



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

October 24, 2008

The Reverend Clergy

Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Societies, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Communities of our Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!"

(Psalm 98: 4)

I would encourage all of you now to embrace the exhortation of the Psalmist and sing praises to our Lord. We are most fortunate within the Holy Metropolis of New Jersey, to have a chapter of the National Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, who provides us the opportunity and education in the area of Church music and chant. I am asking all of you at this time to help support this most vital ministry of our Holy Metropolis and Archdiocese.

The Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, led by their President, Mrs. Kathryn Athanasoulas, has been leading the way in this ministry in the Holy Metropolis of New Jersey for some time. Their efforts and endeavors were most evident on Sunday, October 19th, 2008 when they sang the music for the Divine Liturgy, which was created by Dr. Spyros Spathis. Often times within our Churches, we hear people ask, *how can I be of service*, or *where can I help the Church*. I urge all of you now to consider participating in the ministry that the Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians offers for all of us.

This is a ministry of which all of us can and should be a part of within the Church. On the evening of the 18th of October 2008 the Eastern Federation gathered for a celebratory dinner, prior to the Divine Liturgy on the following day. At that dinner, Dr. Vicki Pappas offered a few words of encouragement to all in attendance, and I would impart them to you now to consider and reflect upon. *"We must not overlook the sacred duty we as Church musicians have in singing the responses to the Divine Liturgy. We must realize that they are not simply a reply, but rather are our opportunity, to truly be a part of the Divine Liturgy, to truly be a part of the Body of Christ, along with the heavenly angelic hosts."* (Dr. Vicki Pappas)

Again I cannot urge you enough to join or renew your membership within the Federation. I hope and pray that all of you embrace this most beautiful opportunity. Praying that Christ our God would bless and protect all of you at all times and in all things, I remain,

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† EVANGELOS

Metropolitan of New Jersey