The Blessed Abba of America  
Commemorating his First Centennial Anniversary  
10-10-1910 – 10-10-2010  
(Article from the Together Again magazine 06/10)

This edition of our Together Again Magazine is featuring and honoring a very special person in the life of our Scholi – the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. This person is the Most Reverend Gerasimos Papadopoulos, Bishop of Abydos. For those who attended Holy Cross, between the years 1952 and 1995, Fr. Jerry and later Bishop Gerasimos needs no introduction. Even those students who came to Holy Cross after 1995 know of the abiding reputation of a blessed man, who loved our School, who worked tirelessly to promote its sacred mission for 43 years, and who now lies in peace under the oak tree behind Holy Cross chapel – still reminding us all of St. Paul's dynamic expression of faith and love for the Lord: "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21).

This June 12, 2010 marks the 15th anniversary from the falling asleep in the Lord of our beloved, ever memorable and ever-blessed Elder Gerasimos Papadopoulos, Bishop of Abydos. This day will be appropriately marked with a gravesite Memorial Service to honor the person and work of Bishop Gerasimos.

This coming Fall, however, October 10, 2010 will mark another significant milestone for this extraordinary churchman, professor of New Testament, and spiritual father. This date will be exactly the centennial anniversary from the year of his birth on October 10, 1910. The School administration, faculty and students have set aside the week before this date to remember and to honor the person and the work of Bishop Gerasimos in a number of different ways. There will be a series of talks and lectures by a number of his students, who will be invited for this purpose, including one from his nephew, Dr. Stylianos G. Papadopoulos, Professor Emeritus of the University of Athens. The week long activities will conclude with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at Holy Cross Chapel, a Memorial Service at the gravesite, and a Reception. While the exact program for the week is not at this time finalized, it is expected that one of the highlights of the week of commemoration will be the posthumous publication of the magnum opus of Bishop Gerasimos, A Commentary on the Gospel of St. John.

A word of explanation is perhaps necessary about this publication. As all of his students knew so well, Bishop Gerasimos had a special love and interest in the Gospel of John. Throughout his life and teaching career, he studied the Gospel and kept copious notes
from his constant reading and research. During the first five years of the 1990's, when Bishop Gerasimos was already in his 80's, he was working urgently to refine and complete his commentary, with additional reflections and notes he was inserting throughout the manuscript. Unfortunately, however, time was cut short and, at the time of his death on June 12, 1995, the Commentary was somewhat complete but still in the form of a handwritten Greek text with many attached notes to be inserted into the main body of the work. This truly huge and in many ways formidable manuscript became the unexpected legacy that Bishop Gerasimos left with me upon his death. I knew immediately that this body of work, which represented many years of research and reflection by our spiritual Father, had to be made available somehow to the general public and especially to his beloved students who cared about him. After all, this was the only reason why this precious manuscript was left in my care. For many years at first it was virtually impossible to even consider transcribing the Greek text into a computer, which was the first thing that needed to be done. After years of unavoidable delay, the work of transcription finally began slowly and methodically. Only after years of occasional laborious typing was the first phase of the work completed, including the original Greek text of the Fourth Gospel, verse by verse, upon which Bishop Gerasimos had been writing his Commentary. Once the basic work of transcribing the manuscript into a typescript was completed, it then became possible to ask others to help in the difficult process of refining the typescript for publication.

This important assistance came from Dr. Stylianos G. Papadopoulos, nephew to Bishop Gerasimos, who accepted to review the entire typescript and to make any necessary corrections so that it could be consistently in the Modern Greek idiom. After two thorough readings and corrections by Professor Papadopoulos, we were able to produce a final computerized Greek text divided into twenty-one chapters, with all the necessary and appropriate subheadings of the entire Gospel of St. John. With the final Greek text on the computer screen, it was time to begin yet another task. This was perhaps the more difficult task of translating the Greek text into English. When this equally formidable task of translation was finally completed, it was Fr. Theodore G. Stylianos, successor to Bishop Gerasimos as professor of New Testament at Holy Cross, who accepted to review the translation. With his corrections and insightful remarks the English translation has also come to its final readiness for publication by our own Holy Cross Orthodox Press, under the direction of Dr. Antone Vrame.

The commentary will be printed in two volumes, one in Greek and one in English. The cost will be $12,500 for each volume for a total of $25,000. It is this dual publication that the Alumni Association of Hellenic College and Holy Cross, under the presidency of Fr. George Chioros, has accepted to support and sponsor by reaching out to all of our Alumni, so that as many as possible may participate in this effort to demonstrate our love and appreciation for an extraordinary teacher and spiritual father, who has taught us so much about the only thing that is essential – our authentic love for Christ and His Church.

Fr. Peter A. Chambers, Chaplain
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