

# Columbia University Honors Costas Montis, National Poet of Cyprus

TNH Staff Writer

NEW YORK – Columbia University, in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Republic of Cyprus in New York, recently honored the memory of Costas Montis, the man known as the national poet of Cyprus.

The commemoration, which culminated in the unveiling of a bust of the poet which will be permanently displayed on campus, filled a hall with professors, students, dignitaries, and interested guests, many of whom only recently learned of the beloved poet.

The event was sponsored by the Photos Photiades Foundation and the Hellenic Studies Program of Columbia. Lambrini Galatsatou, of the Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the UN, was the Emcee.

Maria Hadjipolycarpou, lecturer in Comparative Literature at the university, spoke about Montis' poetry. She noted the timeless messages in the writing which was nevertheless focused on his love for Cyprus and its people.

The Cypriot-born academic emphasized that the poet defined the identity of the island and the Greeks of Cyprus.



Seen after the unveiling of the bust of Costas Montis (L-R) Paul Photiades, Arcady Cotler, Archbishop Demetrios, Prof. Stathis Gourgouris, Vasilios Philippou, and Costas Tsentas.

The sculptor, Arcady Kotler, was contacted by Vasilios Philippou, the Consul General of Cyprus, to create the bust of Montis. He became very excited about the project when he

learned about the work and life of the Cypriot poet.

"I no longer make sculpture of this kind. I now do more conceptual work, but he loves poetry – Kotler, who is from

Moscow, was a friend of the late Russian poet Joseph Brodsky – so he made an exception for Montis.

"If they had asked me to make a statue of a general I

would have said no," he told The National Herald.

Stathis Gourgouris, professor of Classics and Comparative Literature at Columbia, briefed attendees on the Greek Studies Program and highlighted the "dynamism" and "lyricism" of Montis' poetry.

The Foundation, which funded the statue and its installation, was represented by Paul Photiades, who spoke about the cultural activities of the institution and its efforts to elevate the cultural life of Cyprus.

He thanked and congratulated Philippou, as well as Columbia University, for this "important initiative." Philippou praised the longtime efforts of the Foundation regarding the cultural affairs of Cyprus, and noted in particular its contribution to the creation of the bust of its national poet.

He also noted that the Republic of Cyprus has dedicated 2014 to Montis, who was born 100 years ago and who passed away in 2004.

In a touching moment, Philippou read a poem that Montis had dedicated to him.

Archbishop Demetrios praised Montis' "patriotic poetry" and noted its Greekness,

and people were deeply touched when the poet's daughter, Stalo Montis-Pouagare, recited one of her father's greatest poems in Greek and English.

Greetings were also offered by the Greek consul, Manos Koubarakis. After he spoke about Montis' contributions to Greek literature, he read one of his symbolic poems about the Greek language.

Costas Tsentas, the President of the Cyprus Federation of America, greeted the guests and expressed his appreciation for the endeavor.

Proclamations from were also presented to the Foundation by NY State Senator Michael Gianaris, who was represented by Irene Stathatos, and City Councilman Costa Constantinides, represented by Niki Kokkinos.

Cypriot-American poet and lyricist Polys Kyriakos, brought tears to the eyes of many guests when he recited "Gramma Sti Mitera – Letter to mother."

The program concluded with readings of Montis' poems by Columbia students including, Benjamin Moe, Kristen Moustakas, Elena Nikolaou, Ourania Yancopoulos, Lan Yao and Britany Mae Johnson.

# First U.S. Conference on Women Deacons to be Held in New York City

By Marilyn Rouvelas

Special to The National Herald

Readers of The National Herald may have seen Theodore Kalmoukos' front-page interview with Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia this past summer ("Met. Kallistos Ware on Life, Heaven, Hell", Jul. 4), in which he "welcomed the revival of the order of deaconesses; it is never officially abolished...But if we revive that order today, we could give them new and different functions...What is needed in the Orthodox Church today is a more thorough discussion of the meaning of the ministry of deaconesses."

That very discussion will take place at the first U.S. conference devoted to the revival of the ministry of women deacons in New York City at the St. Phoebe Center conference on December 6, at Union Theological Seminary.

Entitled, "Women & Diaconal Ministry in the Orthodox Church: Past, Present & Future," the Conference will examine women deacons in the past (speakers: Valerie Karras and Garen Stayer with Phyllis Zagano responding); explore possible ministries for women deacons through the lens of service being done in the present;

chaplaincy (Clio Pavlanton), spiritual direction (Sister Rebecca Cown), ministry of the word (Susan Ashbrook Harvey), and parish administration and outreach (Ann Marie Mecera); and discuss why and how the ministry might be rejuvenated (Teva Regula and Fr. Steven Tschlis). Paulina Pedas, a high school student, will reflect on her experience as a young woman. For anyone caring about the role of women in the Orthodox Church, this is a must-attend conference.

Why is this conference happening now? The issue of the ordination of women deacons has been on the backburner for a number of years, but was moved forward in March, 2014, by His Eminence Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus at the high-level synaxis of the primates of the Orthodox autocephalous churches in Istanbul where they set the date and tentative procedures for the Holy and Great Council of 2016. He suggested that the position of women and the resetting of the institution of deaconesses should be studied. This encouraging and courageous statement gave hope to those who have been following this issue for a number of years. The last wave of optimism was in 1988 at an

Inter-Orthodox Theological Consultation in Rhodes convened by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople that included representatives from all the Orthodox Churches to examine the issue in preparation for a Holy and Great Council someday. That consultation, "The Place of the Woman in the Orthodox Church and the Question of the Ordination of Women," unanimously affirmed that ordinations had taken place in the past and the order should be revived. Was ordination by a bishop imminent? Apparently not; twenty-six years have passed since the Rhodes definitive consultation. Meanwhile, Women Deacons in the Orthodox Church: Called to Holiness and Ministry by Kyriaki FitzGerald was published in 1998 by Holy Cross Orthodox Press. Various conferences have been held primarily in Europe throughout the ensuing years, but the shouts of "Axios" have yet to be heard for a woman deacon.

The issue is complex. The hierarchs must examine the purpose of the entire diaconate (male and female), both of which have been allowed to whither since the golden age for men in the second and third centuries--the fourth through the seventh for women. Only



St. Paul designated St. Phoebe a deacon. She inspired the St. Phoebe Center conference on deaconesses to be held Dec. 6.

Many are concerned that being a deacon will simply be a fast track for men to priesthood without going to three years of seminary. That would not be the case for women deacons, as the Orthodox tradition has never ordained women priests. In addition, for a bishop to ordain a woman would require agreement of the bishop's synod.

However, if the Orthodox Church is to put into practice its belief that all human beings are made in the image of God, that both men and women can be genuinely called to serve the Lord and his Church, that the

ministry as conceived in the early church includes all three orders of deacon, priest and bishop, then women should be ordained deacons. In addition our priests and communities need many more loving, compassionate and spirit-filled individuals who are willing to give their service (diakonia) to the Lord and others.

In the spirit of St. Paul who designated St. Phoebe a deacon, let us welcome women and their special gifts to help build the body of Christ. I urge you to attend this conference and learn about this treasured tradition. For more information about the conference, visit. [orthodoxdeaconess.org](http://orthodoxdeaconess.org).

Marilyn Rouvelas is the author of *A Guide to Greek Traditions and Customs in America* and founder of [www.orthodoxdeaconess.org](http://www.orthodoxdeaconess.org).

# Greek Lawyers Flaunt their Hellenism

Continued from page 1

calas officially installed Michael J. Hartofilis as President. Following President Hartofilis' remarks Kate Christophoratos presented seven scholarship winners, listed here alphabetically, followed by their corresponding law schools: Constantine Cavaris – St. John's University School of Law; John Hohos – New York Law School; Maria Kefalas – Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law; Antonios Kouloutouros – Georgetown University Law Center; Konstantinos Litgourgis – St. John's University School of Law; Eleanna Maidiotis – St. John's University School of Law; and Peter Varlan – New York University School of Law.

The Gala's Guest of Honor was George Venizelos, who is Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) New York Field Office. He supervises all operations and personnel throughout New York City as well as eight New York State counties, and LaGuardia and Kennedy Airports.

"I grew up watching Kojak," Venizelos told an amused and appreciative crowd, "Telly Savalas was my role model," he said, citing the renowned Greek actor as an inspiration for his law enforcement career. He also cited former Massachusetts Governor and presidential candidate Michael Dukakis, and veteran news anchor Emie Anastos, as worthy examples within the Greek-American community that made a lasting positive impression on him through the years.

The HLA Attorney of the Year – for the first time, a woman – is Anastasia Danias, the Senior Vice President and Chief Litigation Officer of the National Football League (NFL). Walking the microphone to the NFL's theme music – a sound no doubt familiar to scores of football fans in the crowd – Danias spoke about another woman who deserves an honor, the single mom, her own, who raised her. She also spoke of her Yiayia and



Officers of the Hellenic Lawyers Association of New York and honorees. Seated (L-R) Kate D. Christophoratos, Katina Broutzas, Panayiota K. Bougiamas, Mami Stathatos-Fulgieri, Attorney of the Year Anastasia Danias, Maria Barous Hartofilis, Chrsanthy N. Zapantis, Constantina Papageorgiou. Standing (L-R) Thomas T. Papain, Peter Metis, Michael Tiliakos, John Zervopoulos, Honoree George Venizelos, President Michael J. Hartofilis, Christopher G. Kulakis, Bill Gianaris, George Zapantis, and John G. Saketos.

gave advice to the young lawyers in the crowd – to take the sound advice of their yiayi-

ades, and in a few years, they would be the ones whom the HLA would honor.

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Our Parish will joyfully celebrate the Feastday of our Patron Saint

**St. Nicholas the Wonderworker**

**on Saturday 6th of December**

with the following schedule of services:

**Friday, December 5**  
**Eve of the Feast of Saint Nicholas**  
**Great Hierarchical Vespers 7:00 p.m.**

*Pocession, viewing and veneration of the Holy Relics of Saint Nicholas.*

Officiated by His Eminence  
**Archbishop DEMETRIOS OF AMERICA**

*The Responses of the Vespers will be chanted by Christos Chalkias of Thessaloniki and our own Chantors.*

Following the service a reception will be sponsored by the PTA's of the Saint Nicholas  
**William Spyropoulos & Stephen and Areti Cherpelis schools.**

**Saturday, December 6**  
**Feastday of Saint Nicholas**

**Orthros: 8:00 a.m.**  
**and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.**

*Responses of the Liturgy will be chanted by our ST. NICHOLAS CHILDREN'S CHOIR.*

The ladies Philoptochos Society of our Parish will sponsor a luncheon following the services for all the faithful.