

Perichoresis Annual Newsletter

December 2020



Dear friends, colleagues & partners,

We stand before Christmas and the turn of the year!

One year ago, none of us could have imagined the calamities that 2020 would bring upon all of us and I am referring mainly, although not exclusively, to the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences. Many people are not any more with us, others are still struggling with illness and we are not sure about what the immediate future will bring. In these difficult circumstances we do not forget our vulnerable neighbors who are particularly affected: poor, unemployed, refugees, migrants, etc.

As Perichoresis we continue our actions, trying to contribute to their relief with the means we have at our disposal. Above all, we place our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and ask for His blessing and grace upon all of them and all of you! We pray that God may give us all a blessed Christmas season and that He may heal us in 2021 from the wounds of 2020!

Dr. Paris Papageorgiou

Chairman of Perichoresis Board of Directors

Greek lessons for locals & asylum seekers



“Dealing with the question on what somebody profits from teaching Greek to refugees and migrants, the answer follows spontaneously. You share the hope of a better life and you realize that the Greek language is a passport to this perspective. Teaching your mother tongue to refugees and migrants reminds you joyfully that teaching is an act of offer and the reason for which the human languages exist: to communicate and build societies without marginalization”.

Dionisios Zarotis, Educator of Greek language

English lessons for locals & asylum seekers

“When you do what you can, you do what you have to. There is no moment in time without any duty. Watching the development of this program, I can only be full of immeasurable joy, moral completion and spiritual strength that is fed back by the respect and love released from the look of our students. All in all, I consider my dedication and teaching in this program a great factor to become a far better person and a more effective teacher”.

Effie Chatzieftheriou, Educator of English language



Peri-Ergon | Social Cooperative Enterprise



“The Social Cooperative Enterprise “Peri Ergon” was founded in 2019 and is a part of the sewing program through which we try to help our fellow human beings who belong in vulnerable social groups, by creating jobs. For me, Peri Ergon and the message of equality that it promotes is really important and I am very happy to be given the opportunity to participate in this project. We learn and respect each other's particularities, find similarities, exchange views, socialize and create together in a friendly environment”.

Anastasia Sarigiannidou, Coordinator

Greek lessons for Roma

“During the academic year 2019 – 2020 and precisely from October 2019 until March 2020, I was a teacher in the Roma camp for Perichoresis NGO. My daily experience with this community of our fellowmen left only positive memories. During their time in the lessons, I noticed that they filled the classroom with eagerness. The interesting part right here, was that not only the children were eager to learn, but also the adults, who often spoke in regret about the lost years as dropout students. This whole experience was a challenge for me. It was also a lesson that pointed me that education is definitely the main solution for minimizing stereotypical perceptions”.

Konstantinos Matidis, Educator of Greek language



‘Peace Pastries’ program



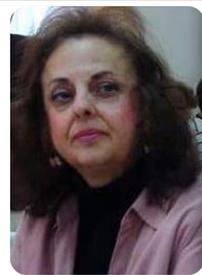
“I want to express my gratitude because through “Peace Pastries” program, me along with other ladies from the Church and the refugee women, we had some of the most momentous afternoons of our lives. Those “Peace Pastries” Thursday afternoon gatherings, were so unique! It was not just the baking, which I enjoyed a lot, but it was the feelings that I was able to feel on the second part of the meeting. Thanks to Nadia, we had time of sharing, were we came closer to each other and sometimes I felt joy, other times sadness but mainly the warm feeling of being able to come side by side and even love a total strange person”.

Mary Yfantides, Program Volunteer



"My experience during my participation in the project of Perichoresis "Peace Pastries" in 2019-2020 was excellent! Cooking together with refugee women of different ages, religious and cultural background was a very pleasant engagement for me! Gradually, through the collaboration in cooking an intimacy and even friendship had been developed. It was very interesting to cook and eat together. We even exchanged delicious recipes! We also shared information about the way of living in our countries. In the end, I had the strong feeling that there are more data that unite people than separate them".

Nikoletta Petridou, Program Volunteer



Sewing program



"As a trainer of the sewing program, I can definitely say that I am very happy to be given the opportunity to create new products every day and meet new people, both Greeks and refugees, and help them through this program as much as I can. In our workshop there is a pleasant and friendly environment we work and chat together, learn from each other and spend creative mornings that makes our days joyful".

Polixeni Yfantidou, Sewing Trainer

HELIOS Integration and Educational program

"The HELIOS team of Perichoresis under difficult and unprecedented conditions, due to the pandemic, managed to implement the educational component of this program and lead it to its second phase, the extension. I feel happy and proud of the people I work with every day as they are characterized by empathy and love for the vulnerable people we serve and take care to always offer the maximum! And this can be seen when our beneficiaries come every day with a smile and say "good morning" in Greek with confidence!"

Olga Zgialtou, Project Manager



ESTIA Accommodation program



"It is the unique feeling of joy and satisfaction when you give from yourself to others what you would like them to give you ... without expecting anything in return, not even a "thank you"! You offer yourself; you fill with joy and you move on to start again from the beginning".

Alexandra Nikolara, Project Manager

RefuAid Integration & Accommodation program

"A year was gone with lots of problems, tons of challenges, many changes, people have come and people have gone... Each time with different emotions, but what remains at the end is hope. Hope for a better journey, hope for more people to embrace those who are trying to build a new life, hope for a brighter future".

Zoe Makridou, Project Coordinator



Food Bank program



"It is a great feeling to see the smile on people' faces when you provide them with the most important food, cleaning & hygiene items, school supplies, clothes, shoes, linen etc. During the pandemic we did not stop to respond to such needs even though the fear of Covid19 was in our minds. We feel that helping others is not only good for them, it also makes us happier and healthier too. By giving, it connects us to others, creates stronger communities and helps us to build a carrying society for everyone".

Giannis Naziridis & Georgios Varytimidis, Coordinators

'From care to Autonomy' program

"Caring for people arriving at Chios island and providing consultancy to the local Offene Arme partner was a blessing! Having the opportunity to strengthen the local colleagues who serve in the frontlines made me feel like I am physically there, trying to achieve the best possible to those in need and hoping that all efforts bring a better tomorrow for the refugees".

Giannis Lazaridis, Project Supervisor



'Baytna Hub' Project



"It was a welcoming place for pre-schoolers and their mothers, where we were taking care of the children's needs for love, tenderness, team play and preparation for their smooth entrance to the Greek school system. At the same time it was a program that took care of the mother's needs for hanging out with other mothers, and learning how to productively be engaged with their children's growing process. It was a place filled with loud happy voices, smiles, music and colors. We are very blessed to run such a project and give mothers and pre-schoolers the opportunity to have their "happy place"."

Christina Milioti, Project Supervisor



Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!

