

➤ The Changing Role of the Church – Diaconia of the Orthodox Church in Greece during the Years of the Economic Crisis 2010–2018

VASILIKI MITROPOULOU & NIKI PAPAGEORGIU & ESKO RYÖKÄS

Abstract

The economic crisis in Greece in 2010–2018 caused a deep recession there. Unemployment rose to very high levels, and social distress increased. In this study, we use publically available internet material to present the many auxiliary activities the Greek Orthodox Church used to respond to the situation. Many of them were typical forms of diaconal activity, but new types of work for the church can also be seen in diocesan activities. The Orthodox Church in Greece does not present all the auxiliary activities in public. However, based on the material available, the article hypothesizes that the role of the Orthodox Church in Greek society has changed during the economic crisis. The church became a supporting factor in society.

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God (Hebr. 13:16).

Introduction

As the Orthodox Church (OC) in Greece understands itself, the Church has always stood by the side of the weak, the poor, the sick, the destitute, and offered diaconia to relieve their needs or sufferings. With the arrival of

the world economic crisis in Greece in 2010, the number of people in need and poverty raised dramatically in only a couple of months, and the lives of numerous people changed for the worse. The economic crisis created a new situation for the Greeks, and it got worse with the gradual increase of the refugee population, until today.

The status enjoyed by the OC in Greece as the national church in the public domain and the conscience of the Greeks, especially in matters of support in difficult times, made it feel a strong responsibility as a Christian organization to reach out to the people and help them. From the first days of the economic crisis, the OC would try to find ways to stand by the side of the suffering to support and relieve them. The OC took over its responsibility as a servant of the people and “went out in the streets” to meet, to help, and to offer them whatever they would need with no discrimination, because hunger and poverty have no colour, race, or nationality. The Archbishop of Greece, Ieronymos II, was one of the first to go out into the streets to meet the poor and feed, dress, cure, and accommodate them. The OC, with its many various diaconia activities, has supported and helped many families and individuals to survive during the years of crisis.

In this article, we present the activities by which the Orthodox Church strove to help people during the years of the economic crisis in Greece. These activities can be referred to as diaconal work, and a presentation of this is our first result. Based on the description of these activities, we then present our second result: a hypothesis of how the role of the OC has been changing in Greek society. The status of the OC in Greek society and the specialties of the Church set the frameworks allowing this hypothesis. Therefore, we need to present more about the context before we can write out our aim. At the moment, no thorough and systematic research exist; nor are there collections of data that present the diaconia/charity work of the OC in Greece, covering all the metropolis, the parishes, and their charity funds (*filoptocho tameio*). We hope that this article will be the initiative for future research that will collect detailed information during the “dark” years of the economic crisis in Greece.

In Greek, the word *diakonia* (διακονία) is derived from the ancient Greek verb *diakoneo* (διακονέω) to serve, to offer services. According to the traditional understanding, *diakonia* (διακονία) means the service, the work, the *diakonima* (διακόνημα) of a deacon (in Greek: *diakonos*, δίακονος) (= serv-

ant, curer) (Hoffman, 1974, 66; See also Beyer, 1964, 87–88). According to the lexicon of the new Greek language, written by prof. G. Mpampiniotis (2005), diakonia (διακονία) is the service, the dedication to a specific service (e.g., someone dedicated his/her life to serving his/her people). The derived verb is diakono (διακονώ) meaning to offer my services, be dedicated to someone/something (e.g., the peace) (Mpampiniotis, 2005:483). As the text later shows, in the ecclesial Greek understanding, the Orthodox Church in Greece has traditionally and in practice followed the meaning of the word diaconia as offering solidarity to relieve the suffering of people.

The socio-economic context in Greece during 2010–2018

The economic crisis that broke out in Greece in 2010 demolished the prosperity image of the modern Greek society and reversed the economic and social stability of the Greek citizens. The causes of the crisis are due to national and international factors, such as economic globalization which has led to the dominance of financial capital and the inability to raise money at the national level, the weak functionality of the Euro-zone due to the economic differentiation between the northern and southern European countries, as well as the Greek “clientele system” (Alexakis, 2012; Mouriki, 2012; Gropa et al., 2013; Pappas, 2014; Koniordos, 2016; Papadopoulos, 2016). However, the cause initiated from the explosion of the international financial crisis of 2007–2008, which in Greece, in 2010, manifested as the public debt crisis (Krugman, 2009; Drettakis, 2011; Giataganas, 2011; Nikiforos et al., 2015). The incapacity of Greece to find finance for its debt by the markets, made it turn to loans from the Eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and, consequently, put it under the economic supervision of the European Union, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Fund (European Commission, 2009; Pettifer, 2015; Papaconstantinou, 2016).

The political leadership of Greece accepted the terms of the loaners via three successive Memorandums opposing measures for the consolidation of public finances, the regulation, and management of the financial sector, the implementation of structural reforms which would improve the competitiveness of the country (Hodson, 2011; Boyer, 2012; Katsikas et al., 2017). At the same time, the terms contained stringent resilience measures and

caused many effects: a rapid fall in the gross national product (over 25%), the rise of unemployment to 24–28%, reduction of salaries and pensions in public and private sector, increased insecurity of labour relations, budget reduction for social and public services, and a reduction of the funding for Education and Health Care (Kyriakoulis, 2012; Mpalourdos & Spyropoulou, 2012; Robolis, 2013; Mpoutsiou & Sarafis, 2013; Katsikas et. al., 2014; Kouzlis, 2015; Giannitsis & Zographakis, 2015). The negative consequences of the crisis and austerity policy have deteriorated drastically the living conditions of Greek citizens as well as of the migrants who live in the Hellenic territory, creating poverty, deprivation of essential goods and social exclusion (Zamparloukou & Kousi, 2014; Matsaganis & Leventi, 2014; Velentza, 2016; Unicef, 2016).

The situation is further deteriorated by the refugee crisis, as it was characterized, namely by the mass movement of refugees from the Middle East, and in particular Syria, due to civil wars, as well as the unceasing flow of immigrants who enter Greece with no legal papers from Africa or Asia in pursuit of access to Europe. The official report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Telecommunications and Information stated that during the years 2015 and 2016, 1,200,000 refugees have passed through Greece, mostly on the islands of the eastern Aegean Sea (2017). The flows, albeit at a lower rate, continued in 2017 and 2018. At the same time, according to the UN High Commissioner, since June 2018, 58,000 refugees remain in Greece (2018). The temporary passage of such a large number of migrants and refugees, as well as the establishment of a part of them in Greece, deteriorate the already precarious situation due to the economic crisis and causes contradictory reactions in the public space.

The Orthodox Church in Greece: present status

The Orthodox Church (OC) in Greece enjoys the status of the national Church since orthodoxy has the rank of the dominant religion. According to Article 3 of the Constitution, there is a relation between the Orthodox Church and the Hellenic State, which includes some privileges over the other religions in the Hellenic territory. These include the oath of the President of the democracy and the members of the parliament, the compulsory teaching of a religion course in Greek schools, the salary of the clergy, non-taxation of

ecclesiastical property, the equal recognition of religious and civil marriage, to give some examples.

In addition to the formal relationship between the State and Church that reinforces the presence of the Church in the public domain, the Church has a strong social influence (Georgiadou & Nikolakopoulos, 2000; Stathopoulou, 2007) and enjoys the trust of the Greek citizens (Stathopoulou, 2007). In the Greek public sphere, there is an image of an active “political” Church, especially in the ethno-political field, which is interested in preserving the Greek national identity. Despite the controversies with the Hellenic state, the Church holds not only its constitutional position as a sovereign religion, but also the symbolic power in the conscience of the majority of the Greeks as a carrier of the Greek-Orthodox identity.

However, recently, because of the economic crisis, the OC has presented a shift in its strategy. There are not many literary sources to verify the change, but the documents and the practices of the church uncover the main ideas. To put it simply, under the pressure of the financial crisis and the new problems created, the nation-based orientation of the Church gradually seems to have transformed. While previously the OC presented an ethnocentric character, the years of the crisis have revealed another nature, focusing more on social problems. The period of crisis coincides with the change in the leadership of the OC and the new Archbishop Ieronymos II, who, contrary to the ethnocentric profile of his predecessor Christodoulos (Stavarakakis, 2003; Oulis et al., 2010), has a more open and social profile. Ieronymos II avoids national-political interventions, is open to all political parties, and introduces the collaboration of the Church with the state for the exploitation of the ecclesiastic property for social purposes (Archbishop Ieronymos II, 2009).

Aim and methodology

Until today no clear documentation exists about the above-described shift, which has been going on in the OC during the last few years. To answer to this lack in research, our aim in this article is to provide an overview of the character of the diaconia activities taken by the OC during the years of the economic crisis and how they are performed in the Holy Metropolis and their parishes. Through this presentation, we can build a hypothesis

proposing that there has been a shift towards a new, more society-based, role of the OC.

No statistical collection of data exist related to the ways of work, nor about persons involved in helping or those getting the help. Therefore, to realize our aim, we collected information on diaconia activities as practiced in dioceses (Μητρόπολις/Metropolis). Our objective in this article is to present a brief overview of the activities, which reveal the social character (the “diakonical” side) of the OC in Greece and also, which sectors provide these activities during the years of the economic crisis. We concentrate on a limited number of dioceses from all over Greece as a representative example of their role (run by the heads of the dioceses – the Metropolitans) to organize and coordinate the work and activities of parish churches (run by their local priests) and the significant number of volunteers.

The selection of the metropolises presented here is based on four criteria: 1) the geographical location (Macedonia in the North, Crete in the South, and Thessaly, Peloponnese and the Aegean islands in-between), 2) the rank in the hierarchy (the Archdiocese of Athens, the Archdiocese of Crete and the Metropolis of Thessaloniki [as the second biggest city in Greece]), 3) the website information about the metropolis and their diaconia activities, the existing information on the website about the metropolis regarding the presentation of their diaconia activities (the updates for the registry of their actions, the accessibility, the communication interface), and 4) our personal and institutional contacts.

The data of this study consists of internet pages that present the diaconia activities in these selected metropolises. The data is not comprehensive, since a common policy among the different dioceses with regard to charity work in the OC is that they do not present all the activities taking place in their diaconia work in detail on their websites. In many personal non-documentable discussions, this practice was motivated by a religious ideal that the left hand of a Christian may not know when the right hand gives relief. Hence, collecting statistical representations about all the activities would require in-depth local interviews with local priests in various parishes. The material we utilize is only descriptive and not statistical in nature. Therefore, this article can only provide a summarizing overview and more or less hypothetical results.

Examples of the diaconia activities of the Archdioceses and dioceses of the Orthodox Church in Greece during the years of the economic crisis

The Greek Church has as its Head at the Archdiocese of Athens and includes 71 metropolis (dioceses) all over Greece (8 of them belong to the Archdiocese of Crete) (Ecclesia, 2020). Every metropolis has, in its jurisdiction, a significant number of parishes. The metropolis, as well as the congregations, offer charity work and support to help people in need.

To make it possible to recognize similarities and variations between dioceses, we follow a model of eight different characteristics of diaconia activities. These are 1) charity funds, 2) health care, 3) nutrition, 4) clothing, 5) education, 6) accommodation, 7) residence (homeless/orphan), and 8) legal advice. At first, we present the diocese describing the most significant multitude of different charity work. Our presentation goes into detail, because in that way we can gain an understanding of what the concrete work means for parish life. After this, we more or less summarize the other dioceses, and at the end of the article, we present an overview of different types of charity work seen in the metropolises.

Holy Archdiocese of Athens

The Holy Archdiocese of Athens is the Head of the Church of Greece. Its region extends throughout most of Athens and its outskirts. The Archbishop is the Head of the Archdiocese of Athens and the OC of Greece. Since February 2008, the Archbishop is the reverent Ieronymos II, born Ioannis Liapis. The Archdiocese has devoted much of its work to social and welfare care organized in NGOs and Charity Funds. These structures cover a variety of needs, e. g. nutrition, clothing, health care, education, providing residence and legal advice.

The most essential of the NGOs is *Apostoli* (i.e. Mission; Apostoli), founded in July 2010 by the Archbishop Ieronymos II as the first action undertaken by the OC to face the economic crisis victims and its work focuses on the sectors of humanity, development, and education (Apostoli). Its aims are the social and economic support of the less privileged social groups (young people included), as well as the improvement of their living conditions

by providing every possible moral and material help. Special care provides support to disadvantaged populations with religious and cultural specificities. *Apostoli* cooperates with the Greek Local Government, research institutes, companies, as well as other national and international NGOs, to ensure the highest effectiveness of its charity work (*Apostoli*. Our vision).

Within the frame of its activities a variety of projects are supported, such as *The Church on the Road*, *The Church at Home*, *I Have a Mission*, *Apostoli Supports Students*, *Apostoli to the Homeless*, *NN and Piraeus Programme Child & Future* as well as many other smaller programs, all founded during the years of the crisis.

More specifically, the *Apostoli* project, *The Church on the Road*, undertakes the daily distribution of free food portions to homeless people, foreigners, and drug addicts and, in general, destitute people, irrespective of race or any discrimination. This activity of the project takes place in central places of Athens, thus; it aims to raise empathy among citizens and attract volunteers. More than 2,000 volunteers, regardless of religion and nationality, participate in the activity (*Apostoli*. The Church on the Road).

Another project run by *Apostoli* is *The Church at Home*. This activity concerns the distribution of packages of food, with items for daily use (for example, flour, legumes, sugar, pasta, evaporated milk), distributed every month in the parish centres to Greek families living on the margins of poverty. According to the vision of Archbishop Ieronymos II, the *Apostoli* project aims to support the priests' work, who take care of the helpless, powerless, and people in pain. When the project was initiated in July 2011, it distributed 1,500 food packages. This number has been continuously increasing ever since (*Apostoli*. The Church at Home).

I Have a Mission, is an *Apostoli* project that includes a series of actions mainly focused on educational purposes. In the frame of this project, books are sent to school libraries in the border area and stationery is distributed for free in schools. The project priorities are to enhance among students the love of reading and a reading attitude. To the present day, more than 30,000 books and stationery have been sent to border areas of Greece. Local teachers, as well as the local municipalities, support the project.

Aiming to support students' families that face problems obtaining food, the *Apostoli Supports School Students* project allows families to keep their anonymity, dignity, and respect. Because when a child is hungry, also his/her

family is undernourished. The project distributes food packages to the school students' families. The amount of food in the package is in accordance with the members of the family. The list of the students' families is drawn up by *Apostoli* in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, that select the appropriate primary or secondary schools included in the project (Apostoli. *Apostoli Supports School Students*).

Another project is *Apostoli to the Homeless*, meant for the protection of homeless people in Athens during the night. In this project, food is distributed to the homeless and destitute people, late at night in the streets of Athens. The volunteers who offer diaconia at *Apostoli* work overnight to provide food, fresh juice, and water. They are accompanied by doctors who, at the same time, offer medical care (Apostoli. *Apostoli to the Homeless*).

Apostoli collaborates with the *NN and Piraeus Programme Child & Future*. NN and Piraeus Bank provide products and services to support the current needs of Greek society. Furthermore, these two prominent organizations seem to be strongly aware of their responsibility towards the society, and thus, they undertake significant initiatives, e.g., the support of *Apostoli* in its charity work for children. This activity ensures a savings programme that provides considerable capital to support the children's studies in Greece or abroad.

Additionally, *Apostoli* is involved in many other actions aiming to improve the life of both the Greeks and immigrants. These include 1) the Environmental Centre in Parnitha, 2) the Independent Addict Reintegration Unit, 3) the Education and Care Unit for Autistic Children, 4) a Bedridden Care Unit, 5) a Nursing Home, 6) nutrition of more than 10,000 food portions a day. For the implementation of these projects, it has launched collaborations with European and national bodies, such as the Ministry of Employment, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, the Information Society, the European Commission, and the United Nations.

For the support of socially vulnerable groups from the perspective of sustainable development, *Apostoli* collaborates with the Greek Local Government (Municipalities), research institutes, companies, and other civil society organizations or other denominations, e.g., The United Society Partners in the Gospel (USPG), The International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), The Anglican Church in Greece, and the Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO) of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, that provides informal educational activities and psychosocial

support to refugees and migrants currently residing at the *Educational Centre Apostoli for the Refugees and Migrants* in Athens. The project aims to facilitate the social integration of refugees and migrants over 15 years old through the instruction of Greek language, history and culture and prepare them to participate in the National Examination for the Certificate of Attainment in the Greek Hellenomathia, which allows foreigners to register at a Greek institution of higher education. Apostoli also supports the Center for Alzheimer's Disease, *Estia* accommodation facility for unaccompanied children, Boarding House for the Chronic Mentally Ill, Protected Homes and Apartments (Apostoli Successfully continues, 2018).

Another social care domain of the Archdiocese of Athens is the General Charity Fund, which coordinates the local parish Charity Funds. The General Charity Fund belongs to the organization, *Service of Christian Solidarity*, which takes care of the social and philanthropic activities of the Archdiocese and offers help to any vulnerable, destitute people independent of their race, sex, age, religion, and nationality (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio). It further collaborates with the Hellenic Economic Chamber, aiming to support those who need accounting, taxation, and financial advice (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Ananeosi-simfonias-gft-oe). It organized 2) a mobile health care unit that offers free medical examinations to uninsured people, (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Programma kinitis monadas ygeias); 2) a voluntary blood donation event in collaboration with the General Hospital of Athens, *G. Gennimatas*, that keeps a blood bank and sets up regularly days for blood donation to support the needs of the sick (Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Blood donation.); and 3) *Imatio*, a shop for distributing clothing daily to the poor and destitute (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Agiasmos-imatio).

Additionally, the Charity Fund organizes many other social services, too. These include 1) the Social Service acting as the connecting link with the 152 parishes of the Archdiocese to facilitate the support at the local congregations, (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Social-services); 2) Social Dentistry that provides free dental care to the poor (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Social Dentistry.); 3) Social Pharmacy which provides free medicine to the poor, where the Panhellenic Pharmaceutical Association gives medication (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athi-

non. Geniko floptocho tameio. Social Pharmacy); 4) *Vafeiadakeion* Nursing Station that every year hosts 180 babies and infants in collaboration with the legacy of the Vafeiadakeion Foundation (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko floptocho tameio. Station-babies); 5) *St. Philothei* Centre of Education, Culture and Volunteerism, where every summer 600 children are hosted, clergymen, and families of the clergymen, in the summer camp of the Archdiocese (Iera Arxiepiskopi Athinon. Centre of education, culture and voluntarism Agia Filothei); and 6) the Centre for the Support of the Family (KESO) collaborating with 74 parishes of the Archdiocese. This centre provides information to families on issues concerning social welfare, such as health issues, psychological support, medical services, law advice, and seminars. KESO collaborates with the Athens Notarial Association for free legal advice. Also, it offers clothes, shoes, and equipment for babies, as well as provides house rental properties through the NGOs *Praksis* and *The Child's Friends* who help find apartments to host temporarily homeless families. Additionally, every year KESO supports economically ten child births by non-insured women, free medical care, free vaccinations and paediatric medical examinations in collaboration with the Red Cross, free physiotherapy, logotherapy in cooperation with relevant organizations, free in-home care provided by students of the National School of Public Health and Nursery (Arxiepiskopi Athinon. KESO).

This long list full of variations shows that during the last years, the Holy Archdiocese of Athens has offered diaconia activities of all the eight classes described in the introduction.

Holy Archdiocese of Crete

The southern archdiocese, the Archdiocese of Crete, is a smaller archdiocese with eight (8) metropolises (dioceses). The Head is the Archbishop of Crete, Irineos. Although much smaller in comparison to the Metropolis of Athens, the Archdiocese of Crete offers a variety of diaconia activities, not only internal but also external. The inward activities of the Archdiocese of Crete include NGOs and the sectors charity fund, health care, nutrition, clothing, education, accommodation, and legal advice and are all supported by volunteers.

The NGO of the Archdiocese of Crete is *Filoxenia* (Iera Arxiepiskopi Kritis. Filoxenia). It aims to enhance and promote the community service and

other work of the Church of Crete in charity activities. This NGO belongs to the Archdiocese, the eight Holy dioceses of the Church of Crete, the Ecclesiastical Academy, and the Orthodox Academy of Crete. The activities of *Filoxenia* extend both in Greece and abroad. In the other sectors of Diaconia, the Archdiocese has organized and runs the charity fund called *The Cash Desk of God's Love*, founded in December 2011. It aims to support people who are financially in need (Iera Arxhiepiškopi Kritis. The Cash Desk of God's Love).

Another charity fund is *Diaconia of Love*, which aims to offer daily free clothing, food, shoes, household utensils, etc., to the destitute (Iera Arxiepiškopi Kritis. Diakonia agapis). *Diaconia of Love*, has organized a Job Office where those wishing to offer work declare it and can do jobs like, e.g., olive picking, wall painting and patient care. There is also a volunteer group for the production and sale of Cretan traditional products (e.g., olive oil soap, woven fabrics, embroidery, handmade creations), and the income from the sales is used to reinforce the goals of the *Diaconia of Love*. A sewing lab where people are taught free of charge hand embroidery, sewing machine embroidery, sewing (for example, patterns), weaving, knitting (for example lace, and needles), kopanelli and other handmade products. In the sector of health, there is care for lonesome people and the poor (Iera Arxiepiškopi Kritis. Monada monahikon & emperistaton adelfon).

The Archdiocese of Crete does not have as many different diaconia activities as the Archdiocese of Athens, but the presented activities still overlap seven of the eight diaconia activities showed above. It is only the work with homelessness that seems not to be as fully developed as above, which makes sense as such phenomena are much more extensive in big cities such as the capital of Greece, Athens.

Holy Metropolis Thessalonikis

The Metropolis Thessalonikis belongs, spiritually, to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and, ecclesiastically, to the Church of Greece. It has its seat in Thessaloniki, and its ecclesiastical district is the entire central part of the city. The Head is the Metropolitan Anthimos Roussas.

The diocese has seven of the classes of charitable activity described above. There is a charity work organization, *The Diaconia Project*, which serves to face the suffering from the economic crisis, which works in the following sec-

tors: funding, nutrition, health care, accommodation, education, and clothing (Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Filantrhopiko ergo; Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Syssitia; Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Rouxismos).

Worthy of mention is the providing of free meals offered daily by seventeen (17) parish churches to the destitute Greeks and refugees without discriminations and with Christian dignity. This kind of activity seems to be one of the significant efforts to fight the consequences of the crisis. Regarding accommodation, worth mentioning is an orphanage, an elder nursing house as well as some tens of possibilities for students. In the sector of Health Care, a supported Social Medical Centre, *Agii Anargyri*, exists for free service from doctors as well as regular organization blood banks (Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Blood donation).

Finally, the diocese has organized two clothing centres, where there are clothes and shoes offered free to the destitute. With this activity, the Metropolis Thessalonikis completes its list of diaconia activities with up to seven of the eight mentioned above. Only activities with legal advice seem to be less present.

Holy Metropolis Neapoleos and Stavroupoleos

The Metropolis of Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos encompasses the western part of Thessaloniki, with its seat in Neapolis. The Head is the Metropolitan, Varnavas. In the area of the diocese lives a great number of low-income Greeks, refugees, and Roma. The diaconia work of the diocese is of great variety and includes the sectors charity fund, health care, nutrition, clothing, accommodation, and education (Iera Mitropolis Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos. Filantrhopiko ergo). The metropolis has established a central charity fund, which supervises the diaconia of all the above sectors.

In this metropolis, we can present statistical data of the total number of people offered free meals in the diocese. The number of people getting food in December of each year is presented in Table 1. We can see the rapid growth in 2011–2012.

Also, the nutrition sector provides daily free breakfast for 200 primary school pupils. Additionally, a Social Grocery Store, *Love*, offers twice a month free food and household items to the destitute who cannot benefit from the free meals and food tables.

Year	Number of people
December 2010	1,387
December 2011	2,445
December 2012	5,284
December 2013	6,573
December 2014	7,483
December 2015	7,556
December 2016	7,954
December 2017	8,109

Table 1: People getting food during the last month of years 2010 to 2017 in the Metropolis of Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos.

As in many other metropolises, there is a clothing bank, *the Sleeve* (since December 2011) and a Social Medical Centre with a Social Pharmacy (since October 2013). More unique is that the diocese provides accommodation for the patients of the hospital and their relatives in two Guest Houses (Iera Mitropolis Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos. Xenones).

The diocese takes special care of the sector of education and runs the project *Study* support lessons, where primary and secondary school students are offered free lessons to help them in courses where they face difficulties. Also a particular centre exists, *The Lighthouse of the World*, which aims to protect the underaged (O Faros tou kosmou). The actions are overseen by the Center for the Protection of Underage Roma and include a great variety of activities. During summer holidays there are some educational summer camps for children: (O Faros tou kosmou. Mia fora kienankairo; O Faros tou Kosmou. Dorean kataskinosi; O Faros tou kosmou. Eduact & Robotics camp). Furthermore, a specialized sector concerns the collaboration with the Prosecutor of Thessaloniki to execute alternative punishments for juveniles who have violated behaviour rules or laws and the assignment of temporary custody for the underaged.

The long list of different activities in the Metropolis of Neapoleos and Stavroupoleos shows significant variations of diaconia activities. Compared

with the list presented above, we can notice that only two of the presented eight seem to be less critical. Those are legal advice and providing residence.

Holy Metropolis Demetriados and Almyrou

The Metropolis Demetriados and Almyrou has its seat in Volos and the Head is the Metropolitite, Ignatios Georgakopoulos. The charity work offered by the diocese includes a great variety of services and extends into the sectors of health care, accommodation, and nutrition.

A unique role is filled by the Association for the Support of the Prisoners' in Volos, *The Crucifix*. Its members visit any person who is in need and provide material and psychological support, e.g., they visited the hot spot of the refugees and immigrants (MOZA) and distributed clothing, diapers for babies and toys for the children, or donated medical material to the Health Centre of Zagora (Pilion) (Iera Mitropolis Demetriados & Almyrou. Fylakes).

In the sector of Health Care, the Archdiocese supports the care of patients in *Achillopouleio* hospital in Volos (Iera Mitropolis Demetriados & Almyrou. Diakonia Asthenon) and has also established a special First Aid Social Station, *Diakonia* (Iera Mitropolis Demetriados & Almyrou. Fagito; Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Stathmos Koinonikon Boitheion). There is also a blood donation bank and a *Social drugstore*, which offers free medicine to vulnerable social groups and recycles the expired medicines (Iera Mitropolis Demetriados & Almyrou. Koinoniko farmakeio).

Worthy of mention as a speciality is also the free breakfast for elementary school pupils. There, volunteer women cook meals that are offered free to destitute people in 29 parish churches. That kind of activity is also organized (Iera Mitropolis Demetriados & Almyrou. Vrefonipiakos_stathmos).

The Metropolis Demetriados and Almyrou has somewhat own profile in its diaconia activities. We could see health care, nutrition, accommodation as well as providing residence, but less about charity funds, clothing, education, and legal advice.

Holy Metropolis Mantineias and Kynourias

The Metropolis Mantineias and Kynourias has its seat in Tripoli in Peloponnese and includes the areas of central Peloponnese. The Head is the Met-

ropolitane, Alexandros Papadopoulos. The sectors in which the diocese offers diaconia are the charity fund, accommodation, health, food, clothing, and education (Iera Mitropolis Mantineias & Kynourias. Filanthropiki Diakonia).

The diocese has a very active accommodation sector taking special care of elderly sick people. There are two elder nursing homes, *Dekazeion* Church Nursing Home for older people and *Condorroupeion* Church Elderly Home in Leonidio. Furthermore, the Foundation for blind women, Aghia Paraskevi, in Tripoli, cares for and cures blind women from all over Greece. Further, a combination of Health Care and Accommodation for sick elderly people is provided in two foundations: *Osios David the Elder* for chronic illnesses, and the *St Leonidas* foundation for chronic patients and older persons. Additionally, the diocese has established a Nursery Station, which aims to help new families in raising their children.

The diocese takes a particular interest in supporting university students financially. Therefore, in the sector of Education, the diocese offers each year four financial excellence awards to students who were distinguished at the Panhellenic University Entrance Examinations at the University of Peloponnese. Also other scholarships and awards exist there (Iera Mitropolis Mantineias & Kynourias. Filanthropiki Diakonia).

The Metropolis Mantineias and Kynourias presents the most typical diaconia activities, and as Metropolis of Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos, it is less present in the areas of providing residence and legal advice. Six of the eight characters of diaconia activities could be found here.

Holy Metropolis Syrou

The Metropolis Syrou has its seat in Ermoupolis, the capital of Syros Island, and includes the islands of Kyclades. The Head is the Metropolitan, Dorotheos Polykandriotis. It offers a variety of diaconia activities, which include the sectors charity fund, accommodation, and health care.

This diocese presents some of the charity working models shown earlier. The existing charity fund (Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Eranos Agapis & Filathel-feias), and residence for both the elderly and students (Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Oikos Eygirias Agiou Ioanni Talanton; Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Foititiki Estia). A combination of accommodation and health care is provided in *The Traveler's House* hostel. It aims to host the escorts of patients coming to the

hospital from the Cycladic islands. It also hosts students during educational excursions, doctors, and nurses during their training, pupils with specific learning problems, children from sports teams that come to Ermoupolis from the Cycladic islands (Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Xenonas Filoxenias).

The Metropolis Syrou has not such a long and versatile palette of diaconia activities, as many of the above presented. Our analysis shows only charity fund, health care, and accommodation as the central form, and activities on areas of nutrition, clothing, education, providing residence, and legal advice are less present.

Holy Metropolis Kitrous, Katerinis and Platamonos

The metropolis has its seat in the city of Katerini, near Mt Olympus. The Head is the Metropolitan, Georgios Chrysostomou. The diocese offers many diaconia activities, which include charity fund, nutrition, accommodation, clothing, health care, and education. (Iera Mitropolis Kitrous kai Pierias).

One characteristic specialty of the area is in the nutrition sector. The diocese has organized *The Daily Bread*, where meals are cooked and distributed to the parishes. About 300 meals are offered daily to destitute people in need. Every morning, breakfast is provided to primary school pupils in the city of Katerini. Furthermore, *The Feeder* Social Grocery store covers the basic food needs of 500 poor, low-income families, and solitary older people in the area of Pieria.

Additionally, clothing and shoes are provided to families and individuals who live in poverty. Accommodation for older women is provided there as well. Some extra charity is also meant specifically for children and youngsters, especially those coming from countries in a state of war. the diocese has established a social teaching centre where teachers offer free lessons to primary and secondary school pupils, as well as special preparation lessons for the Panhellenic University Entrance Examinations (YouTube channel: Iera Mitropolis Kitrous kai Pierias. Filanthropiko ergo).

The Metropolis Kitrous, Katerinis and Platamonos presents the most typical diaconia activities, and it is less present in the areas of providing residence and legal advice. Six of the eight characters of diaconia activities could be found here.

Holy Metropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias, and Northern Sporadon

This metropolis includes the islands of Evia and the northern Sporades and has its seat in Chalkida, the capital of Evia island. The Head is the Metropolitan, Chrysostomos Triantafyllou. The diocese has a variety of diaconia activities, which includes the sectors of a charity fund, health care, nutrition and clothing, education, and accommodation. Worthy of special mention is the existence of two charity funds aiming to provide any kind of support and relief to the destitute and suffering people: the Philanthropic Charity Fund (Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Geniko filoptoho tameio) and the Parish Charity Fund, working in every parish of the diocese (30 in total) (Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Enoriaka filoptoha tameia).

These offer meals, foods, clothing, social health care, and summer camps (Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Syssitia; Iera Metropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Rouha & Trofima; Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Ygeia; Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Kataskinosi). More unique is the two working areas: the Centre for Drug Prevention and Counselling, which collaborates with OKANA (Centre for Those Addicted to Drugs) and other public organizations (Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. OKANA), and a special working form for the diocese, a school for learning the Greek language. The lessons are free for any interested person (Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Sholeio ellinikis glossas).

The Metropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias, and Northern Sporadon follows the model of the Dioceses Kitrous, Katerinis and Platamonos and two others presented above. It is less present in the sectors of providing residence and legal advice. Six of the eight characters of diaconia activities could be found here.

The diaconal role of the Church

The short overview of the diaconia activities taken by the webpages of the metropolis of the OC during the years of the economic crisis shows an interesting phenomenon. The Church has been active, especially in areas that traditionally have been understood as typical for the state. We summarize our analysis of diaconia activities in diverse dioceses in Table 2.

Archdiocese or Metropolis	Character of activity							
	Charity Fund	Health Care	Nutrition	Clothing	Education	Accommodation	Residence (Homeless/orphan)	Legal advice
1 Archdiocese of Athens	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2 Archdiocese of Crete	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
3 Metropolis Thessalonikis	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
4 Metropolis Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos	x	x	x	x	x	x		
5 Metropolis Demetriados		x	x			x	x	
6 Metropolis Mantineias and Kynourias	x	x	x	x	x	x		
7 Metropolis Syrou	x	x				x		
8 Metropolis Kitrous, Katerinis and Platamonos	x	x	x	x	x	x		
9 Metropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias, and Northern Sporadon	x	x	x	x	x	x		

Table 2: The diaconia activities of the dioceses in the Orthodox Church of Greece during the years of economic crisis.

In Table 2, we can see two phenomena. Firstly it characterizes the activities of the Church, and secondly, in these very activities, we can see something about the way in which the OC has understood its role in Greek society during the years of economic crisis.

The OC activities are many and multifold. We do not have statistical material about the quantities in many areas, but we can note that the church seems to go at least to some point beyond the limits of parish charity work, which traditionally has been understood as diaconia activity (Barnett, 1995; Malkavaara, 2015; Noller, 2016). The Church is now covering many areas, which traditionally have been understood as the responsibility of the Greek State's social welfare services. The information on the social work of an indicative number of metropolises shows evidently that their diaconia activities are multidimensional and multilevel, aiming to support or cover the needs of the people living in Greece – both Greeks and immigrants. This can be seen, especially, in the noteworthy fact that the main sectors of the diaconia activities are those serving basic human needs like nutrition, health care, clothing, accommodation, and education.

All the metropolises we presented in this article focus on the free daily meals (*sysstitia*), to prevent people from starving. They have organized kitchens where volunteers cook and serve meals to the hungry. Other metropolises prepared food packages and delivered them to the homes of low-income families or disabled people. Additionally, some have opened “social supermarkets” with free food for those who cannot come to the *sysstitia* for various reasons. Special care is taken in the sectors of clothing and health care, which also cover basic living needs. Most of the metropolises opened a “social clothing store” where the poor can take the clothes they need for free.

In the described areas, the role of the Church has expanded. Moreover, a somewhat similar effect can be seen in one more development. The metropolitans give an essential diaconia activity the highest priority and attention because it relates to the health conditions of the people in a society. Here we refer to the “social medical centres” organized by the metropolises. There doctors and nurses examine the sick poor people for free and provide them with the medicine they need, as they cannot afford to pay for them. Pharmacists and other people collect medicine.

On the whole, as it can be noticed from the diaconia activities of the metropolis, the overall social work of the OC responded as well as possible to the needs that emerged in Greek society during the years of the economic crisis, which affected mainly the majority of the urban population. It covers a wide range of activities and addresses all vulnerable groups of the people, including the immigrants. The main topic is in the needs of the people, and the OC is organizing its activities based on the requirements in society.

A hypothetical conclusion

The outcomes described above led to an interesting, even though hypothetical result about the role of the Church in Greek society. We do not have many exact statistical facts nor literature to help verify our conclusion. We have only more or less vague formulations, mostly on internet pages, which we know do not necessarily describe all of the activities that occurred in the dioceses. But we have knowledge of the self-understanding of the Orthodox Church before the economic crisis, and we have glaring examples of activities done in the Church. In comparison with the common knowledge about the character of the diaconal activities of churches, this gives us enough reason to formulate the following hypothesis.

In light of the material described above, the role of the Orthodox Church in Greece seems to be changing during and because of the economic crisis. As society now works, the OC has a vital role in helping people in the very practical questions of everyday life. As far as we can verify it, this seems to be the new role the Church has chosen to take in society. The old nation-based Church has become society-based. The change in the role of the OC has taken place during the years of the economic crisis and focuses more on answering to the needs of the people.

In the language of the Church, the role of OC can be seen as following the words of Christ in Matthew 25:35: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was stranger and you welcomed me”. In this way, the Orthodox Church in Greece tries to prove in practice that Christian love and diaconia is not an abstract theory, but practical solidarity and empathy towards all people regardless of gender, age, nationality, and religion, as taught by St Paul. And in today’s Greece, this means an active society-based role of the OC.

We hope that this brief and small-scale offering of information can be the initiative for two things: Firstly, both for Greece but also for other countries to examine their diaconia activities and contribute to the international discussion of diaconia in Christianity. And secondly, to a more in-depth analysis of the role of the Orthodox Church in Greece.

Internet sources

Holy Archdiocese of Athens

- Apostoli. <http://mkoapostoli.com/> – Retrieved 2.2.2020
- Apostoli. Our vision. <http://mkoapostoli.com/en/identity/our-vision/> – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Apostoli. The Church at home. <http://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/the-church-at-home/> – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Apostoli. The Church on the road. <http://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/the-church-on-the-road/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Apostoli. Apostoli supports students. <http://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/apostoli-supports-students/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Apostoli. Apostoli to the Homeless. <http://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/apostoli-to-the-homeless/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020
- Apostoli Successfully continues (2018). Apostoli successfully continues its project on non-formal educational for young refugees and migrants. <https://www.eurodiaconia.org/nl/2018/07/apostoli-successfully-continues-its-project-on-non-formal-education-for-young-refugees-and-migrants/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. <http://iaath.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. <http://iaath.gr/idrymata/geniko-filoptocho-tameio>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Ananosi-simfonias-gft-oece. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/all-news/82-ananosi-simfonias-gft-oece> – Retrieved 7.3.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Programma Kinitis Monadas Protobathmias Ygeias 2018. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/all-news/76-programm-mobile-unit-health-2018-news-gft>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Blood Donation. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/29-blood-donation/12-aimodosia>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Agiasmos-imatio. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/all-news/71-agiasmos-imatio-protosyggelos-filoptocho-tameiou>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Social services. <http://filoptocho.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Social Dentistry. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/all-news/36-social-dental-cat/50-social-dental>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Social Pharmacy. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/all-news/27-farmakeio-cat/27-social-pharmacy>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Geniko filoptocho tameio. Station-babies. <http://filoptocho.gr/index.php/31-babies-home/16-station-babies>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. Centre of education, culture and voluntarism Agia Filothei. <http://iaath.gr/idrymata/kentro-paideias-politismoy-kai-ethelontismoy-iaath-filothei>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Athinon. KESO. <http://www.kesoiaa.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Archdiocese of Crete

- Iera Archiepiskopi Kritis. <http://iak.gr/gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Kritis. Filoxenia. <http://mkofiloxenia.iak.gr>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Kritis. The Cash Desk of God's Love <http://www.iak.gr/gr/arxiepiskopi/1410865929/index.html>. – Retrieved 7.3.2020.
- Iera Archiepiskopi Kritis. Diakonia agapis. <http://iak.gr/gr/arxiepiskopi/1410865212/index.html>. – Retrieved 2.02.2020.

Iera Archiepiskopi Kritis. Monada Monaxikon kai emperistaton adelfon. <http://iak.gr/gr/arxiepiskopi/1304947557/index.html>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Demetriados and Almyrou

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. <https://imd.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Fylakes. <http://old.imd.gr/page/top/fylakes>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Diakonia asthenon. http://old.imd.gr/articles/top/diakonia_asthenon/100. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Fagito. http://old.imd.gr/page/top/dorean_fagito. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Stathmos Koinonikon Boitheion. http://old.imd.gr/articles/top/stathmos_koinonikon_voithion/488. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Koinoniko farmakeio. http://old.imd.gr/page/top/keiononiko_farmakeio. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropoli Dimitriados & Almyrou. Vrefonipiakos stathmos. http://old.imd.gr/articles/top/vrefonipiakos_stathmos/297. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias, and Northern Sporadon

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Geniko filoptoho tameio. <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=48>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Enoriaka filoptoha tameia <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=49>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Syssitia [\[idos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=50\]\(http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=50\). – Retrieved 2.2.2020.](http://www.imchal-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Rouha & trofima <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=51> – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Ygeia. <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=52> – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. OKANA <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=46>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Kataskinosi. <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=40>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Chalkidos, Istiaias & Voreion Sporadon. Sholeio ellikis glossas <http://www.imchalkidos.gr/Site/ePageUser/PageUser.asp?Lang=0&Rec=45>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Kitrous, Katerinis and Platamonos

Iera Mitropolis Kitrous kai Pierias. <https://el-gr.facebook.com/MitropoliKitrous/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Kitrous kai Pierias. Filanthropiko ergo. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfp1_8Vty3Y0SGT1tw9n-NDQ. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Mantineias and Kynourias

Iera Mitropolis Mantineias & Kynourias. <https://immk.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Mantineias & Kynourias. Filanthropiki Diakonia. <https://immk.gr/2018/06/19/φιλανθρωπική-διακονία/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Neapoleos and Stavroupoleos

Iera Mitropolis Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos. <http://www.imnst.gr/wp/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos. Filanthropiko ergo. <http://www.imnst.gr/wp/φιλανθρωπικό-έργο/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Neapoleos & Stavroupoleos. Xenones. <http://www.imnst.gr/wp/φιλανθρωπικό-έργο/ξενωνας-το-σπιτιτων-αγγελων/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

O faros tou kosmou. <http://www.farostoukosmou.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

O faros tou kosmou. Mia fora kienankairo. <http://miaforacamp.gr> – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

O faros tou kosmou. Dorean kataskinosi. <http://skourascamp.com/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

O faros tou kosmou. Eduact & Robotics camp. <http://eduact.org/el/camp/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Syrou

Iera Mitropolis Syrou. <http://www.imsyrou.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Eranos Agapis & Filathelfeias. http://www.imsyrou.gr/images/stories/Anakoinoiseis_Scroll/26072018_1.pdf. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Oikos Eygirias Agiou Ioanni Talanton. [tent&view=article&cid=173&Itemid=715. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.](http://www.imsyrou.gr/index.php?option=com_con-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Foititiki Estia. <http://www.foititikiestia-imsyrou.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Syrou. Xenones Filoxenias http://www.imsyrou.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&cid=174&Itemid=733. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Holy Metropolis Thessalonikis

Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. <http://www.imth.gr/>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Filanthropiko ergo. <http://www.imth.gr/default.aspx?lang=el-GR&loc=1&page=345>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Sysistia. <http://www.imth.gr/default.aspx?lang=el-GR&loc=1&page=226>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Rouxismos. <http://www.imth.gr/default.aspx?lang=el-GR&loc=1&page=227>. – Retrieved 2.02.2020.

Iera Mitropolis Thessalonikis. Blood Donation. <http://www.imth.gr/default.aspx?lang=el-GR&loc=1&page=315>. – Retrieved 2.02.2020.

References

Alexakis, M. (2012). Pagosmia oikonomiki krisi kai Ellada: eukairia gia mia nea metapoliteusi? In 3rd Synedrio EKE – proceedings. *Elliniki Koinonia 1975–2010*, M. Antonopoulou & S. Koniordos (eds). pp. 21–30. http://www.hellenicsociology.gr/sites/default/files/eke_praktika_2011.pdf. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.

Archbishop Ieronymos II (6 February 2009). Interview. *To Vima*. pp. A10 & A12.

Barnett, J. M. (1995). *The Diaconate*. A Full and Equal Order. Revised Edition. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International.

Beyer, H.W. (1964). διακονέω, διακονία,

διάκονος. In Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Volume II. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. pp. 81–93.

Boyer, R. (2012). The Four Fallacies of Contemporary Austerity Policies: The Lost Keynesian Legacy. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Vol. 36, pp. 283–312. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/ber037>

Drettakis, M. (2011). Oi dimosionomikes diastaseis tis krisis stin Ellada. In A. Vlachos, N. Theocharakis and D. Mulonakis, (eds) *Oikonomiki Krisi and Ellada*. pp. 143–164.

- Athens: Gutenberg.
- Ecclesia (2020), <http://www.ecclesia.gr/English/EnDioceses/EnDioceses.asp>, – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- European Commission (2009). *Economic Crisis in Europe: Causes, Consequences, and Responses*. Luxembourg: European Communities.
- Georgiadou, V. & Nikolakopoulos, H. (2000). Ho lais tis ekklesias [The people of Church. Views of the ecclesiastic religiosity in Greece.] *Hē koinē gnōmē stēn Hellada* [The public opinion in Greece]. Athens: Institute VPRC. 141–185.
- Giannitsis, T. & Zografakis, St. (2015). *Greece: Solidarity and adjustment in times of crisis*. Macroeconomic Policy Institute, March 2015/38.
- Giataganas, X. (2011). Ta triantachronia tis Elladas tin Europaiiki Enosi. *Diethnis kai Europaiiki Politiki* 21–22, pp. 105–112.
- Gropa, R., Kouki C. & Triandafyllidou A. (2013). *Elliniki krisi kai Europaiiki neoterikotita*. Athens: Kritiki.
- Hodson, D. (2011). *Governing the Euro Area in Good Times and Bad*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199572502.001.0001>
- Hoffman, J. B. (1974). Lemma: diakonos, diakoneo. (transl. Ant. Papanikolaou). *Etymologikon Lexikon tis Arxaias Ellinikis*. Athens: Papadimas.
- Katsikas, D. X., Filinis, K. & Anastasatou, M. (2017). *Katanavntas tin Elliniki Krisi*. Apantisis se Kairia Erotimata gia to Kratos, tin Oikonomia kai tin Europi. Athens: Papazisi.
- Katsikas, D., Karakitsios, A., Filinis, K., Petralias, A. (2014). Ekthesi gia to koinoniko profil tis Elladas se sxesi me ti ftocheia, ton koinoniko apokleismo kai tin anisotita prin kai meta tin ekdiloso tis krisis. Athens: ELIAMEP. www.crisisobs.gr. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Koniordos, S. ed. (2016). *I elliniki koinonia sto staurodromi tiw krisis*. Athens: EKE. http://www.hellenicsociology.gr/sites/default/files/praktika_5ou_sunedriou_me_isbn.pdf. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Kouzis, G. (2015), I ergasia sto apospasma kata tin periodo tis Krisis kai ton Mnimonion. *Koinoniki Politiki*, vol. 3, pp. 7–18.
- Krugman, P. (2009). *The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008*. N. York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Kyriakoulis, P. (2012). *Oi ergasiakes Sxeseis meta to Mnimonio*. Panorama tis metarrithmisis tis ergatikis nomothesias, 2010–2012. Athens: EIEAD.
- Malkavaara, M. (2015). *Diakonia ja diakonivirka*. Suomen ev.-lut. kirkon julkaisu ja 26. Kirkko ja toiminta. Kirkkohallitus, Helsinki.
- Matsaganis, M. & Leventi, C. (2014). Poverty and Inequality during the Great Recession in Greece. *Political Studies Review*, 12, pp. 209–223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1478-9302.12050>
- Mouriki, A. et al. (2012). *To koinoniko portreto tis Elladas 2012– Opseis tis krisis*. Athens: EKKE (National Centre for Social Research).
- Mpalourdos, D. & Spyropoulou, N. (2012). Portreta tis ftocheias stin Ellada tis krisis. *To Koinoniko Portreto tis Elladas – 2012: Opseis tis krisis*, pp. 161–183. Athens: EKKE (National Centre for Social Research).
- Mpampiniotis, G. (2005) *Lexikon tis neasEllinikis Glossas*. Limma: diakonia (2nd ed.) Athens: Kentro Lexikologias E.P.E.
- Mpoutsiou, St. & Sarafis, P. (2013). Southern European model welfare state and economic crisis. *Interscientific Health Care* Vol 5, Issue 4, pp. 147–161.
- Nikiforou M., Papadimitriou D. B. & Zezza G. (2015). To provlima tou ellhnikou dimosiou xreous [The Greek Public Debt Problem]. *Policy note* [Levy Economics Institute of Bard College], 2/2015. http://www.levyinstitute.org/publications/index_gr.php?docid=2219. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Noller, A. (2016). *Diakonat und Kirchenreform*. Empirische, historische und ekklesiologische Dimensionen einer diakonischen Kirche. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Oulis, D., Makris, G. & Roussos, S. (2010).

- The Orthodox Church of Greece: Policies and Challenges under Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens (1998–2008). *The International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 10, no. 2–3: 192–210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1474225X.2010.490123>
- Papadopoulou, Th. (2016). *Poioi kai pos mas odigisan stin xreokopia*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Papakonstantinou, G. (2016). *Game Over: The Inside Story of the Greek Crisis*. New York: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform.
- Pappas, T. (2014). *Populism and Crisis Politics in Greece*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137410580>
- Pettifer, J. (2015). *The Making of the Greek Crisis*. New York: Penguin.
- Robolis, S. (2013). *Oikonomiki Krisi kai Koinoniko Kratos*. Athens: Epikentro.
- Stathopoulou, Th. (2007). Thriskeutikotita kai empistosini stous thesmous. Diafenomenes taseis stin Ellada kai tin Europi. *Politiki kai Thriskeies*, K. Zorbas (ed.) pp. 161–186. Athens: Papazisi.
- Stavrakakis, Y. (2003). Politics and Religion: On the “Politicization” of Greek Church Discourse. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 21, pp. 153–181. <https://doi.org/10.1353/mgs.2003.0019>
- Unicef (2016). *I katastasi ton paidion stin Ellada 2016*. Paidia se kinduno. Athens: UNICEF. – <https://thediplomat.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/children-in-greece-2016.pdf>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- United Nations High Commissioner. <http://www.kathimerini.gr/970533/article/epi-kairothra/ellada/yopath-armosteia-toyohe-58000-oi-prosfyges-sthn-ellada>. – Retrieved 2.2.2020.
- Velentza, E. (2016). To koinoniko profil tis Elladas se kairous yfesis: Oi sunthikesdiabiosisstinEllada mesa apo tin polidiastatiennoia tis poioutitaszois”. *I elliniki koinonia sto staurodromi tis krisis – exichronia meta*. S. Koniordos (ed.). pp. 69–82. Athens: EKE.
- Zambarloukou, S. & Kousi M. (2014). *Koinonikes opseis tis Krisis stin Ellada*. Athens: Pedio.

Authors

Vasiliki Mitropoulou

Dr., Associate professor

School of Theology, Aristotle University Thessaloniki, Greece

mitro@theo.auth.gr

Niki Papageorgiou

Dr., Professor

School of Theology, Aristotle University Thessaloniki, Greece

nipap@theo.auth.gr

Esko Ryökäs

Dr., University lecturer

School of Theology, University of Eastern Finland

esko.ryokas@uef.fi