



# AHEPA CANADA

Dear Brothers and Sisters.

Christmas is once again upon us, accompanied with our eternal hope for peace and understanding. It is the season to remember the need for things whose importance we far too often overlook: the need for love, kindness and thoughtfulness. It is the time of the year during which we try to slow down the frantic pace of our lives, spend a little more time with our family and friends in celebration of the birth of Christ, revitalize our eternal hope for a better tomorrow.

Like any other family, the AHEPA Family of Canada has been busy celebrating the holiday season across our country, helping the less fortunate in our communities and sharing the joy of the season with one-another. I had the honour of being invited to few of our AHEPA Family gatherings and the distinct pleasure of celebrating with Brothers and Sisters this very special season. These visits allowed me to partake in the fellowship and warmth which so distinguishes the AHEPA Family. While in attendance at some of these gatherings, I had the pleasure of presenting several AHEPANs with their 25- and 50-year pins, as well as presenting scholarships to local students.

As it is the season of the spirit of giving, I would also like to proudly announce that this will be the fourth year in which the Foundation awards a Journey to Greece scholarship and the first year in which it will award two such scholarships. The awarding of this second scholarship has been made possible by the generous legacy of the late Br. Nick Logothetis and shall accordingly be named in his honour the "Nick Logothetis' Journey to Greece Scholarship". The Journey to Greece scholarships give the opportunity to deserving Canadian students of Hellenic descent to spend six weeks in Greece studying and experiencing Hellenic history and culture. I would be remiss, of course, if I did not also mention the kind generosity of the Toronto AHEPA Chapter which will, once again, contribute to the travel costs of the scholarship winners. I would like to congratulate and wish the best of luck to the new AFCFC Scholarship Committee: Christos Katopodis (Chair), Diane Polesello, Vasilia Kachmarski, Jim Fabrikis and Helen Christodoulou. I would also like to thank Danielle Efraim who, after several years of service, is leaving the committee.

This year we will continue with our objective of raising the visibility and image of the Canadian AHEPA Family by encouraging members to seek greater interaction and cooperation with local organizations, as well as with municipal and provincial governments in their respective communities. At the national level, we are working to schedule meetings with the Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, and members of his government in order to discuss various issues concerning Greece, as well as issues of importance to Canadians of Hellenic descent. I would like to thank Past Canadian AHEPA President Br. Frank Antoniou for his efforts in organizing these visits.

We shall also continue our successful partnership with the Simon Fraser University's Hellenic Studies Department, offering The Odysseas Greek Tutor on line through our website, free of charge. This program provides the opportunity for anyone who wants to learn Greek via the internet. We are very grateful to Dr. Andreas Gerolymatos for giving AHEPA Canada the opportunity to be part of this program, a program generously funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

Our AHEPA CANADA website has been totally re-designed. If you have already visited the site, you will notice several additions, one of the most important being a login section which will give controlled access to important documents such as minutes of AFCFC Board meetings. For the moment, only the AFCFC Board members will have access to this action. Please visit our website [www.ahepacanada.org](http://www.ahepacanada.org) and send me your comments.

One of the most exciting challenges this year will be the 2010 National Convention which will be held in Montreal between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of July. The last National Supreme Convention held in Canada was over 20 years ago. I firmly believe that the 2010 National Convention is not an event that concerns only the Montreal chapters. It is an event which all AHEPA Family Chapters in Canada must support. Indeed, it is the duty of all Canadian AHEPA Family members to support and actively participate in this Convention. It is an opportunity to showcase the strength, uniqueness, vitality and achievements of the Canadian AHEPA Family to the whole of the international AHEPA Family domain. I would like to congratulate the Montreal AHEPA Family, and especially the organizing committee, for a job well done.

An idea which I would like for us to discuss today is the possibility of organizing for the 2010 National Convention, a forum comprising Greek-Canadian and Greek-American politicians and academics to discuss issues of importance to Greece and all Hellenes around the world, including Cyprus, FYROM, Halki, etc. I would like to report to you that the matter was discussed during our last Supreme Lodge and everyone agreed that it would be an excellent idea to pursue the organising of such a forum, and that we would need to finalize the details as soon as possible.

Before closing, I would like to thank DOP Canadian President Diane Polesello for her commitment and work for the AHEPA Family Charitable Foundation of Canada, also all the AFCFC Board members for their commitment and dedication.

In closing, I would like to wish you all a **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**. May the celebration of the coming of Christ bring to us all joy, peace and contentment.

Br. Nick Aroutzidis  
President  
AHEPA Canada

