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Greek-American Businessman Offers COVID-19 Financial Aid to New England Parishes



BOSTON – Philanthropists John and Effie Lagadinos from Canton, Massachusetts made donations of five thousand dollars to each and every parish in New England amounting to a total of $300,000 in order to help them ‘breathe’ a little more easily during the coronavirus pandemic that closed the doors of their naves.

Lagadinos, one of the most prominent Greek-American businessman in Massachusetts, founder and president of the Pulse Systems, which produces state-of-the-art radar pulse components and subsystems for the military and industry, has been helping parishes in Boston for many years, especially St. John the Baptist. He is also a great benefactor of the monastic community of Mount Athos not only financially but also with donations of ambulances for the needs of the Holy Fathers of Mount Athos.

His wife Effie has volunteered her services for many years to the Hellenic Nursing Home in Canton. Mr. Lagadinos got the idea to help financially the New England

parishes by reading The National Herald's annual 50 Wealthiest Greek-Americans special insert. He has been reading the National Herald for decades and could have been included in that special edition, but when we first called him for an interview he said that he didn't want anything to be written, but after we told him that we are not doing an article to promote him but to present examples of philanthropy with the hope others will follow, he agreed to a telephone interview.

Lagadinos, said "I subscribe to The National Herald and two weeks ago I read the edition with the list of the 50 Wealthiest Greek-Americans and I observed that almost all of them or the majority of them are of advanced age. I thought that I could have been included on that list and I am not saying this for self-promotion, but because I want to tell you that I consider it shame to swim in such wealth, and I include myself also. To display such indifference for these parishes which are trying to survive on the income of Christmas and Easter and the different events which they organize during the year. And now what will happen that the churches are closed? That was my initial thoughts that led me to my decision to assist the parishes in New England." He also added that "it is a shame to degrade ourselves all this time with the St. Nicholas church in New York."

He also said that "I couldn't ever imagine that the churches would close for Easter and because many of them base their survival on Easter's income. I decided to extend my hand and offer something. I spoke with Metropolitan Methodios who told me that there are 62 parishes. I told him I will send to all 62 parishes five thousand dollars each. The total amount came to three hundred thousand dollars. If this crisis continues for two, three months and if nobody else does something we will send something again because we have to keep the doors of the parishes open – what else can we do?"

He also mentioned that "the parish of St. Nektarios (Roslindale) has some financial necessities with the heating system and we will do something there as well."

Lagadinos' company, Pulse Systems, was established in 1970 and it has an excellent name and reputation in the United States and globally. He was born in Megalopolis, Greece where his grandfather was the mayor. After he finished elementary school he went to Iraklion Crete for four years with his mother's sister. From there he went to Athens and was graduated from the famous Evangeliki Scholi of Nea Smyrni in 1956. He came to the United States and studied engineering at Northeastern University in Boston. Working initially for two companies, EG&G and Raytheon, in 1970 he established his own company.

He said that "we should have been closed now with the pandemic, but we received

letters from the government to stay open because the components we make are pivotal for the operation of the Defense Department. Our company is very strong, it has important technology and I am very happy with my job and I will not stop ever, unless something else happens to me."
Mr. and Mrs. Lagadinos accompanied their donation to the parishes with the following letter:

"As we begin this beautiful Season of our Pasha, we pray for your entire congregation to be kept heathy and in good spirits so that all of us, Orthodox Christians say 'Christos Anesti'.

Also, we pray for God to have this virus leave our world and allow our parishes to open up again their doors to the faithful where we all find peace and tranquility that we all have missed.

This new virus that is plaguing the whole world has transformed our lives and it has placed us in a complete isolation away from our places of worship but It does not have the power to keep us away from our tradition and our strong faith to our religion.

My family and I, John and Effie Lagadinos of Canton Mass., a family of two old immigrants who came in this country back in 1956, are reaching out to all of you to share some of the 'Evlogies' that God has given us over the years during our work in both the material and spiritual arenas.

This letter has reached you because of our love for you and knowing that the closure of our churches will cause limited financial assistance from the faithful to the church which is greatly needed during these difficult times lying ahead.

I do not think that this small gift will solve all your problems but I hope to ease your pain and encourage more people in a good financial position to follow this example.

Wishing all of you Christos Anesti

With all our respect,

John and Effie Lagadinos."

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