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# St. Catherine's Newsletter

Assumption Greek  
Orthodox Church

October, 2009

## FACES IN THE CROWD

by Niko G. Lakerdas



In this session of Faces in the Crowd, I decided to write about a good friend, but even better altar boy, Robert James Gonzini, better known as R.J. He attends Stagg High School which is located in Palos Hills.

**Height:** 5'6"

**Weight:** 160

**Sports:** I play basketball, and just about any other sport but not on an official team.

**Free time:** During my free time I like to hang out with my friends, usually playing pick up games of any kind of sports.

**Looking Ahead:** This year I am looking forward to a lot of new experiences and meeting new people.

**Favorite Saint:** Saint Iakovos

**Favorite Quote:** "Just because you can't see KUB doesn't mean he can't see you."

**Favorite Part about Going to Church:** Serving in the altar.

**Favorite Song:** "Weekend Warriors" by change of pace

**Roots in Greece:** Tripoli



## CONTRIBUTORS

Jayne Jurasek

Katherine Kott

Niko Lakerdas

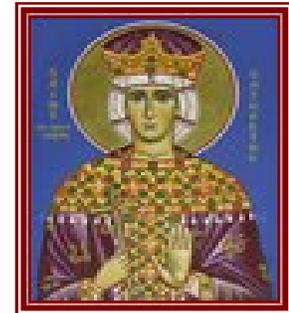
Marika Maggos

Christen Massouras

Alexandra Palmisano

Dennis Papafotopoulos

Mary Ellen Woods



## Sunday Church School Spotlight on...Kindergarten

"Kindergarten children are so eager to learn and we are off to a great start," said Katherine Kott, the new kindergarten teacher. She is assisted by Mary Ellen Woods. They spend time each Sunday with their students Sophia, Niko, Athena, Eva, Dennis, Thalia and Jillian. The class will be focusing on "Happy With God," learning that God's love is our greatest source of happiness. They also learn about the gospel lessons, Holy Communion and the Lord's Prayer. Each week the children prepare a craft that is connected to the lesson. According to kindergarten Dennis, "My favorite thing about Sunday School is making rainbows. The rainbow was God's promise to Noah there would be no more raining."



Katherine enjoys teaching kindergarten because, "it is a blessing to me to help the children grow closer to their Lord and Savior." She is new to the Sunday Church School staff this year and is enjoying getting to know the kids and their families. In her spare time, Katherine likes scrapbooking, reading and spending time with her friends and family. She was recently engaged and



Mary Ellen  
Woods

Katherine  
Kott

is excited to be planning her wedding. A special time for Katherine during the church year is the preparation for Pascha, with the many services and the joy of the season.

Mary Ellen feels "watching the kids' faces as they notice something new about the chapel or service is very rewarding." She graduated from St. Catherine's Sunday School in 1995 and wanted to come back and help teach kindergarten. Mary Ellen plays on a softball team with family and friends and likes to travel. She loves to play with her nephew Jack and niece Emily. Her favorite service is the midnight Easter service. She likes "being in the packed church of people with their candles lit and singing Christos Anesti." She feels, "this shows we can all come together as one to celebrate the resurrection of Christ."

## Olympic Reflections by Alexandra Palmisano



### DISAPPOINTED??

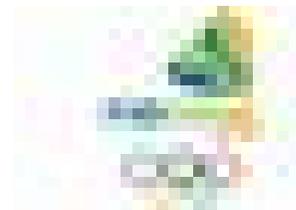
Olympia, an ancient city in Greece, was where the Olympics were first held. We, the Greeks, should be proud of our ancestors' invention of these great games. To us, it would be a great pleasure to hold the Olympic Games in our home of migration, the United States. Better yet, in Chicago, which makes it even closer for us here at Assumption Church.

For many, it would be phenomenal to see the preparation for games in progress and the actual games in action. Many would consider it a "once in a lifetime" opportunity to see the Olympic athletes in person and view their competitions. In this recession, the Olympics could have provided many jobs.

Others would disagree. They say that we don't have room to house all the athletes and tourists. They think taxes will rise. Many of them don't want anything to do with the Olympics and getting the city ready for the games.

We'll never know if having the Olympics in Chicago would have benefit or had a negative impact on our city. I personally think it would have been a great opportunity for our city. It is disappointing that we lost the bid to Tokyo, Madrid, and Rio. To me, it seems like Chicago would have been the better choice than the three, but Rio de Janeiro was chosen to host the 2016 Olympics. Rio has one of the highest crime rates in the world. If the U.S. contributed more money to the money that Illinois and Chicago presented to the Olympic court, maybe we could have had a better chance to win. We'll never know.

Anyway, I would like to wish the best of luck to the United States and to Greece in the upcoming 2016 Olympic Games. GOOD LUCK!!!



### Sunday School Athletes

by Jayne Jurasek

With all the excitement around Chicago's bid for the 2016 Olympics, it made me wonder...do we have any future Olympic athletes in our own Sunday School?

In a survey of 40 Sunday School students, 100% participate in some form of athletic activity. 30 out of 40 are active in more than one sport. Here is a breakdown of the results:

Track/Cross Country	4
Soccer	20
Softball	2
Gymnastics	7
Tennis	4
Dance	3
Swimming	10
Ice Skating	1



Bike Riding	1
Baseball	5
Basketball	16
Chess	1
Water Polo	2
Volleyball	3
Hockey	1
Football	3

I don't know about the 2016 Olympics, but we definitely have plenty of athletes for the 2010 Junior Olympics! Go Assumption!

## A Message to Christian Athletes

As Christians we have to show our faith every moment. Saint Paul describes the Christian as an athlete of Christ. So, as Christian athletes we have to play with integrity and be respectful to our teammates, coaches and the athletes who play against us. We have to be very careful how we speak to our teammates. Sometimes they are going to make a mistake, but as Christians we have to try to cover the mistakes of our teammates without making them feel guilty. All the teammates have to play together and try to include those who are not as good. If we are a better athlete than someone else on the team, for example, when we pass the ball, let us try to give them a nice pass and make them look like a better player and make them feel that they are an important part of the team. Think of a team like a hand that has five fingers. The fingers are not all the same, but we have to use all the fingers to catch a ball. The same thing goes for the team—we have to include all the teammates to work together.

May the Grace and the Love of our Lord Jesus Christ always be with you and protect you.

+Father Athanasios



Jeanne Jurasek and Larry Palmisano win medals in the 10K event at the 2009 Metropolis Junior Olympics.

## He Is Everything

The way the crowds cheer, the way the sun shines, the way He guides. He watches from above. He views everything we do, from the pools to the courts, all the way to the fields. He helps us make the nail biting decisions we face every second during the few minutes of the one-on-one we have with our opponents. His name is God. He plays a very important role in the lives of Greek Orthodox Christian athletes. He is who we hope will guide us and protect us through our games. He does everything for a reason. When we are to miss a shot, it merely means that He would like us to work on our shooting. If we are to lose a race, it's simply God telling us that we can do better. There's always a reason why things happen in those minutes or even seconds in some sports. We may not know that reason at the time, but God knows. Eventually, He will let us know why we missed the shot or lost the race.

BY ALEXANDRA PALMISANO

**The Athlete's Prayer** God, let me play well but fairly. Let competition make me strong but never hostile. In this and in all things, guide me to the virtuous path. If I know victory, grant me happiness; If I am denied, keep me from envy. See me not when I am cheered, but when I bend to help my opponent up. Seal it in my heart that everyone who takes the field with me becomes my brother. Remind me that sports are just games. Teach me something that will matter once the games are over. And if through athletics I set an example – let it be a good one.



## College Corner

Hey! How is everyone back home? As most of you know, I'm currently at the University of Illinois down in Champaign, IL. It's only about 2 and a half hours from home which isn't too bad. I'm living at Illini Towers which is one of the residence halls near campus. It's private meaning that it's a lot nicer than the normal dorms which is great! The food is decent in my building however, the restaurants around school are really good. The thing I like best about being in college is the independence you have from your house. It is nice to finally be on your own. It's also really nice not to be in school for 8 hours at a time (even though all of the studying makes up for it). There are actually two Orthodox churches nearby. One is a Greek Orthodox church called Three Hierarchs, and the other is an Antiochian Orthodox Church called St. Nicholas. There is also the Orthodox Christian Fellowship house which has a little chapel downstairs. Every Tuesday we also meet to have a dinner at the house, followed by a spiritual discussion :) It is a lot of fun getting to meet so many new people! Can't wait to hear from you again soon! - **Maria Lakerdas**

### Word Scramble Answers

1. wives
2. females
3. males
4. Shem
5. fowl
6. Ham
7. Japheth
8. beasts
9. cattle
10. Noah

# INFO

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**HOURS**  
**MATINS — 8:30 AM**  
**DIVINE LITURGY—10:00 AM**  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL LITURGY—**  
**9:45 AM**

We're on the web!  
[www.assumptionchicago.org](http://www.assumptionchicago.org)

The St. Catherine's Newsletter was created in 2007 by a Sunday School student. It serves to inform, educate, and entertain the children of the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church community. All are welcome and encouraged to contribute to the newsletter.

If you are interested in writing an article, sending in a self written piece of work, or just for more information... PLEASE CONTACT:

Very Rev. Fr. Timothy Bakakos —  
[FrTimothy@assumptionchicago.org](mailto:FrTimothy@assumptionchicago.org)  
or Dr. Evie Maggos— [demags@aol.com](mailto:demags@aol.com)



**MAIL TO:**

# KID'S CORNER

**Harvest Day Celebration & Trivia Challenge....Saturday, October 17, 5:00 pm**

## DO YOU KNOW.....

- What LOL means?
- Who won the Superbowl in 2005?
- Which four Great Lakes border Michigan?
- What American won 4 gold medals @ 1936 summer Olympics in Berlin?
- On the TV show "Arthur," what is Arthur's little sister's name?
- What is the capital of Montana?
- What were St. Sophia's daughters' names?

**Form a team of 8-10 people for the Harvest Day Trivia Challenge. Find out who really knows the most. One team will be named**



## WORD SCRAMBLES

### PEOPLE & THINGS ON NOAH'S ARK

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| 1. IEWSV   | 6. MHA     |
| 2. EMLEAFS | 7. AHTEJHP |
| 3. EMLAS   | 8. EBSAST  |

Do you have a question about our faith that you want answered? E-mail a question for "Ask Father" and we'll get the answer.

[demags@aol.com](mailto:demags@aol.com)