEW YORK – The mission of the Association of Greek American Professional Women (AGAPW), which includes the preservation of the Hellenic heritage in America, the promotion of promising young persons, and the recognition of the achievements of Greek-American women, has already generated a rich tradition of excellence, mutual support, and quality events in New York.

The annual "Greek American Woman of the Year" Award Gala and the presentation of the AGAPW scholarship on March 12 filled The Lounge Room of Manhattan's 3 West Club with guests who love the organization and who wished to congratulate and thank Paulette Poulos, the Executive Director of Leadership 100 who was chosen as Woman of the Year for a lifetime of service to Orthodoxy and Hellenism.

Elena Karavassilis, received the Excellence Tuition Scholarship. She was introduced by Dr. Aphrodite Navab, who evoked applause when she said "I want to thank Olga Alexakos – we don't do that enough."

Navab also expressed gratitude to those who have contributed to the scholarship fund and urged the guests to support it, saying "It has a very humble beginning and it has grown to \$3000."

Karavassilis, a sophomore at Queen's College's Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, spoke graciously about growing up at St. Nicholas in Flushing and how proud she is to be Greek "for countless rea-

Continued on page 6

For subscription:
718.784.5255

subscriptions@thenationalherald.com



Fr. Themis: From Rock Star to Orthodox Priest

By Constantine S. Sirigos
TNH Staff Writer

NEW YORK – Fr. Themistocles Adamopoulos is a missionary of the Orthodox Church serving in Sierra Leone before, during, and after the Ebola outbreak. He is not going anywhere soon as he has a lot of work to do. He is currently in the United States, driven there by the only thing that could take him out of Africa, the need to raise funds for his latest big project: An Ebola orphanage.

"I would never have left but for that...there are children whose parents died of Ebola running around barefoot...We have a responsibility to the poor, the Ebola orphans...we can't let them run around barefoot and being vulnerable to exploitation...I am the voice of those children."

Fr. Themis, as he is known (one will likely only encounter his full title Very Rev. Dr. on the internet) helps first and asks questions later – but he will also

Continued on page 6

Greek Music In U.S. and Intro to Hi-Fi

By Steve Frangos
TNH Staff Writer

CHICAGO – The spring of 1948 marks one of the most significant moments, in the history of Greek music in North America. No sooner had the technology to produce long-playing record albums become available than a host of Greek promoters and musicians based in the United States began to release a flood of new music.

These long-playing albums, soon dubbed simply "LPs," covered the full gamut of Greek music from the most traditional songs and melodies to the very borders of, what was then, modern music.

Continued on page 7

Greek Independence Day: March Whatever

"Greek Independence Day is on March 25, so why do the Greeks hold their parades on different days?" I heard that complaint lodged over and over again, ever since I was a kid. And I'm sure it was lodged long before I was even born, too.

It is a valid point, to be sure, because to some extent, a celebration loses something when there is historical distortion. On the other hand, there aren't nearly as many Greeks in New York City (or in the country, for that matter) as there are Irish, and so while St. Patrick's Day

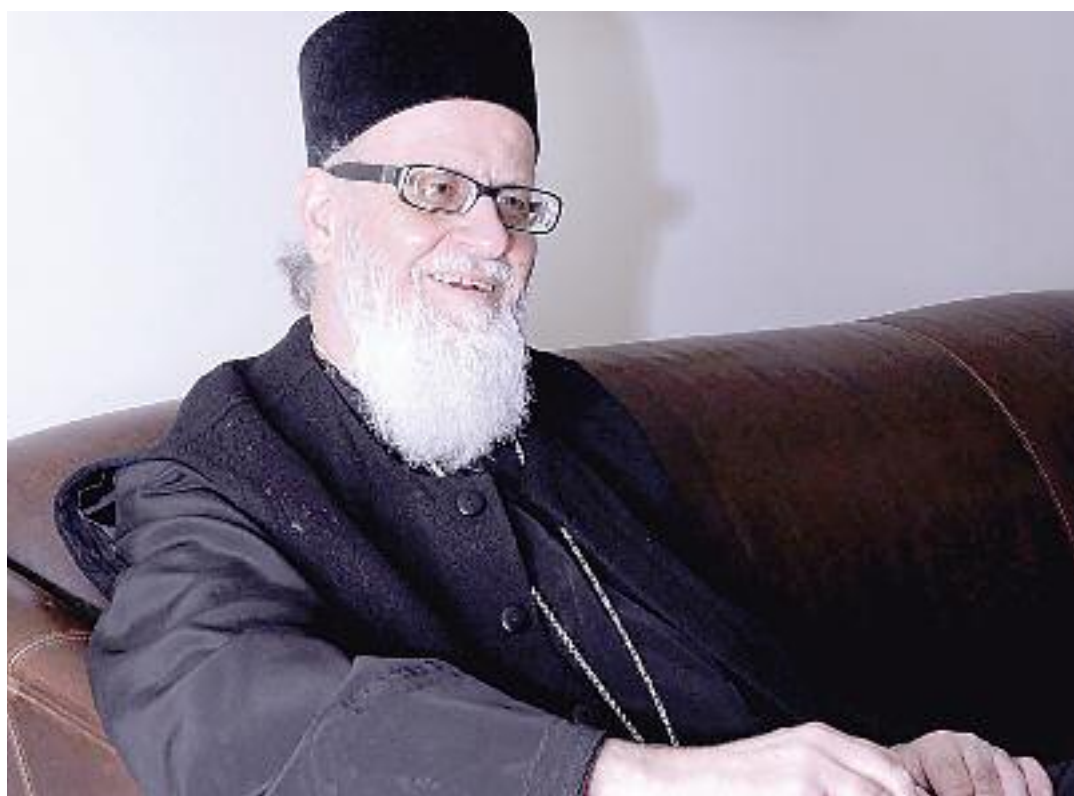
Parades never have trouble getting the Irish to turn out by the thousands – as well as those who want to be Irish for a day – no matter what day of the week March 17 falls on, it is harder to get enough Greeks to fill the streets on a weekday.

Those two points continue to shape the debate, which remains unresolved. Ironically, though, the purists who insist on having the parade on March 25 each year might be interested to know that Greek Independence really did not begin on that day!

There is the long-held notion that when Bishop Germanos hoisted the Greek flag at the Agia Lavra Monastery near Kalavryta and proclaimed: "Eleftheria i Thanatos – Freedom or Death," that was actually the start of the Greek Independence movement, and the 1821 date was March 21, not March 25th. Others place the date as March 23.

Moreover, because the city of Kalamata was liberated on March 23, 1821, it logically fol-

Continued on page 5



TNH/COSTAS BEI

Until one meets a person like Fr. Themistocles Adamopoulos, it is difficult to appreciate the power of Christ's words "go, sell your possessions and give the money to the poor."

Pericles, Pals Carousing in Kifissia

By Leonidas Petrakis
Special to The National Herald

Greeks, in times of crisis and prosperity alike, like to gather around a table to eat, drink, and talk, in cozy indoor spaces in the winter or outdoors for long hours during the balmy summer nights. One could argue that this ritual is their national sport.

The ritual has long roots in Greek history. The men and women who created the early Hellenic civilization and laid the foundations of our modern Western world were relentless in questioning and arguing in their pursuit of knowledge, but were equally captivated by beauty and wellbeing. They had a strong sense of joie de vivre, and they celebrated life with every opportunity.

The Symposium ("symposium" – drinking together) was a highly-structured ritual that provided the opportunity for drinking but not necessarily to



Publ. G. Daskalaki, HOROS 22-25 (2010-2013) 179-186.

An Ancient drinking cup recently discovered in Kifissia has caused excitement not only in archaeological circles, but has drawn the attention of the general public at large.

excess, merry making, performing music and reciting poetry, playing games, and above all discoursing on pre-selected important topics and ideas. There exists a large written record attesting to this: Plutarch's "Table Talk," Athenaeus' "Deipnosophistai," Xenophon's "Sym-

posium," and of course Plato's "Symposium," one of the most significant books of the Western literary canon, with its discussion subject being Love. Such literary sources together with artifacts recovered by archaeol-

Continued on page 10

Film About Georgakas Featured in Thessaloniki

TNH Staff

THESSALONIKI – Prolific author, academician, poet, political thinker, and TNH columnist – he co-writes the biweekly Agora viewpoint – Greek-American Dan Georgakas is the subject of a documentary by Kostas Vakkas. The film is titled Dan Georgakas: a Disapora Rebel.

Georgakas, who is professor and director of the Greek American Studies Project at Queens College in New York, tells his life story and his experiences in growing up in Detroit.

The film, which attempts to show an alternative point of view to Greek-American history, is part of the 17th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival, in Thessaloniki, with screenings on March 19 and 21.

Georgakas told TNH that "my rebellious perspective is linked to growing up in a working class district of Detroit and being born Greek and American. Life had greatly improved for all of us as a result of the leftist reforms begun in the 1930s. I wanted to accelerate that kind of change. As a child of immigrants, I was not programmed to consider all things American as normal and positive. This made it easier to go against convention. In a similar fashion, as an American, I was not programmed for traditional Greek culture either. Much of my subsequent writing and activism has been directed at melting the mind-forged manacles that prevent us from understanding a new economic order based on

Continued on page 11



(L-R) Anthoula Katsimatides, Olga Alexakos, Anthousa Iliopoulos, Penny Tsilas, Dr. Aphrodite Navab, Paulette Poulos, Dr. Eleni Andreopoulou, Rev. Dr. Robert Stephanopoulos.



PHOTOS: TNH/COSTAS BEJ

The "Greek American Woman of the Year" Award Gala of AGAPW, where Paulette Poulos was honored, and the AGAPW scholarship was presented filled The Lounge Room of the 3 West Club.

AGAPW Recognizes Paulette Poulos' Lifetime of Service to Community

Continued from page 1

sons." Dr. Eleni Andreopoulou-Panzures introduced Poulos, saying "I am honored and humbled to stand here tonight in celebration of a great woman like you!" She continued by saying "we are here to honor and celebrate her substantial contribution to the preservation of Hellenism and Orthodoxy in our community. This is the essence of our identity! She has tirelessly devoted and evolved these concepts by organizing and focusing all of us."

Poulos grew up in a close-knit family, the middle child of the late Rebecca and Charles Poulos and sister of Carol and Peter Poulos, and a dynamic community, Three Hierarchs in Brooklyn.

Poulos expressed her own essence when she said, "It is with great humility and gratitude that I stand before you this evening. Those who know me know I am not comfortable receiving honors for something that I love doing and hold dear to my heart. I have not viewed by service to the Greek Orthodox Church and community as a professional accomplishment, but rather as a personal and spiritual fulfillment. Nonetheless, I am proud to be among



(L-R) Dr. Olga Alexakos, founder of AGAPW, Anthoula Katsimatides, Anthousa Iliopoulou, Penelope Tsilas, Dr. Aphrodite

such accomplished women and I have been an advocate of the advancement of women all my life."

She said she was prepared "by the unconditional love of my beloved parents," who instilled in their children "faith, ideals and the importance of integrity," and that "I was privileged to

serve with a great leader in the person of Archbishop Iakovos of blessed memory... a visionary... who believed in placing women in positions of responsibility... today I strive to carry on the legacy of my mentor."

She thanked Alexakos and AGAPW, the officers and Board of Leadership 100 and said "I

am indebted to Archbishop Demetrios for his trust in me and paternal love and guidance."

Alexakos thanked all who contributed to the success of the event in celebration of Women's History Month held under the auspices of The Consulate General of Greece in New York.

Press Secretary Lambros Kazis represented the Greek diplomatic corps.

Anthoula Katsimatides offered introductory remarks and served as the Emcee and Rev. Dr. Robert Stephanopoulos, who was accompanied by Presbytera Nikki Stephanopoulos, offered the invocation and read a letter

of congratulations to Poulos from Archbishop Demetrios.

Also addressing the guests were Manos Koubarakis, Consul of Greece, George Tsandikos, Chairman of Leadership 100 and Maria Logus, national president of Philoptochos. Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas could not leave the state capitol, but she sent a citation for Poulos.

There was a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception and the guests enjoyed a slide presentation about Poulos' life and work prepared by her colleague Fran Karivalis, a recital of wonderful Greek songs by soprano Flora Kirou.

Among the dignitaries were Nancy Papaioannou, President of the Atlantic Bank of New York and President of Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce, Penelope Tsilas, Judge Harriet Pavles George, Litsa Diamataris representing The National Herald, Anthousa Iliopoulos, spouse of Consul General of Greece Ambassador George Iliopoulos, Maria Allwin, board member of The Hellenic Initiative, Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Kourides representing the Hellenic American Cultural Foundation and Catherine Moutousis, president of the Cathedral Philoptochos.

By Constantine S. Sirigos

Fr. Themis: Rock Star to Building on Bedrock of Faith to Serve the Poor

Continued from page 1

make an appeal for funds for the children.

He was on the front lines of the Ebola outbreak.

"When the crisis hit, I did not know whether I would make it out or not. There was no international help. Even the World Health Organization (WHO) said in June 2014 that it was not such a bad situation."

"We played an important part by handing out gloves and masks and other materials sent to me by my friends in Australia and America," a prime example of how far even modest donations go in such places. A few early dollars can stop an epidemic its tracks.

On March 23, the U.S. branch of the organization that was created to support his efforts – it can be visited at paradis4kids.org – will hold a "Meet Fr. Themis" fundraiser at The Grove restaurant in Cedar Grove, NJ at 6:30 PM. Inquiries can be made at 973-650-9510.

March 27-28 he will be a featured speaker at the Archon's Lenten Retreat at Kimisis of Southampton in Long Island.

When he arrived in America, authorities deemed him low risk, so he could travel freely but was required to report his temperature twice a day for 21 days through Mar. 18. To reassure people, Adamopoulos voluntarily also quarantined himself in an apartment for 15 days.

ATHEIST ROCK STAR TO ORTHODOX MISSIONARY

People are fascinated by dramatic changes in some people's lives – rock star to Greek Orthodox missionary is as wide a gulf as one can imagine, but if one looks closely, common ground and streams connect the disparate aspects of their lives.

In his youth his love for humanity took the form of a passion for political and social justice. He became a Neo-Marxist and helped organize strikes. Now with the same missionary fervor he brought to workers in Australia, he brings his message of solidarity with the poor of the world to the middle class and the rich of America.

Adamopoulos was born in Alexandria. His family left Greece in the early 1900s to join the then-substantial Greek community in Egypt but left in the 1950's when the Nasser regime

turned against the Europeans. His parents settled in Melbourne, Australia and after first struggling, their education ensured a good life – though Adamopoulos experienced prejudice against the Hellenes that both fueled his strong sense of social justice and caused him to distance himself from his Greek and Orthodox heritage.

He became thoroughly Australian but the culture that conquered him was rock and roll after the advent of the Beatles, whose exploration of social and philosophical issues blew away youth like him raised on fun but vapid "boy meets girl" songs.

He dropped out of the prestigious University of Melbourne "to form what was eventually known as Australia's first post-Beatle group," The Flies. Their hits songs put him on TV and "people were camped outside my house to get a glimpse." His younger sister sold possessions



like his toothbrush as souvenirs.

He had a great run but thinking practically about his future, he returned to university. Adamopoulos laughed when reminded that successful people in other fields wish they were rock stars. "Yes, I got out of it to become a priest."

But not right away. There was a long road with turns that caused his parents to worry. His sister remained an anchor in his life.

The nudges towards God came from unexpected directions. First, the Beatles took their spiritual turn and travelled to India. "Until then we never thought about religion. It was uncool," he said. But he turned first to Buddhism and Hinduism.

An incident in an ashram shook him up. "I was wearing a shood – it was just a fashion



ABOVE: Fr. Themistocles Adamopoulos with some of the people he has helped in Sierra Leone. His mission's programs help the disabled go back to the community to live a normal life. LEFT: Fr. Themistocles Adamopoulos in his bass-playing days as Themis Adams for the rock group The Fly.

section of Melbourne to rescue him. "They brought me pastichio, which was a part of my youth I would not give up, but I did not accept their invitation to return to what they would call normality."

Eventually he did return to his parents because his peers rejected the new Christian among them.

He humbled himself by shifting from university to public school teaching, but he soon felt compelled to take the full path to Christ.

Adamopoulos sold all his possessions – his car, his beloved books – and put the money in an envelope marked "for the poor," which he slipped under the door of the Greek Orthodox Church.

He was not part of the Church at the time, but he thought, "I am Greek, and there must be a reason God made me Greek... I must return to what God made me. For better or for worse, I must embrace that. I am Themistocles Adamopoulos, not Themis Adams."

He knew what he wanted, but the world didn't know what to make of him and his new

faith.

His first encounter with the Greek Church was not felicitous. When he told the priest of his fervor to learn about God, his reply was "Ach! Leave God where he is. Don't get mixed up with that!"

Adamopoulos concluded, "This can't be where God is, so he looked into the Presbyterians, Methodists and others. They embraced him, but he did not feel at home.

"I'm going to go back to the Greeks and preach the bible," and share his new knowledge, but quickly "I realized the Orthodox Church had so much to offer, the mystical, monastic and spiritual side" that was either largely or wholly lacking in the other churches.

He finally found guidance from a humble but sympathetic priest and Archbishop Stylianos of Australia helped him to become focused and encouraged him to study theology. He attended Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, MA and then Harvard, Princeton and earned his PhD at Brown.

After mastering the most sophisticated theological thought,

Adamopoulos felt he was missing something.

MOTHER THERESA SHATTERS ILLUSIONS

Then he saw a documentary about Mother Theresa, an experience that must be similar to his first encounter with the Beatles. "I saw this elderly woman with no frills or show, no masks – just a basic human being taking care of other human beings, I said myself 'Themistocle, this is what Christianity is.'"

With Archbishop Stylianos' blessing he went to the Patriarchate of Alexandria, which sent him to Kenya for several years. He then went to Sierra Leone.

"What I saw was such a dramatic collapse of a country. It needed serious help after civil wars, poverty," so he decided that was the place to apply what he learned in Kenya, which was essentially "how to become their friend," he said of the people he encountered.

"I had to start with nothing. Ex nihilo." But Faith was a powerful foundation, and he realized, "The name of the game is to educate them. You don't make them rely upon you."

His team has built schools with nearly 2000 pupils and most importantly, a teachers college that multiplies their efforts and resources

"We have also built the St. Moses Orthodox village for the victims of the civil war, people who are disabled, amputees, polio sufferers and we provide for them... We want them to go back to the community to live a normal life so we train them and feed them," he said.

In addition to churches where the people can have access to services and religion classes there is also a clinic and there a feeding program.

Adamopoulos was most passionate when he told TNH that despite the suffering the people in Greece are enduring, "they send us a lot of money... The American people should know that Greece is helping Africa. In Europe, they are probably the most generous donors to Africa."

Two mission-oriented organizations have been especially supportive: Ierapostolis Syndesmos "Agios Kosmas O Aitolos" (in Thessaloniki) and Adelfotia Exoterikis Ierapostolis Thessalonikis.