



# Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

January 2011 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

**Our best wishes for a happy & healthy 2011. May your tables be filled with Greek delicacies. May you be surrounded by loving family and friends. May peace reign throughout the world. May no mother's son or daughter die in senseless battle. May you all be given the strength to continue with your works of good deeds. May you all do something every day of your life to make the world a better place, even if it is for only one person.**

**Photo of Rimonim  
Kehila Kedosha Janina  
Photo by Vincent Giordano  
Of Blessed Memory**



We apologize in advance for the length of this newsletter. Some months there is an overabundance of news. December was one of those months.

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This newsletter, our 36<sup>th</sup> will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedosha Janina and news concerning Greek Jewry. We hope you find our newsletter interesting. Your feedback is of utmost importance to us. If you missed previous issues, they can be accessed on our website ([www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)).

We now reach over 5000 households worldwide, with our community of 'friends' continually growing with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net).

As always, you are all invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up ([papusoup@mindspring.com](mailto:papusoup@mindspring.com)) so we are sure that our Kiddush (traditional Greek Jewish Kosher foods) is sufficient. If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush for a special occasion or an Adara, contact Sol.

**This month we lost too many.**

**Jean Matza Rosenzweig (wife of Sol Rosenzweig) passed away on November 26, 2010 at the age of 96. Jean is the daughter of Joseph Matza and Ida Menachem Matza, from Ioannina and sister Lillian Matza Novison. Jean was born in New York City, lived in Brighton Beach with her parents and family, spoke Greek fluently, and was very proud of her Greek heritage that she conveyed culturally and traditionally to her daughter, Marsha Rosenzweig Artel, her son-in-law Joe Artel, her son, Ronald Rosenzweig and her five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.**

**We mourn the losses of two survivors of the Holocaust in Greece, Erika Kounio Amariglio from Salonika and Benny Elias (originally from Kastoria). Additional information will follow in this newsletter.**

**Finally, Vincent Giordano, a man who loved the Romaniote community in New York and in Greece, passed away at the age of 58. Additional information will follow in this newsletter.**



**Joseph and Serena Negrin Family**



**Negrin Family 1940s**

**We are overjoyed to announce the Bar Mitzvah of Samuel Garrett Matsil, the son of Adam and Kimberly Matsil, the grandson of Bob and Sydel (Del) Matsil and the great-grandson of Isaac and Anna Matsil and Abraham and Sophie Malta (one of the founders of the KKJ). The Bar Mitzvah will take place in Overland Park, Kansas. Mazal Tov!**



**Sam Matsil**



**Bob, Eli and Alvin Matsil October 1955**

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**We mourn the passing of Benny Elias, born in Kastoria and deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau with his family in 1944. Benny and his sister Lena Russo were among the 35 Jews from Kastoria to survive. Benny lost most of his family and did not come to the United States until the 1950s. He became a successful businessman and was always a generous supporter of causes having to do with Sephardic Jewry. He will be missed.**

**From the website of the Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece:**

***"On the night of March 24, 1944, the Jewish population of the city was arrested and detained in the Girls' High School of Kastoria. Three days later, 763 people, and a small number of Yugoslavian Jews who had found refuge in Kastoria were transported to Thessaloniki on vans and then to Poland, never to come back again.***

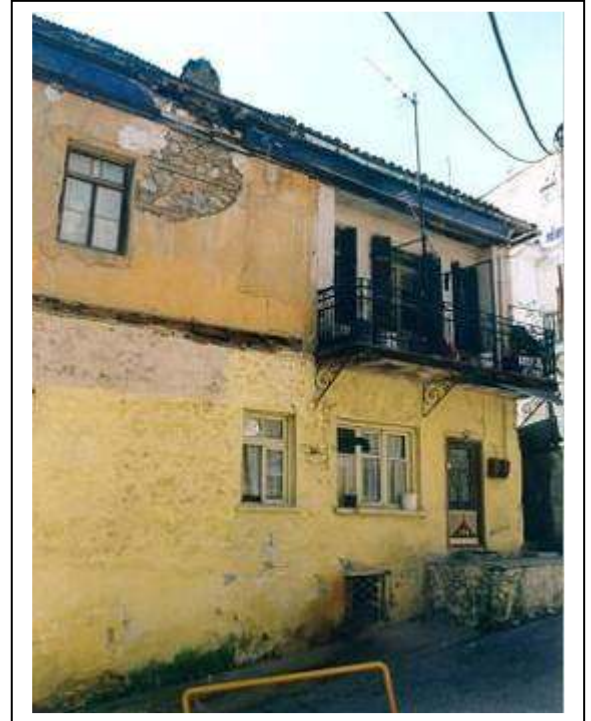
***The Synagogue was demolished in 1948 and so was the school a few years later. The community's cemetery, by Doblitsa fountain, no longer exists. Today only one Jewish family lives in the city.***

***A little over fifty years later no one seems to remember, or, even worse, no one seems to know that a large Jewish community lived in this place for one thousand years.***

***The Memorial of the Jewish Martyrs of Kastoria, victims of the Holocaust, stands on a panoramic spot, with a lovely view of the lake."***



**Holocaust Memorial in Kastoria**



**Former Jewish home in Kastoria**

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The passing of Erika Kounio Amariglio was a painful loss for the writer of this newsletter (Marcia Haddad Ikononopoulos). Erika, the older sister of Heinz Kounio (author of a Liter of Soup & Sixty Grams of Bread) was herself the author of "From Thessaloniki to Auschwitz and Back," to date the only memoir of a female survivor from Greece to be translated into English. Erika was a dear woman, a gracious hostess, and a treasured friend. She worked hard to assure that the story of the losses of Greek Jews would be told to a larger audience. Our condolences to her husband Rolly and her children. She will be truly missed.



**Kounio family in Salonika pre-WWII**



**Jews on way to Baron Hirsch ghetto 1943**

## The Passing of Vincent Giordano

**It was with great sorrow that we lost a dear friend, Vincent Giordano. Vincent put up a valiant battle but, unfortunately, succumbed to cancer at the age of 58. Sam Gruber from the ISJM summed it up best on his blog:**

### **Vincent Giordano (1952-2010)**

**by Samuel D. Gruber**

**Photographer and filmmaker Vincent Giordano died on December 11, 2010. Vincent was an accomplished photographer with an artist's eye, and a mastery of craft (especially visible in his beautifully handmade palladium prints) and the sensibility of a trained ethnographer. He was a man of warmth, humor, and modesty, but also of talent, ambition and tenacity. These were all qualities he maintained, even when in great pain, until his very last hour.**

**In recent years Vincent brought these talents together in an intensive investigation of the small community of Romaniote Jews in New York, centered on the synagogue of Kehila Kedosha Janina synagogue on New York's Lower East Side. Since 2002, soon after he began work in his documentary project *Before the Flame Goes Out*, he has been a friend and unexpected colleague. What began by my writing a simple cover letter for a grant became a continuing collaboration, with the International Survey of Jewish Monuments serving as a sponsor for Vincent's work.**

**Over a period of about six years Vincent created a remarkable series of photos of the building, and many of the people who still call it their religious and cultural home and related community events. What began as a documentation of the synagogue building and its liturgical and historical artifacts evolved into a deeper and more meaningful investigation including photos, film and audio. Vincent found that it was not enough to look at a building without knowing the things inside or to know the objects without understanding their history and use. He believed that knowledge can only come through knowing the people who made these things, and who continue to use and cherish them today. Similarly, he felt he could not see full picture of this Romaniote community without its other half: the community of Ioannina, or what survives of it in post-Holocaust Greece. So the project which at first was quite modest kept growing. And in this process I was always impressed with Vincent's adaptability, organization skills, diplomacy, patience, tenacity and overriding belief in the integrity and meaning of the task.**

**Vincent forged excellent ties with the Romaniote community. His photos, which often involved long set up times and exposures, drew many of the synagogue community into his work so that many aspects of *Before the Flame Goes Out* were collaborative efforts with the community itself. His patience was often rewarded by the stories told by those watching, many of who subsequently became portrait subjects, and he often donated prints of his work to these new friends and the community. Photography developed into oral history that became an important part of the work. Vincent also reached out to historians and other specialists (such as myself) to expand and refine his knowledge of his subject, so that photography and oral history now link with more traditional lines of historical inquiry. For his work on *Before the Flames Goes Out* Vincent received grants from the Memorial Foundation of Jewish Culture and he was a Fullbright Scholar in Greece in 2007. His talent was recognized by many generous donors who supported *Before the Flame Goes Out*. These included The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation, The Lucius and Eva Eastman Fund, The Cahnman Foundation, The Rothschild Foundation, and The David and Goldie Blanksteen Fund. . . .**

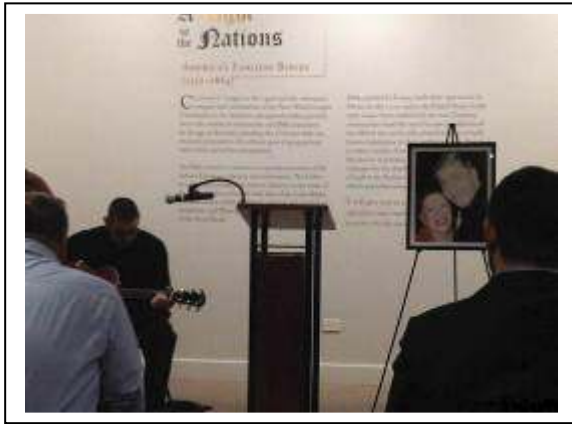
**Vincent was so often behind the camera there are few photos of him. I include this one snapshot, when I caught him by surprise at Kehila Kedosha Janina back in 2005. The picture captures for me his mix of toughness and playfulness. He combined a no-nonsense attitude of getting the shot, with humor and constant enthusiasm for his subject.**



Vincent will be missed by his many friends and colleagues, and especially by his loving wife Hilda and his step-children Elizabeth and Thomas, and grandchildren, Matthew, Analisa and Rachel. A celebration of his life and art will also be scheduled in 2011. I will shortly post a gallery of some of Vincent's photos. You can also see images on the website <http://www.romaniotelegacy.org/>

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**Photos from the Memorial Service in honor of Vincent at The Museum of Biblical Art in NYC.**



Vincent's family has requested that donations in his memory be made to **The International Survey of Jewish Monuments (ISJM): International Survey of Jewish Monuments, 118 Julian Place, Box 210, Syracuse, NY 13210**

#### Museum News

Family photos continue to come in and although they may be too late to be included in our present Family Exhibit, they are welcome additions to our photo archives. We are grateful to David Mussey and other members of the Cohen family for these treasures.



**Rachel Coffino Cohen Family**



**Esther Petrillo**

We love this photo taken in Ioannina on the occasion of the 1936 engagement of Alma Levy and Issak Batis.



This month we were honored by an article in Kathimerini (a major newspaper in Athens). The original article can be accessed at

[http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_civ\\_2\\_26/12/2010\\_426698](http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_civ_2_26/12/2010_426698)

The following is an English translation of the article that appeared in Athens on December 26<sup>th</sup>. A special thanks to Nikos Alexiou who, as a personal friend of the reporter Margarita Pournara, arranged for the interview at Kehila Kedosha Janina.

*Jews in the U.S. with Greece inside*

*Romaniotes from Ioannina went to New York as immigrants in the early 20th century and built a synagogue there*

*Margarita Pournara*

*It is one of the secrets of Manhattan. Few know that in lower Manhattan there is a Greek Romaniote synagogue, the only one in the western hemisphere, founded in 1927. The Kehila Kedosha Janina was built by Jews from Ioannina who went to New York with the great immigration wave of the early 20th century. They were one of the few Jewish communities who, for centuries had been incorporated into the local community, and moved to the U.S. only for economic reasons and not because they suffered persecution. The fascinating story was told to us by "the soul" of the synagogue, the Sefaraditissa Marcia Haddad Ikononopoulos, on a sunny Sunday morning in December on Broome Street, along with the Queens College professor Nikos Alexiou who has made a special study on the subject.*

*"Some have difficulty with the term "Greek-Jews." The Romaniote synagogue has withstood time and this community in America today gives its own response. Greeks and Jews are both people of the Diaspora and we have interacted with each other, coexisting side by side, witnesses to major historical events. It was no different during immigration, "said Marcia providing us with-what else? - Greek coffee.*



***Before we begin, a brief history lesson: "The Greek Jews immigrated to Greece during the time of Alexander the Great and over the centuries built their communities in various regions of Greece including Ioannina, Chalkis, Volos and Veria, which are considered the oldest Jewish communities Europe. When the Greek lands passed into the hands of the Romans, they were called "Romaniotes" so that they can distinguish them from those who settled in other parts of Europe. The Romaniotes spoke Greek, adopted the local dialect and customs, and differed only in their practice of their religion. Even today, in their liturgy, one can hear poetry and psalms sung in Greek. They were always embedded in the local communities with the same rights as all other citizens. Greek in awareness but Jewish by faith. In Byzantium, Jews were forbidden from riding horses because this act was reserved for Greek Christians, and some emperors passed tough laws against them, but did this did not last long. Jews could own land and, for the most part, engage in most occupations."***

***During the first 1800 years of Jewish presence in Greece, it was almost exclusively Romaniote. After 1492, with the persecutions against the Portuguese and Spanish Jews, there arrived in Ottoman occupied Greece 20,000 Sephardim, outnumbering the Romaniotes.***

***Marcia Haddad explains: "They settled mainly in Greece, spoke Ladino (a Spanish-Jewish dialect) and looked upon the Hellenized (Romaniote) Jews with curiosity and sometimes hostility, whom they sometimes believed had lost their Jewish identity. They even called the Romaniote Jews "Grecos". The Sephardim came with an air of cosmopolitanism. They brought their rabbis and their commercial links with all the Jewish enclaves of the Mediterranean, looking on the Romaniotes as being beneath them. In addition, Ashkenazi (German Jews) came to Greece, lured by the understanding that they could own their own land and not suffer persecution or live in ghettos, as was the case in other countries.***

***Due to a series of historical circumstances Romaniotes and Sephardim were treated differently by the Ottomans. "The Turks gave privileges to the Sephardim, and not to Romaniotes. They looked upon the Romaniotes as a conquered people, along with their Greek Christian counterparts. When the Greeks proclaimed the Revolution in 1821, the Romaniotes were on their side, while some felt that Sephardim were identified more with the Ottomans, who sheltered them from the persecutions of the 15th century.***

***In World War II, 13,500 Greek Jews (both Sephardim and Romaniotes) fought alongside the Greeks, including the hero Mordochai Frizis. Prior to 1940, in Greece, there were 78,500 Jews, 67,000 of whom perished in the crematoriums. The annihilation of the Jews in the Holocaust united the two communities. There were so few Jews left that it did not make sense to feel that they have different origins. Currently, the Jewish population in Greece is estimated at 5,000. Unfortunately, the history of the Holocaust and the Jewish losses has been written by Ashkenazi Jews and, often, Greece is overlooked. Even today, many Jews of other nationalities are surprised to hear that Jews have lived on Greek soil for centuries and that they were exterminated at Auschwitz and other camps.***

***Every year, back in Ioannina***

***The Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue was founded in 1927 by Jews who immigrated to America with the Greeks. Members, hailing from Ioannina, were part of the large wave of immigration that brought millions of Europeans to the U.S. from 1900 until 1924. Jews from Ioannina were forced to seek a better future not because they were persecuted, but because of financial needs.***

***In the early 20th century, an estimated 2,000 of the 4,000 Jews of Ioannina emigrated. Like the Greeks they lived in a rural economy with high deprivation, insecurity and hardship. In addition to Ioannina, other Jews mainly originating from regions of Epirus and Macedonia (which had not yet been incorporated into the Greek state) came to the U.S.***

***"Again there were large differences between Sephardim and Romaniotes when settling in new homes," says Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos. "The Romaniotes kept their language, their manners, customs, food and music. Usually they had humble occupations. The Sephardim, spoke Ladino and assimilated quickly in countries where they settled. With better connections and urban origin, they immediately earned a place in the middle class.***

***The Romaniotes in New York settled in the southern part of Manhattan, along with other Jews and Greeks. There they came into contact with co-religionists from other parts of the world. While they could pray in any of the dozens of synagogues that were established by Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews, they preferred to build their own synagogue to follow their own ritual that included the Greek language.***

#### ***Dance from Epirus***

***"Most made their livelihood with textiles and made women's clothing and underwear. The first generation spoke only Greek at home, which isolated them from other Jews who often questioned whether they were Jewish. They would gather together to dance and eat Greek food. Ouzo was never absent from the celebrations or religious gatherings. They used to marry among each other, initially discouraging marriage to Jews from other backgrounds. There were good relationships with Greek Orthodox and the museum has photos of Jewish gatherings in 1937 attended by Archbishop Athenagoras.***

***The Romaniotes, like the Greeks kept a Greek awareness in their new life. Within a few decades, they scattered across America, but in many cases still retained words, habits, and especially a great love of Greece. Each year the congregation organizes trips (pilgrimages) to Ioannina and many descendants of Romaniotes return to learn of their roots with great emotion. Often relatives are found and when the locals hear their Yanniote dialect (learned from their grandparents) it is emotional for all.***

***The Kehila Kedosha Janina, though tiny, is one of the architectural landmarks of New York (New York Landmark). The facade was preserved in 2004. Inside there is a women's gallery that has become a small museum with traditional costumes from Ioannina, mementos, photographs and books. Occasionally, there are organized courses in Greek cooking, local dances, music, etc. The address is address is 280 Broome Street.***

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**Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum is proudly supporting a new photography project by one of our own:**

**"Take a Coffee" by Ariel Weintraub**

**Ariel Weintraub, the granddaughter of Betty Mioni & Isaac Pardo is a talented young photographer influenced by her exposure to the traditional Greek-Jewish world of the Lower East Side. Remembering her family sitting around the table and "taking a coffee" and the fascinating stories that would be told as they sipped the strong brew, Ariel now wants to document what is left of that world before it is gone. Ariel would love to come to your house and "take a coffee" and interview members of Kehila Kedosha Janina, documenting your family history with photographs and writings, with the hope of future publication. If you are interested please contact Ariel by email at [Ariel.J.Weintraub@gmail.com](mailto:Ariel.J.Weintraub@gmail.com) or contact Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net). This project has the official endorsement of Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum.**

We are beginning to collect photos for our next exhibit on Emigration & Immigration (Due to open the beginning of November 2011).

We are looking for the following:

- 1) Photos of Jewish interest taken in Greece before emigration  
Photos of homes, streets, shops, Jewish families
- 2) Photos of Greek Jews in the New World shortly after arrival  
Photos of homes, streets, shops, Jewish families

We want to capture what life was like before they left and the world they encountered once they arrived.

This photo of Ioannina has always been one of our favorites:



### **NEWS OF INTEREST TO GREEK JEWS**

**The Jerusalem Post's article on Bulgarian Righteous and cries of indignation from Greek Jews.**

**'A Whitewashing the Media Perpetuates: The Jews of Bulgaria and the Holocaust '**

**By Shelomo Alfassa**

**Based upon the book 'Bulgaria and Her Jews' by Vicki Tamir**

**December 20, 2010**

***Once again, the media is reporting that the Bulgarian Jewish community is said to have been not harmed during WWII, this lie needs to be stopped.***

***The Bulgarian Jewish communities in the various cities around the country were made up mostly of Sephardic Jews, a large number being Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) speaking Jews who had settled there in then Ottoman-Bulgarian cities, after the Spanish expelled them in the 15th century.***

***These viable thriving Bulgarian communities were extinguished in WWII.***

***Germany entered Bulgaria in early 1941. On April 6 of that year, the German Luftwaffe took off from Bulgarian bases and launched a massive attack on Belgrade, inflicting up to 25,000 casualties. Simultaneously, the Germans took control of the air space over the whole of Yugoslavia and Greece. From the same Bulgarian bases, the Nazis then spread over Skopje and Bitola (Monastir) to Salonika, plundering the homes and destroying the lives of the Jews in those cities. The Germans were able to do this with the whole-hearted support of the Bulgarians.***



**Bulgaria's King Boris III shaking hands with Hitler.**

***Boris saved 50,000 Bulgarian Jews at the expense of some 12,000 Jews from Macedonia and Thrace***

***In the former Greek lands, Bulgarian fascism was ruthless. After Bulgaria acquired some parts of Romania, Macedonia and parts of Serbia, they were so happy they renamed streets in Sofia after Hitler and his top military generals. In Sofia, a second Kristallnacht occurred, with members of the fascist Bulgarian group the Legioneri attacking Jewish institutions, smashing windows and painting swastikas and obscenities on Jewish homes.***

***In 1940, Bulgarian Interior Minister Peter Gabrovski dispatched Aleksandur Belev to Germany to study 'the Jewish problem.' When he returned he helped draft a law designed to protect Bulgaria from the Jews. To the horror of the Jewish communities in Bulgaria, the law was passed in January of 1941. This 'national defense law' stipulated, in part, the following: Jews shall not be members of political parties; Jews cannot be elected into any section of national politics, sports, academia, etc.; Jews cannot enter in civil service; Jews shall not serve in the army; Jews shall work in labor camps; Jews may not start any new businesses; Jews must sell their real estate at 50% of the 1932 market price to non-Jewish Bulgarians; Jewish children could not be accepted into institutions of learning; Jews could not own radios or telephones in their homes; food rations for Jews would be a fraction of food rations for Bulgarians; all Jewish associations and organizations must be disbanded; Jews over 10 years of age must purchase and wear yellow stars of David on all of their clothing.***

***"By 1942, all Jews living in Bulgaria were enslaved and forced to conduct back-breaking labor for the government of Bulgaria." This new law and its over 40 anti-Jewish regulations, made life a living hell for the Bulgarian Jews. By 1942, all Jews living in Bulgaria were enslaved and forced to conduct back-breaking labor for the government of Bulgaria. In some of the camps that were established in Bulgaria, the Jews were awakened at 3am and forced to work to midnight, sometimes forced to work at gunpoint, always with the threat they would be sent to concentration camps in Poland. These men were beaten and left to work outside in the cold. Some Jews died in the Bulgarian camps because of work related causes. Other Jews died because of the weather, beatings, malnutrition and even despair. Further, the Jewish men forced to work in such horrid conditions worried about their wives and children and their elderly parents.***

***In August 1942, concentration camps were set up in Bulgaria. These camps have been spoken about by the famous Rabbi Daniel Tsion and others, and it's known life there was deplorable. While this was occurring, Jews not in camps, were being evicted onto the streets and their synagogues taken over. The chief rabbi, Asher Chananel, was taken into custody and treated brutally. When a contingent of Sofia Jews was sent to Dupnitsa, the mayor complained there***

***were too many Jews there to feed and that 'Bulgaria should be cleansed of its Jews' and that the 'Jews be liquidated.'***

***In January 1942, the Germans at Wannsee declared that they were ready to deport the Bulgarian Jews and the Bulgarian government gave its commitment for the same. By the summer of that same year, the Bulgarians would allow the full deportation of all Jews from Bulgaria, leaving behind millions in property to be later be divvied up. In November 1942, the Germans were informed "Bulgaria readily accepts Germany's proposal" for the deportation of the Jews. The Jews in Bulgarian occupied Thrace were first to be rounded up, riled from their warm beds in the middle of a cold winter's night, they were hoarded into warehouses not even understanding what was happening to them. These Jews were forced to walk, for many many miles, being whipped by troops eager to see them arrive in Bulgarian cities which had railroad links-many Jews died along the way. Once in the camps, these Jews suffered starvation, disease, humiliation, and severe conditions with no soap and one water hose to serve up to 1,500 people. Later, put on trains, one account said listening to the train car was like hearing the "wailing of caged birds." A witness told that they saw a white-bearded old Jew, who was sentenced to death, crying: "No vos spantes, hermanos, la salvacion viene!" [Have no fear, brothers, salvation is coming!]***

***The fact is, Bulgaria deported Jews from the territories it had annexed from Yugoslavia and Greece. This included in Macedonia, formerly part of Yugoslavia, Bulgarian officials interned 7,000 Jews in a transit camp in Skopje. From Thrace, about 4,000 Jews were deported to Bulgarian assembly points at Gorna Dzhumaya and Dupnitsa and handed over to the Germans. In all, Bulgaria deported over 11,000 Jews to German-held territory. By the end of March 1943, most of them had been deported to the Treblinka extermination camp in Nazi-occupied Poland. In Bulgaria and its main cities, the Bulgarian Jewish community SUFFERED and lived in tremendous fear and died, just like their brothers in other parts of Europe. Yes, it was in lower numbers, and yes, there was eventual intervention, but the outright lies saying that Bulgarian Jews were unharmed during the war, and during the Holocaust era, must stop. This annual praising of Bulagria--does not tell the whole story--and is tantamount to a rewrite of history and a cover up. Further, the Jewish news agencies, which continue to report the Bulgarian Jews were not harmed during the war, must open their eyes and not continue to parrot the continued whitewashing of history.***

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***Shelomo Alfassa's essay was prepared in response to *The Jerusalem Post's* article 'Restoring the crown to former glory' where Dr. Rumiana Marinova-Christidi, a Bulgarian, states the Bulgarian Jewish community thrived while across Europe Jews were persecuted.***

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***In response to the JP's article, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, Museum Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina, and President of the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry, who herself lost family deported from Kavala ( in the Bulgarian Zone of Occupied Greece) sent the following letter to the Jerusalem Post:***

***"Your newspaper owes an apology to the 13,000 Jews who died because of the complicity of the Bulgarians during WWII, 5000 of whom were living in the Bulgarian Zones of Occupation in Greece. The Bulgarians were directly responsible for their murders. I am now in the process of compiling the deportation list of the Jews of Kavala (1135 in number) who in March of 1943 were rounded up, brutally housed in unheated tobacco warehouses and placed on trains that would take them across the Danube to Treblinka and their death. Male relatives who were taken by the Bulgarians into Bulgaria for forced labor were thrown onto the passing trains as they passed through as the Bulgarians laughed! How dare your newspaper print an article praising these murderous barbarians? Where is your responsibility to your readers to do research before your print this insult to the memory of Jews who perished in the Holocaust? "***

**AS A NOTE, NEITHER ARTICLE WAS ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION BY THE JERUSALEM POST.**

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**First Chief Rabbi of Albania since before WWII**

The first chief rabbi of Albania was inaugurated in Tirana last week in the presence of a representative of Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha and Chief Rabbi of Shlomo Amar (of Greece).

Prime Minister Berisha had expected to attend but because of the floods in Albania, he sent his representative with a blessing and greeting to the new chief rabbi and the Jewish community.

The inauguration is the result of a meeting a number of months ago between Prime Minister Berisha and the Rabbinical Centre of Europe (RCE) in the RCE's offices in Brussels. The RCE is an organization dedicated to meeting the needs of Jewish communities in Europe.

During the meeting, the representatives of the RCE thanked Berisha for his efforts and expressed their gratitude for the great support and assistance that the Albanians have made for the Jewish community through sheltering and saving many Jews during the Holocaust.



***The RCE broached the subject of appointing Rabbi Joel Kaplan, who is affiliated with the RCE, as the first Chief Rabbi of Albania. Berisha consented to the idea. The ceremony, including the traditional agreement between a community and its new chief rabbi, was presided over by Rabbi Aryeh Goldberg, Deputy Director of the RCE and Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, Head of the Rabbinical Court in Milano and founder of the RCE.***

***"The Rabbinical Centre of Europe's mission is to assist any European Jewish communities, whether they are large or small, affiliated or non-affiliated," Rabbi Aryeh Goldberg, Deputy Director of the RCE said. "Albanian Jewry has a long and illustrious history and the current community needs a spiritual leader to ensure its vitality and continuity."***

***"The RCE thanks Prime Minister Berisha for his support and the fact that only the devastating floods kept him away from the inauguration is a testament to his commitment to the Albanian Jewish community." The event was also attended by representatives from the Albanian Christian and Muslim communities.***

***During the RCE's visit to Tirana, a Jewish center called "Moshe Rabenu" and a synagogue named after the visiting Chief Rabbi of Israel was inaugurated as "Hechal Shlomo." Rabbi Kaplan will now preside over a reinvigorated Jewish community. "This will be the first time in 70 years that there will be a minyan (Jewish prayer quorum) in Albania," Rabbi Kaplan said. The rabbi's first task will be to import kosher food into Albania and he will enjoy diplomatic status.***

***Rabbi Kaplan, formerly the Chabad emissary to Thessaloniki in Greece, had approached the RCE with the idea of reinvigorating the small Albanian Jewish community. The number of Jews in Albania is thought to be around 150, although these numbers are buttressed by large numbers of Jewish tourists and businessmen who visit the small nation.***

***Albanian Jewry dates back over 1,300 years, but was at its peak after many Jews expelled from the Iberian Peninsula made it their home. During the Communist era, the Socialist People's Republic of Albania banned all religions, including Judaism. After the fall of Communism in 1991, all but a small number of Albanian Jews moved to Israel.***

### **Holocaust Memorial to Greek Jews in Israel is rededicated**

**December 17, 2010**

**Inaugurated in Holon (near Tel Aviv) the revised monument which was established in memory of Greek Jews who perished in the Holocaust.**

**We thank Solomon Errera for this information.**

**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTPIIX5XR3s>**

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### **NEWS FROM GREECE**

**This year, the lighting of the eighth candle of Hanukkah took place in Psychico (Athens suburb) with the presence of the President of KIS and members of the Community Council of KIS, along with other dignitaries. Rabbis Mizan, Arar and Hendel were present along with the outgoing Mayor of Psychico Mr. Katsaros, the new Mayor of Filothei N. Psychiko Mr. Pantelis Xyridaki the Ambassador of Israel Mr. ArieH MekeL and crowds of onlookers.**



Hanukah was celebrated in Thessaloniki by the community and invited guests.



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For those of you who have been following the news on the trials of Greek human rights advocates, we are happy to report the following:

***"Greek human rights activists who defended Jews acquitted 07 December 2010***  
***Charges against three Greek human rights activists who were on trial for criticizing biased judges who had acquitted the notorious Holocaust denier Konstantinos Plevris have been quashed. A three-judge panel on Monday unanimously found in favor of the activists of the AntiNazi Initiative, an Athens-based group founded in 1997 that fights hate in Greek society. They were on trial for speaking out against the judges who acquitted Plevris, an open admirer of Hitler and the Nazis, despite crude anti-Semitic statements in his book "Jews: The Whole Truth." The president of the Athens Jewish community, Benjamin Albala, a member of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, expressed his satisfaction with ruling. 'The outcome shows that the brave human rights activists of the AntiNazi Initiative were right when claiming that in the previous trial some court officials were biased,' Albala said. One of the appellate court judges who had acquitted Plevris, Marianthi Pagouteli, has published anti-Semitic remarks on her blog, according to the Greek daily newspaper 'Eleftherotypia,' including "Jews.... I wish Hitler had exterminated you completely.' Plevris has repeatedly called Jews 'subhuman' and said that 'our race's instinct for survival leads to war and calls for the death of Jewish Zionism.' Plevris was found guilty by a Greek court in 2007 of inciting to racial hatred through statements made in his book and condemned to 14 months in jail for 'racial insult' and 'incitement to hatred and racial violence' on the basis of the 1979 anti-racist law. However, the Supreme Court later acquitted him of these charges. The Prosecutor's Office in Athens started legal action against the three for publicly denouncing certain judges who had participated in the proceedings against Plevris. The AntiNazi Initiative, the Greek Helsinki Monitor and the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece had initially sued Plevris for incitement to racial hatred and violence against the Jews. Plevris sued senior members of the Central Board, several journalists and the human rights activists for libel after he was acquitted by the Greek Supreme Court. The World Jewish Congress (WJC), which had raised the issue with senior European Union officials, welcomed the acquittal.***

***WJC Deputy Secretary-General Maram Stern declared: 'We are glad this travesty is over. It was shocking to see that some in the Greek judiciary seemed to agree with the anti-Semitic thinking***



*of Plevris and wanted to silence those that had the courage to speak out and defend the Jewish community in Greece against this hatemonger.'*

<http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/9770>

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### Updates on Greek-Israeli relations

The new friendship between Greece and Israel was recently tested with the unfortunate fires that engulfed Haifa. Over the past decades Greece has been plagued by forest fires and, due to the expert experience, was able to offer help to Israel.

#### ***ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS: GREEK AIRCRAFT OVER ISRAEL***

*The Hellenic Airforce is in action over the skies of Israel for the first time in its history, helping fight the flames of Israel's worse-ever natural disaster. Greek firemen are battling the blazes alongside their Israeli counterparts. Thousands of Israelis, stranded in their homes, are standing on rooftops cheering as Greek fire-fighting aircraft swoop over the flames one by one, discharging great amounts of water over the gigantic flames which threaten to engulf Haifa, Israel's third-largest city.*

*Over 40 Israelis were killed yesterday in the country's biggest-ever forest fire. The fire started on Thursday morning at Mount Carmel, in the north of the country, and within hours spread over hundreds of square kilometers. Early suspicions may point to arson: in the past, terrorists were known to ignite forests in an effort to lay waste to Israel's vast efforts to plant trees in such an arid land. Many thousands of citizens were hurriedly evacuated as the security forces struggled to cope with a fire totally out of control. A bus full of young prison-service cadets, rushing to save prisoners in a nearby prison, was engulfed by flames and 40 of its young occupants were killed. Entire villages were laid waste. Forest fires are uncommon in Israel and the country does not have any aerial firefighting capabilities. As the Israeli fire service reported its inability to cope with such a massive disaster, Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu set about calling Israel's friends all over Europe for help.*

*The first to respond were Greece and Cyprus. While such European giants as Germany and Britain were asleep, Hellenic pilots were climbing into their cockpits for their short flight to Israel, while dozens of Greek firemen, well trained in dealing with large forest fires, volunteered to help Israel. Four Greek firefighting aircraft arrived at Israel's Ramat David air base early in the morning. They were greeted by the Commander of the Israeli air force, General Ido Nechoshtan, who simply said "the skies are yours". The Greek pilots were joined by Israeli navigators and immediately began filling their planes with sea water and dumping it over the flames, which already reached the eastern areas of Haifa, an industrial metropolis of a million citizens. Greek efforts were bolstered by Cyprus's only fire-fighting helicopter, which arrived from Larnaca, and by 100 firemen from Bulgaria. Firefighting efforts are now frantically concentrated on saving lives and preventing further urban areas from being consumed by flames.*

*When Nazi Germany conquered Europe, including the Hellenic Republic, the United States Senate wanted to keep the US out of the war. US President Franklin Roosevelt, in perhaps the most memorable speech of his political career, strongly called for help to the besieged people of Europe. When your neighbor's house is on fire and you have a water hose, he said, you don't wait and argue; you give him the water hose and help him fight the fire. The Hellenic government and people acted today in the spirit of Roosevelt and all freedom-loving people in the world. Such help, which only a few years ago may have seemed unthinkable, continues to strengthen the growing bond between Israel and Greece, between the Jewish and Hellenic people. We are both small minorities threatened to be engulfed by a sea of radicalism in our region. With their rich heritage and history, both the Hellenic and the Jewish people fought for*

**three thousand years to preserve their own identities and cultures. Today's help will not be forgotten. Israelis salute the help of the Greek government, army and authorities, and the bravery of those Greek pilots and firemen who came to us in our hour of need. Well done, friends!**

**Dr. Shlomo Shpiro**

**(Deputy Head of the Political Studies Department at Bar-Ilan University in Israel. He has been closely cooperating with Greek academics for almost two decades)**

[http://www.rieas.gr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1365:action-speaks-louder-than-words-greek-aircraft-over-israel&catid](http://www.rieas.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1365:action-speaks-louder-than-words-greek-aircraft-over-israel&catid)

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**Journalist Jean Cohen analyzes new Greek-Israeli relationship**

***Greece-Israel relations soar as ties with Turkey fade***  
**By Jean Cohen • December 14, 2010**

***ATHENS, Greece (JTA) -- Israel's ambassador to Greece, Arye Mekel, was on the phone with a journalist earlier this month when the call came in that Israel's Carmel region was up in flames. The Israeli prime minister needed to speak urgently with his Greek counterpart. Mekel quickly located Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou in Poland, where he was meeting with the Polish president. But a Papandreou aide told Mekel the meeting could not be interrupted.***

***"Tell him Bibi Netanyahu wants to speak with him urgently," Mekel pressed, using the Israeli prime minister's nickname.***

***A few moments later Papandreou was on the phone. In just hours, five Greek firefighting planes were in the skies along with a cargo plane loaded with spare parts, mechanics and pilots. Benjamin Netanyahu greeted them at the airport.***

***The quick response by Greece was a sign of the increasingly close relations between two Mediterranean countries that until 18 years ago did not even have diplomatic ties. Papandreou visited Israel in July, and the following month Netanyahu made the first-ever trip by an Israeli prime minister to Greece. In October, the two countries held joint military exercises. The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations recently announced that Greece would be the site of its annual leadership mission in February.***



**Netanyahu greets Greek firefighters**

**"Greece and Israel have opened a new chapter in their ties," Mekel said. "Our two governments have taken a mutual decision to develop multifaceted cooperation in the fields of politics, security, the economy and culture."**

**The subtext behind the sudden flurry of activity between Greece and Israel is the crisis in relations between Israel and Turkey, Greece's chief rival. Those ties, already on the skids, took a nosedive after the flotilla incident of May 31, when nine Turkish nationals were killed in a clash with Israeli commandos aboard a ship trying to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza. After the incident, Turkey canceled joint military exercises with the Israelis and withdrew its ambassador to Israel.**

**With Israeli Air Force pilots no longer able to train in Turkish airspace, and the Turkish market for Israeli military hardware and other exports at risk, Israel turned to Greece. Conditions appear ripe for a boost to Greek-Israeli relations. For Israel, nearby Greece would seem to be a natural ally in a Mediterranean region dominated by Islamic countries. For Greece, which is in the midst of a severe financial crisis, friendship with Israel is seen as a great asset, particularly due to Israel's perceived closeness to the administration in Washington. By the same count, Papandreou hopes Greece's closeness with Israel will convince Diaspora Jews to invest in Greece and support Greece in international disputes.**

**This wouldn't be too different from the approach Israel and American Jewish organizations took vis-a-vis Turkey until recently -- for example, opposing efforts to have the Turkish massacres of Armenians officially labeled as a genocide. Greece also seeks an expanded role as a mediator in Middle East peacemaking -- a role that until recently was occupied by Turkey.**

**"Greece could contribute in a positive way," said the country's foreign minister, Dimitris Droutsas. By capitalizing on its close ties with the Arab world, Greece could be a source of trustworthiness, confidence and objectivity for both sides, he said. For the time being, trade and tourism between Greece and Israel are growing. Approximately 250,000 Israeli tourists will have visited Greece in 2010, a 200 percent increase over last year, and bilateral trade stands at approximately \$140 million, according to Mekel.**

**"Clearly there is a lot of room for improvement," Mekel said. "Last week, a delegation from Israel came to Greece to present proposals to the Greek government for 13 large-scale joint projects in fields like tourism, agriculture, renewable energy sources, water and waste management, space technology and investments."**

**The American Jewish organizational world already appears to be on board. Aside from the Presidents Conference mission, Jewish organizations lined up behind a U.S. congressional resolution on Oct. 1 asking Turkey to respect the cultural heritage and the religious sites of the Greek Cypriots in Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus. Turkey invaded the Greek-speaking island in 1974 and retains control of its north. Israeli tourism to the Greek-speaking southern part of Cyprus, a Mediterranean island nation, is robust. It's all a major turnabout for two countries that until two decades ago didn't really get along. In the 1980s, Greece was widely considered the most hostile country to Israel in Europe. Andreas Papandreou, the father of Greece's current leader, was prime minister, and he pursued a policy of cozying up to Arab regimes. Greek officials recognized the PLO in 1981, and it wasn't until Andreas Papandreou left office that Israel and Greece established formal diplomatic ties, in 1992. Droutsas says Greece and Israel were never in conflict, but he acknowledges that government-to-government ties lagged far behind "true relations between the two peoples." He said, "This gap must be closed and we are determined to strengthen and to deepen these relations at a fast pace."**

**Papandreou and Netanyahu**



***They're catching up fast. Just three weeks after Papandreou visited Israel in July -- the first visit since Greek's then-premier, Constantine Mitsotakis, visited Israel in May 1992 when his country first recognized the Jewish state -- Netanyahu spent a few days in Greece. The two prime ministers, both of whom speak flawless English from time spent living in the United States, appeared to be hitting it off as old friends, even cruising the Greek islands together. Since then the official visits have been fast and furious. Droutsas, Greek Minister of State Haris Pamboukis and Culture Minister Pavlos Geroulanos all visited Israel. On the Israeli side, the director of political and military affairs at the Defense Ministry, Amos Gilad; Deputy Defense Minister Matan Vilnai, and minister without portfolio Benny Begin all have gone to Greece. One area where Israel doesn't have too many friends here is in the media. Influenced by 40 years of cultivation by pro-Arab and anti-Israel politicians, the Greek media have a mostly unfavorable view of Israel.***

***But that also has started to change. Mekel, a former journalist who appears frequently on Greek media, says there has been more positive coverage recently of Israel. The improvement in Greece-Israel ties obviously has been welcomed by this country's small Jewish community of about 5,000.***

***"There is no doubt that the improvement of the relations between the two countries makes us feel much more at ease," said Beny Albala, head of the Athens Jewish community. "We hope that these relations will continue for a long time for the benefit of both countries and our community."***

**<http://www.jta.org/news/article/2010/12/14/2742176/greece-israel-ties-rapidly-grow-as-ties-with-turkey-fade>**

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**Anti-Semitic Remarks of Metropolitan Bishop of Pireaus and response of Greeks and Jews**

**Leading priest blames Jews for Greece's problems  
December 21, 2010**

**ATHENS, Greece (JTA) -- A high-level priest on the morning show of the largest television station in Greece blamed world Jewry for Greece's financial problems.**

**The Metropolitite of Piraeus Seraphim also blamed world Jewry for other ills in the country during his appearance on Mega TV.**

**Mixing Freemasons with Jewish bankers such as Baron Rothschild and world Zionism, the Metropolitite said that there is a conspiracy to enslave Greece and Christian Orthodoxy. He also**

accused international Zionism of trying to destroy the family unit by promoting one-parent families and same-sex marriages.

Thirteen minutes into the program the Greek host asked the Metropolitane, "Why do you disagree with Hitler's policies? If they are doing all this, wasn't he right in burning them?"

The Metropolitane answered, "Adolf Hitler was an instrument of world Zionism and was financed from the renowned Rothschild family with the sole purpose of convincing the Jews to leave the shores of Europe and go to Israel to establish the new Empire." Jews such as "Rockefeller, Rothschild and Soros control the international banking system that controls globalization," the Metropolitane also said. The Metropolitane of Piraeus Seraphim is not the only Greek priest with such extreme ideas, as Salonika's Metropolitane Anthimos also has preached similar ideas from his pulpit.

"Watching and listening to the program, I felt disgust hearing the Metropolitane of Piraeus expressing himself like that against world Zionism, and shamelessly saying that Hitler with the help of Jewish bankers did what he did," said Benjamin Albala, president of the Athens Jewish community.

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## **RESPONSES**

**NEW YORK :** "In response to the recent anti-Semitic rhetoric that has been unfortunately used publicly by a Hierarchy of the Church of Greece, the Holy Archdiocese of America condemns any such language, and expresses its sadness that these hurtful words should have been spoken at all. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America considers the remarks to be gravely offensive and totally unacceptable.

As a leader in Interfaith Dialogue, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese affirms its longstanding and positive relations with the Jewish Community here and abroad, and grieves with them at this incident, which is not expressive of the feelings and attitude of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and worldwide, and the Greek Nation. In this Holy Season that celebrates peace and good will among all peoples, we pray that, with God's grace and help, mutual respect, understanding and love will prevail."

Sent: Thu, December 23, 2010 9:50:38 AM

### **Athens**

*There was an intense reaction in the Greek Diaspora in the U.S. to the anti-Semitic comments made by the Metropolitan Seraphim of Piraeus, which blamed the international Jewish community for the economic crisis in Greece. This position was condemned by the Greek government and the Archbishop of America Demetrios.*

*As broadcast by Voice of America, the Archdiocese of America Greek Orthodox Church issued a statement condemning the declarations of the Bishop of Piraeus and regrets for the "unacceptable expressions which should not even have said" by a hierarchy of the Church of Greece. "The comments are very offensive and totally rejected" the statement stressed.*

*The announcement of the Archdiocese concludes: "The Archdiocese of America, which has a leading role in interfaith dialogue, confirms the long positive relationship with the Jewish community here and abroad, and grieves for these anti-Semitic statements, which are not representative of the feelings and attitudes of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and around the world, nor of the Greek nation.*

*"The holy days, which celebrate peace and goodwill among all people, pray to prevail with the grace and help of God, mutual respect, understanding and love."*

**Response was immediate and the president of AHEPA (the largest Greek heritage organization in the U.S.) Nikolas Karakostas said: "We strongly condemn the anti-Semitic statements made by Bishop Seraphim of Piraeus, which we consider unacceptable, unfounded. This is not open to any participation in public debate. In addition, such statements are irresponsible because they came from an individual with such a high rank in the hierarchy of the Church. "**

**Mr. Karakostas asked the Archbishop of Athens Jerome to publically condemn these statements of Metropolitan Seraphim of Piraeus.**

**The position expressed by Seraphim was condemned by the Greek Government, whose representative C. Oral Peloti stated: "It is not usually the role of the government to consider and comment on statements by priests. But the government is obliged to condemn the language of hate from anyone. It is obliged to stigmatize as unacceptable language that denies the Holocaust, the greatest crime against humanity.**

**"These views are marginalized. They attack Greece. They attack our civilization. They affect the very society, an integral part of which is the Greek Jewish community. "**

**<http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1231072172>**

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**Greek gov't condemns priest's anti-Semitic statements**

**By JTA**

**12/23/2010 22:48**

**The Metropolitane of Piraeus Seraphim had blamed Jews for Greece's financial problems, said Hitler "instrument of Zionism."**

**Talkbacks (6)**

**ATHENS, Greece -- The Greek government on Thursday condemned a high-level Orthodox priest for making anti-Semitic statements during a television interview.**

**The Metropolitane of Piraeus Seraphim blamed world Jewry for Greece's financial problems and for other ills in the country during an appearance Monday on Mega TV, Greece's largest television network.**

**"It is not the role of the government to judge and comment on priests' statements. But it is the government's obligation to condemn the language of hatred by whoever expresses them," Greek government spokesman George Petalotis, an assistant minister to Prime Minister George Papandreou said in a statement issued Thursday afternoon. "It is the government's duty to stigmatize as unacceptable the language that denies the Holocaust, the biggest crime against humanity. These views are pushed to the margins. They insult Greece. They insult our culture. They insult our very society of which the Greek Jewish Community is an inseparable part.**

**"Every one should know that the Greek polity and our society condemn them unequivocally," the statement concluded.**

**Metropolitane Seraphim also said during the interview that there is a conspiracy to enslave Greece and Christian Orthodoxy, and he accused international Zionism of trying to destroy the family unit by promoting one-parent families and same-sex marriages.**

**The bishop said that "Adolf Hitler was an instrument of world Zionism and was financed from the renowned Rothschild family with the sole purpose of convincing the Jews to leave the shores of**

Europe and go to Israel to establish the new Empire." He added that Jewish bankers like "Rockefeller, Rothschild and Soros control the international banking system that controls globalization."

The American Jewish Committee on Wednesday called on the heads of the Greek Orthodox Church to condemn the Metropolitan's statements. "Seraphim's horrendous lies on Greek TV demonstrate that anti-Semitism is alive and well within the Greek Orthodox Church," said Rabbi David Rosen, AJC's international director of interreligious affairs, in a letter to the head of the Greek Orthodox Church in Greece, Archbishop Ieronymos II, as well as Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. "It is the responsibility of the church leadership to condemn and uproot anti-Semitism."

The European Jewish Congress called for the priest's removal

<http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishNews/Article.aspx?id=200801>

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**Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America condemn Anti-Semitism, a message from the National Commander**

New York, NY  
12/24/2010

The Order of Saint Andrew, the First-Called Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, unequivocally condemn anti-Semitism, and in particular condemn the egregious anti-Semitic tirade of the Metropolitan of Piraeus broadcast on Greek television this past week. The Order expresses its outrage that a cleric of the Greek Orthodox Church could speak such heinous and outlandish falsehoods directed at any group of human beings. In a statement of the Commander of the Order, Dr. Anthony Limberakis said:

"It is unconscionable that a Hierarchy of the Church could speak this way, much less believe these things. As dedicated Church servants who support and defend the religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and religious liberty for all people, we cannot be silent in the face of this repugnant attack on our Jewish brothers and sisters. As Orthodox Christians, and as persons of Greek heritage, we are appalled by the behavior, attitude, and malevolent speech of Metropolitan Seraphim of Piraeus. We say unconditionally that he in no way represents either Orthodox Christianity or the Hellenic ideals. His behavior has brought embarrassment and shame on his high office and we hope he will retract and apologize for his outrageous remarks. As we prepare for the Feast of Christmas, we pray for all people to embrace each other with respect and tolerance glorifying God in the highest, with peace on earth and good will amongst women and men."

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The Board of Directors of Sullogos Nomou Magnisias Argonautes condemns the deplorable public comments of Metropolitan of Piraeus Serafeim, which constitute a direct assault on the democratic institutions of Greece, offend the democratic sentiments of the Greek people, cultivates a feeling of hatred and prejudice against other peoples and religions, and contradicts the Christian message of peace and brotherhood. The recent anti-Semitic comments by Metropolitan of Piraeus Serafeim on MEGA Channel, in conjunction with his previous xenophobic positions and attacks against the political leadership of Greece, offend the religious sentiments of all Greeks; undermine and encourage actions of hatred, such as were the attacks against Synagogues and the assaults against immigrants and those who try to protect the rights thereof; and contribute to the zeal of some to criticize Greece and Greeks for anti-Semitism. Metropolitan of Piraeus Serafeim's comments also offend the memory of the late Archbishop Damaskinos of

**Greece and Metropolitan Ioakeim of Demetrias, who risked their lives in order to save Greek Jews during World War II.**

**Just as Sullogos Nomou Magnisias Argonautes is preparing again to honor the memory of our compatriot Greek Jews, who fell victims during World War II to the Nazi regime, as well as those who risked their own lives to save 85 percent of the Jewish Community of Volos, we ask all Greek Americans and the entire Greek Diaspora to condemn the comments and actions similar to those of Metropolitan of Pireaus Serafeim, which is in essence, an affront on humanity.**

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**For those of you who wish to know more about this bishop, we did a little research.**

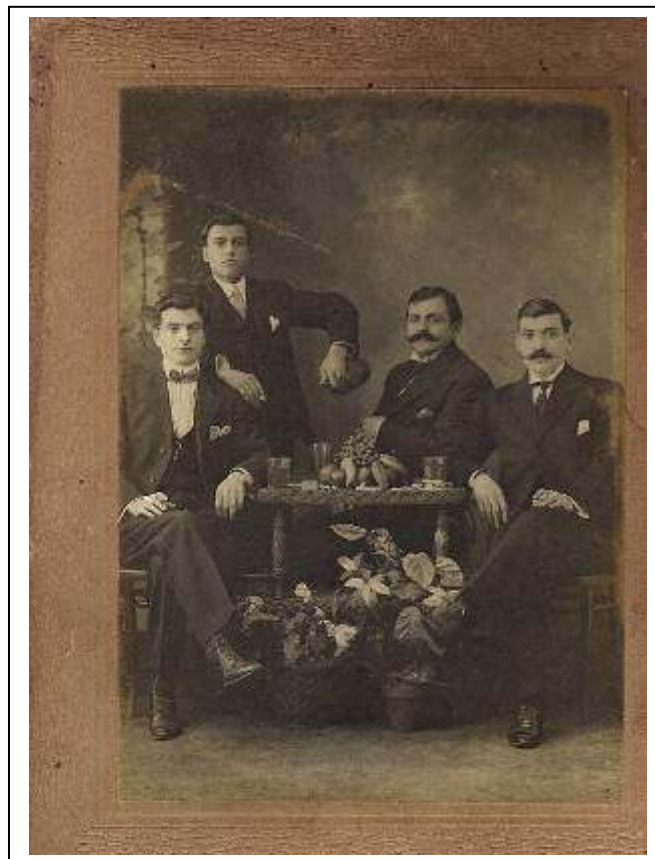
**Metropolitan Bishop Seraphim has a history of distorting the dogma of his own church and of being in opposition to other high ranking prelates. Born in Athens in 1955, he studied Economics and Theology and received a license to practice law before becoming a Greek Orthodox monk. In December 2000, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Holy Synod, elected him as Bishop and assistant to His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos (Harkianakis) of Australia. He was responsible for the Third Archdiocesan district of South Australia and the Northern Territory serving until 2002, when, to our misfortune, he came back to Greece.**

**While Archbishop Christodoulos was being hospitalized in the "Aretaeion" Hospital, and his entourage had expressed its annoyance with the positions of the Metropolitan of Piraeus, Seraphim continued his diatribes against the Catholic Church and published his "Confession of Faith; Against Ecumenism," in which he called "the Papists" (the Catholic Church) a heresy and stated plainly how he feels about Judaism and Islam ("As Christians who believe in the Holy Trinity, we do not have the same God as any of the religions, nor with the so-called monotheistic religions, Judaism and Mohammedanism, which do not believe in the Holy Trinity.")**

**In 2010 he asked Queen Elizabeth II to divest pop singer Sir Elton John of his knighthood for uttering blasphemy. The metropolitan sent a letter to Queen Elizabeth II and the British Ambassador to Greece after Elton John said that Christ was a homosexual.**

**Requests for our help**

**Eleanor Matsas asked our help in identifying the Solomon brothers in this photo:**





**We are happy to help Eleanor and pass on the information we received:**

**Marcia, I can help identify one of the men in the Solomom Brothers photo. The gentleman seated in the left of the photo was my mother's father Samuel Solomon, my grandfather. My mother was Rachel Solomon Coffino, her mother was Esther Petrillo. I'm sad to say I don't know the other men in the photo though I suspect they were my grandfather's brothers, but I'm not sure. Hope this helps. Annette Nekoukar**

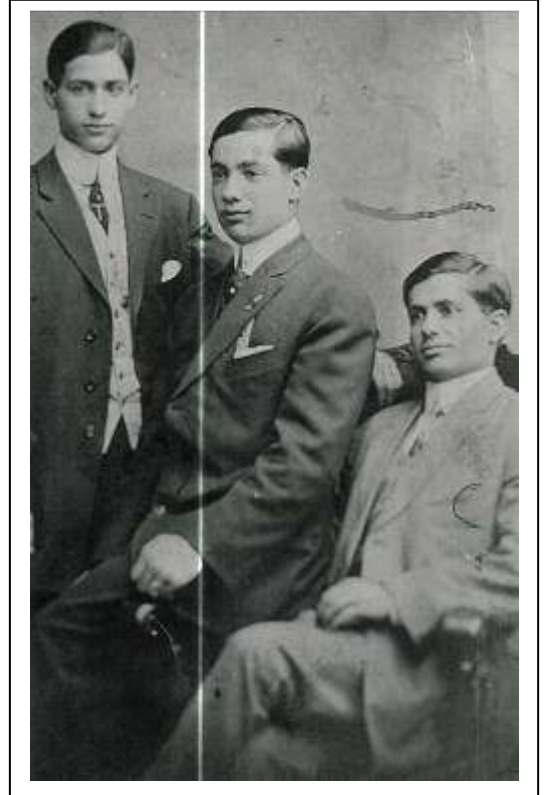
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**Richard Solomon is asking for our help in finding relatives and information on his family connections:**

**Richard is looking for information on the "Hades" and "Schinasi" families from Ioannina. He would like to know if there is anyone related to his grandfather (Abraham Schinasi) and some insight as to the meaning of the surname 'Schinasi.'**



**Esther Petrillo (mother of Abraham Schinasi)**



**David Hade**

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### **Searching for a lost friend's family**

**I am from Ioannina and Northern Epirus, immigrating with my family to the US in 1956. In 1942 my mother was a nurse at the military hospital in Ioannina (406 General military hospital that was located outside the city. She had been born in Petrovouni nearby. Her good friend was Jewish and also a nurse there. They both had young sons and lived in the hospital dormitory. Her friend was taken by the Germans in 1944. Is there any way we can find her family name and whether there are any living relatives? We would like to follow up on a request my mother made before she died. Thank you for your help. Mike Dimitriou**

**If you have any information on this Jewish nurse from Ioannina, please contact us at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net).**

## Responses to last newsletter

Please pass on my deepest condolences to Sylvia Ringel, sister of Elliot David, IBM. I lived in the apartment house next to theirs on Webb Avenue in the Bronx. Thank you very much.  
Dorothy David Schulman

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Internet site of interest:

<http://www.judaica-europeana.eu/Newsletter.html>

New on our website ([www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org))

Information on 2011 Tour to Jewish Greece (from May 22-June 6). Limited space available.

Our new exhibit is now on our website. Click on the link on the left for 'Exhibits.'

The deportation list from Kavala should be up on our website by the middle of January.

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Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum continues to work with other museums and organizations to help spread the story of Greek Jewry.

The story of the losses of Greek Jews from Ioannina in the Holocaust is now part of a national program on Holocaust education in the United Kingdom due to the collaboration of our Museum with Holocaust Memorial day Trust in London:

<http://education.hmd.org.uk/resources/a-candle-assembly>

<http://education.hmd.org.uk/resources/citizenship-humanities-and-media-studies-upper-secondary-post-16>

This past month we have also worked with two young teachers in Israel who will be incorporating the story of the Greek Holocaust into their curriculum.

If your organization or institution wants to learn more about Greek Jewry, especially the unfortunate losses in the Holocaust, do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are all about sharing.

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Kehila Kedosha Janina e-newsletter: number 36: January 2011  
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