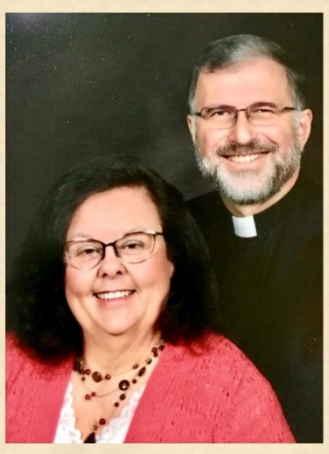


Pastoral Message from Fr. George for Today's Special Remembrance

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros declared Sunday, June 6th as the first “**National Sisterhood of Presbyteres Sunday**” ... “a day for the Church to dedicate a Sunday and celebrate all our Presbyteres throughout the Holy Archdiocese of America.” ([Click here to read His Encyclical.](#))

Presbytera (Gk. πρεσβυτέρα, pronounced — and sometimes spelt — *Presvytera*) is a Greek title of honor that is used to refer to a **Priest's Wife**. It is derived from *Presbyteros* — the Greek word for Priest (literally, “elder”).



To be a Presbytera is a tremendous privilege. In addition to being my beloved wife, Presbytera Marinda is the mother of our children, the grandmother to their children, and Godmother to her Godchildren. She is and has been an essential part of every parish our Bishop has asked us to serve. She seeks to offer her talents to bring joy and triumph in the ministries of our parish. She is a vessel of God's grace, sharing her abilities with those God places in her midst. It is no surprise her favorite verse in Scripture is “*Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.*” (Hebrews 13.2)

Presbytera Marinda is empathetic; she prays for those suffering within and outside our parish. She provides us with significant support, whether she is recognized or not as we serve together as co-workers within the Church. In her vocation, she encounters wonderful people in a personal way; she maintains silence within her heart for the shortcomings of me and those God has asked us to serve, choosing instead to forgive and move forward to achieve peace and unity within God's Holy Body.

Her role as Presbytera affords her precious moments to discern the beauty and vitality of God's Church. She teaches and supports our youth and their families; she cares for the sick and needy and consoles those grieving from the loss of family and friends. She attends almost every worship service and teaches others to prepare Koliva, Artos, and Prosfhora. Presbytera Marinda takes part in the ordinary and the significant events of our parishioners' lives; she offers Christian fellowship and hope by reflecting God's love.

I am especially grateful that Presbytera Marinda quietly and patiently helps me by assisting parishioners I hurt to respond with understanding and pardon, knowing those who blame me for their own problems never, ever forgive. Veteran clergy when asked “*What would you have done differently?*” often reply, “*I would have spent more time with my own family.*” Likewise, for Presbytera Marinda... she finds ways to overlook my shortcomings in this objective and instead seeks the means to minimize my missing the “memorable moments” of our family. In short, she is my rescuer and steadfast co-worker in ministry.

For her love, support, sacrifice, and unwavering faith in our Risen Lord, I thank and commend Presbytera Marinda (Theodosia) for being my precious “gift of God” these past 44 years... may He bless us and all clergy families with “many more” years of health and joy as we serve together in His Holy Vineyard!

Chronia Polla and thanks be to God, to His servant, Presbytera Marinda, and to all our Presbyteres!

Just a thought...



*Last year, after these Easter Lilies stopped blooming, they were left unattended at church, no longer full of blooms or their distinctive fragrance. Fr. George took them home and planted them with Presbytera Marinda's help. This photo was taken three days ago. With some "tender, loving, care" offered to those in need, our world can burst forth with new blossoms, new opportunities, and unexpected joy. **What will you and your family seek to reclaim today? The sky is the limit! Email Fr. George a kind act you and your family offered to nurture and sustain God's creation!***