Leadership 100 Conference to Honor
US Ambassador to UN John Negroponte and Famed Actress Melina Kanakaredes

John D. Negroponte, US Ambassador to the United Nations and well-known actress Melina Kanakaredes will be honored at the 13th Annual Leadership 100 Conference with the Leadership 100 Award for Excellence. Ms. Kanakaredes will also lead the ship 100 Award for Excellence.

The 12th Annual Leadership 100 Conference in February 2003 in Amelia Island, Florida.

Ambassador Negroponte has served as United States Representative to the United Nations since September 18, 2001. Prior to this appointment he had been Executive Vice President for Global Markets of The McGraw-Hill Companies. A member of the Career Foreign Service from 1969 to 1997, Ambassador Negroponte worked in eight different Foreign Service assignments in Asia, Europe and Latin America, including Ambassador to the Philippines (1993-96), Ambassador to Mexico (1989-93) and Ambassador to Honduras (1981-1985). His distinguished career also includes important positions at the State Department and the White House as Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (1987-89) and Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (1985-1987).

A graduate of Yale University, Ambassador Negroponte is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the American Academy of Diplomacy, as well as a former chairman of the French-American Foundation. He and his wife Diana have five children.

Star of television, film and theater, Melina Kanakaredes is most familiar to audiences for her portrayal as Dr. Sydney Hansen on the popular television series Providence and a recent performance in Cabaret on Broadway. Her film credits include 15 Minutes with Robert De Niro, Rounders, Dangerous Beauty, and The Long Kiss Goodnight. In addition to her role in Providence, other television credits include a recurring role in NYPD Blue, and guest-starring roles on The Practice and Oz. She also starred in the drama series New York New and Leaving L. A. Ms. Kanakaredes received two Emmy nominations for her work on the daytime series The Guiding Light. In 2002 Ms. Kanakaredes was the spokesperson for Lee National Denim Day to promote Breast Cancer Awareness.

A second-generation Greek American, Ms. Kanakaredes was born and raised in Akron, Ohio and is the third daughter of an insurance salesman and homemaker. She attended Ohio State University to study music, dance and theater, later transferred to Point Park College in Pittsburgh, where she graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theater.

Ms. Kanakaredes lives with her husband Peter and their two children, in Los Angeles and still spends considerable time in her native Akron.

George & Margo Behrakis Host Chairpersons of L100 Conference

George and Margo Behrakis of Lowell, Massachusetts, will be the host chairpersons of the 13th Annual Leadership 100 Conference at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida. Both have been members of Leadership 100 since 1986.

Mr. Behrakis is the Chairman of Gainesborough Investments and the founder of two pharmaceutical companies - Dooner Laboratories and Muro Pharmaceutical, Inc. He has been active in the revitalization of the business community in his hometown of Lowell. He established a Chair in the Field of Targeted Pharmaceuticals and a Health Sciences Center at Northeastern University. He serves on the Board of Overseers of Tufts University Medical School, as well as on the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Board of Overseers of the Boston Symphony.

Mr. Behrakis is a member of the Leadership 100 Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and is a past president of his church, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Lowell, and a former vice chairman of Hellenic College / Holy Cross School of Theology.

George and Margo have four children, Drake Behrakis and Stephanie Liakos, both also members of Leadership 100, and Elena Frankel and Joanna Behrakis. They have six grandchildren.
Leadership 100 Celebrates 20 Years of Service

Our Leadership 100 13th Annual Conference at The Breakers in Palm Beach will mark a historic turning point. We will celebrate 20 years of service to advance Orthodoxy and Hellenism in America. We began as the endowment fund of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America in 1984 when Archbishop Iakovos inspired 100 donors to give $100,000 each to expand the National Ministries of our Church. In time, we adopted the name The Archbishop Iakovos “Leadership 100” Endowment Fund, Incorporated”, a legally separate entity with the same spirit and the same goals.

Over those 20 years we have grown dramatically in membership and funding, with the dramatic increases coming from our Millennium membership drive from 2000 to 2003 under the able leadership of Membership Chairman Stephen G. Yeonas. Today we are approaching 700 members and have raised almost $38 million, with 249 members fulfilled. Most significantly, we have distributed more than $13.2 million in grants.

The magic ingredient for our success has been the extraordinary service of our Executive Director, Father Alex Karloutsos, who served two terms in that role, from 1986 to 1992, and more recently, from 1999 to this year. Father Alex will be moving on from Leadership 100 to take on major assignments at the Archdiocese, including beginning a new endowment fund, working in public affairs at the highest level and overseeing the activities of the Archbishop as Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, including the ministry of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

But, as Archbishop Demetrios, told us at our Board meeting in Boston in October, Father Alex will be “changing rooms”, and still be with Leadership 100 mentally, emotionally and psychologically.

Leadership 100 owes a great deal to this energetic and charismatic leader, who has taught us that service is at the core of leadership and that no amount of money can be substituted for spiritual commitment and growth.

The story of Leadership 100 has much to do as well with the early, insightful and wise leadership of my predecessors as chairman, Andrew A. Athens and George P. Kokalis and with George K. Chimples who served as co-chairman.

Of course, the real heroes of Leadership 100 are you, every man and woman who has joined, dedicated their time, talent and treasure and kept their commitment and enthusiasm. This has been the real drawing card for others, seeing this dynamic and inspiring family at work and play, with no other thought in mind than seeing our Church grow and advance in service to Our Lord. What an amazing spectacle that is!

In this issue of The Leader, we give you a foretaste of that amazing spectacle. This year we honor a consummate diplomat and a sparkling and talented actress, that picture alone speaks volumes about our contributions as a people of faith, family values, heritage and national pride.

We are especially proud this year to have two great Hellenic Americans, my friends and neighbors in Massachusetts, George and Margo Behrakis of Lowell, as our Host Chairpersons. They will add real class and grace to our events.

In addition, we will be offering programs for our youth from five to 18 and for young adults from 19 to 35. The Archdiocese Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries is putting the program together.

I look forward to welcoming each of you to Palm Beach and to what will surely be a memorable experience for all.

With love in Christ,

Arthur C. Anton, Chairman
ARCHPASTORAL REFLECTIONS

December 25, 2003
The Nativity of Christ

...and the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We greet once again the arrival of the Feast of the Nativity of Christ with feelings of indescribable joy and deep awe. The birth of Jesus Christ was an event of universal proportions and ageless relevance. In considering the birth of Jesus, we ponder the infinite love of our Incarnate God the Word, who for us and for our salvation became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

The Nativity of Christ, a beautiful and miraculous event, marked in a very real manner the visible and palpable entry of salvation into our world. As such, it radiated unto the heavens and the far corners of the earth, summoning both angels and shepherds in reverent adoration, alerting the Magi from afar, and inviting people in love, calling them from across the world to respond with devotion and faith.

By entering the world as an infant, our God made known to us, in a very intimate and tender way, the awesome lengths to which He would go in order to offer salvation as a triumph of love, as an everlasting communion with Him. Those who were blessed to witness firsthand the miracle of the birth of Christ, whose name is Emmanuel [which means God with us] (Matthew 1:23), were instilled with the insatiable yearning to respond to the love of God through faith, a faith that guided them to the place of His birth, that flooded them with feelings of joy, and that moved them to return to their places glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen (Luke 2:20).

Like those who witnessed the miracle of the Nativity, we too are recipients of God's love. Like the shepherds and the Magi, we too are invited by Christ during this special season to experience the same, living miracle of grace and truth witnessed in Bethlehem centuries ago. We too have been issued a grand invitation to respond to the love of God in faith, and through that faith to be brought together in communion with Him and with one another.

This is the essence of the miracle of the Incarnation: God is with us. He became flesh and dwelt among us. He is in our midst, offering to our homes and families His abiding love, just as He demonstrated this love to those who witnessed Him in Bethlehem. He is with us in every moment and aspect of our relationship with Him, in our hopes and in our doubts, in our accomplishments and in our struggles, in our joys and in our sorrows. Especially, He is with us as we grow in faith and offer testimony to others concerning His abundant love.

He is with us in our communities—communities of worship and ministry that serve Him who became one of us. He is with us in our parishes, which through the Holy Sacraments have incorporated each of us into Him and have made us members of His body, the very body that was born in Bethlehem. He is with us in our Church, which confesses and proclaims Him God Incarnate, full of grace and truth.

As we joyously celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, it is my heartfelt prayer that our hearts may be centered continuously upon the magnificent love of God for us, and that we, in turn, may grow continuously in our love for Him and in our faith in His abiding presence.

May you have a blessed Christmas and a joyous New Year 2004, in the peace and love of God.

With paternal love in Christ,

†DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America

Leadership 100
Conference Inaugurates Youth Program

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13th Annual Leadership100 Conference at THE BREAKERS in Palm Beach, Florida, February 19-22, 2004
A luxurious and legendary hotel, The Breakers, resides on 140 acres of oceanfront property in the heart of Palm Beach, Florida. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a recipient of the prestigious AAA Five Diamond Award, and is a member of the Leading Hotels of the World. The Italian Renaissance-style resort hotel, which was founded in 1896, recently completed a ten-year, $145 million revitalization and expansion.

The Breakers has 560 guest rooms, with 57 suites, and an elegant oceanfront conference center, including the Ponce de Leon Ballroom, award-winning dining, seven restaurants, and on-site boutiques. Recreational facilities include two 18-hole championship golf courses, 10 lighted tennis courts, three fitness centers, two beauty salons and a 20,000 square foot indoor/outdoor spa. The Mediterranean-style beach club features four heated pools, cabanas, a rooftop terrace, and a half-mile private beach. The resort offers scuba diving, deep-sea fishing, and other water sports, plus family and children’s activities.

The Breakers is located seven miles from Palm Beach International Airport and 42 miles from Ft. Lauderdale International Airport. Transportation can be arranged in advance by contacting The Breakers.

**THE BREAKERS**

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Readers may be acquainted with the Desert Fathers and Mothers. These were men and women who tested their readiness to live and die for God in the harsh desert of Egypt. St. Anthony, the “father of monasticism” was one of them, inspiring numerous others to assume a lifestyle of extreme poverty and intense prayer during the fourth and fifth centuries. Fewer people, however, are familiar with what happened in later centuries as these monks and nuns migrated to Palestine, Sinai, and Asia Minor. In recent months, I have been privileged to study the letters of two such fathers, Barsanuphius and John, who lived in sixth-century Gaza, a city that is in the headlines for different reasons in recent years.

Palestine was always the center of numerous pilgrims visiting the holy sites. The Apostle Philip evangelized the Ethiopian on the road to Gaza (Acts 8.26). And St. Hilarius founded monasticism in that region in the early 300s. Then, in the early 500s, two men decided to live in total seclusion and complete silence. People would visit their huts for counsel and confession. However, they were unique in one way: their advice was always sought and received in letters. They never spoke to or saw anyone, always communicating through their attendants, to whom one would submit questions and receive responses in writing.

Barsanuphius became known as “the great old man,” while John was simply called “the other old man.” Some 850 letters (in Greek) survive from these elders, and so we have literally “a correspondence course” on the spiritual life. Barsanuphius came from Egypt; John joined him around the year 525. The letters themselves come from a variety of people and are wide-ranging in content. Questions are addressed by monks and laypersons, by married men and single men, by deacons and priests as well as bishops. We have no questions from women, although many concern issues of marriage, family, and relationships. The topics touch on daily problems, such as illness and death, money, law and politics, property and social relations, even dreams and slavery.

These two monks are quite remarkable and refreshing. While their prayer is sometimes responsible for healings and miracles, they are for the most part simple and balanced in their words. They do not provide wisdom on request; nor do they attempt to solve every problem presented to them. Most of the time, they try to inspire rather than to impress. Their advice is practical: they encourage people to do their best, to avoid hurting others. They are always personal in their counsel: they never give general commands or make rigid corrections. Where the advice of the Desert Fathers may appear strict, sometimes resembling going through “the eye of a needle,” the advice of the two elders of Gaza is mild and moderate.

John answers practical questions: on fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. Barsanuphius responds to spiritual issues: on discernment, silence, and love. Yet, these two “old men” support one another’s ministry. They do not compete; they complement each other. Sometimes they advise people to seek the other’s opinion; other times, they offer a second opinion. Sometimes, they assume partial responsibility for sins confessed; other times, they simply pray for their disciples. The two elders also direct a nearby monastery, which became quite renowned in their time for its open spirit, welcoming numerous visitors (including women), and manifesting impressive outreach to the wider community with its workshops, guest-houses, and hospital.

The two saints are commemorated on February 6. In following issues, we shall read some of their letters to experience their humor and humility, their kindness and openness, their care and compassion.

By Alexander Zagoreos
“Cosmic Grace, Humble Prayer. The Ecological Vision of the Green Patriarch Bartholomew” is an opportunity to read the important addresses and speeches of the Ecumenical Patriarch on the environment. His All Holiness has become the leading cleric, and a global leader, on environmental issues, following the lead of his predecessor, Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I. In promoting a historical Orthodox Christian view of the Creation, His All Holiness shows us that when we harm the environment we are committing a sin against nature. The message of the book is clear and compelling, but delivered with warmth of spirit that contrasts with many secular environmentalists.

Father John Chryssavgis is the editor of this well organized book, and he has written a concise introduction that outlines the roots of Christian environmental responsibility, summarizing the Ecumenical Patriarch’s thoughts on the relationship of faith, human behavior, and the preservation of God’s creation. Father John writes in the introduction: Perhaps no other church leader in history has emphasized ecumenical dialogue and communication as a primary intention of his tenure. Certainly, no other church leader in history has brought environmental issues to the foreground, indeed to the very center of personal and ecclesiastical attention.

In the foreword to Cosmic Grace, John, Metropolitan of Pergamon poses the question: What does the Church have to do with an issue such as the environmental crisis of our time? He points out that the ... ecological crisis is deeply rooted in theology, and is above all a spiritual problem. And therefore, ... should undergo a profound metanoia (or repentance) in order to undo the damage it has caused. It is not inappropriate to note that some of the most environmentally ravaged lands and waters are in preponderantly Orthodox post-Soviet bloc countries, and it is in these regions, visited by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, that he has highlighted many of his thoughts on our ecological responsibilities.

And what are his views? His All Holiness was enthroned on November 2, 1991, and on November 5, 1991 he delivered a speech to the Inter-Orthodox Conference, called “Ecological Responsibility” and said, ... the late Patriarch Demetrios expressed the deep anxiety of the whole of the Orthodox world and of every responsible thinking person concerning our environmental disaster so rapidly overtaking us, for which our thoughtless abuse of God’s material creation is entirely to blame. This lays the groundwork for what is to follow in his speeches, but also establishes the continuity of the message of his predecessor. In May 1992, in a speech delivered during the official visit of HH Prince Philip to the Phanar, the Ecumenical Patriarch suggests the adoption of September 1 as a day of prayer for the natural environment by all Christians, which had already been established in the Orthodox world by Patriarch Dimitrios on September 1, 1989.

He went on to say, We venerate the clothing of St. Nektarios, because the Saint used to wear it. Is it not much more fitting that we should also venerate the flowers and the plants? After all, they enshrine within themselves the energy of God.

The book follows with speeches and addresses on the life of moderation, asceticism, consumption, fasting, conservation, science and technology, environmental justice and ethics, population, beauty and nature, and war and peace. In a speech in New York at a luncheon organized by Scenic Hudson to present His All Holiness it’s first Global Champion of the Environment Award he summarized his position saying: God created heaven and earth as a harmonious totality; consequently, we also have to see creation as a harmonious and interdependent whole. For us at the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the term “ecumenical” is more than a name: it is a worldview and way of life. Let us love one another. With love, let us share with others everything we see page 7.
The modern environmental movement in the U.S. started with preservationists John Muir (founder of the Sierra Club), President Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, and conservationist Gifford Pinchot. Their pioneering work has led to modern environmental organizations and “green” political movements around the world, many of which are very effective. However, there is a tendency for some of these groups to exaggerate the threats and underestimate the many successes achieved in the past because organizations seem to obtain more support by creating a sense of imminent environmental problems. Thus there is the danger that secular institutional environmentalism does not properly recognize success, but rather exaggerates the problems, and ultimately divides people. The Ecumenical Patriarch, on the other hand, is leading the Church in the spiritual awareness of the environment and its care, which will broaden the base of support, make us all better stewards of the planet, and unify us. The leading position of Bartholomew I and his spiritual awareness of the environment and its care, which will broaden the base of support, make us all better stewards of the planet, and unify us. The leading position of Bartholomew I and his recognition as the “Green Patriarch” deserves our support and our follow up by actions, not just words. A good starting point is to read this book.

Alexander Zagoreos has been a member of Leadership 100 since May 2000. He has been active for many years in environmental causes and serves on the Board of Directors of Scenic Hudson. He is Managing Director at Lazard Freres & Company in New York City.
Yeonas Park on Seminary Grounds Touches the Hearths of Children of all ages

Stephen G. and Thelma Yeonas, prominent members of Leadership 100, donated the funds to establish a Childrens Park on the beautiful Hellenic College/Holy Cross campus.

At a recent meeting of the Leadership 100 Board of Trustees in Boston, Father Nicholas Triantafilou challenged Mr. Yeonas to be the first of the Leadership 100 members to inaugurate the big slide on the campus, which he did to the joy of all on hand.

The park has brought joy and celebration to the many seminarians and their families who have committed themselves to serve the Church in America.