

The Monastery Center for Disease Prevention “Panagia Philanthropini” Ormylia



**“CANCER:
THE POWER OF
FAITH AND PRAYER
”**

What Nature Teaches us:



A new giant sequoia seedling replaces its fallen ancestor. It will take more than 500 years for this seedling to approach the size of its fallen kin - Black Mountain grove.

Main Points of our walk together in the Garden of Sacred Tradition:

- **Brief Scriptural citations**
- **Early Christian Tradition during the persecutions**
- **Legalized Christianity and the creation of Christendom**
- **The Great Monastic Tradition**
- **Sacred Tradition Alive Today**

Wisdom from the Holy Hill

“...Faith is life...”

**Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos,
of blessed memory!**



The Old Testament and Cancer

**The “Glory” Departs Israel:
The Ark of the Covenant is stolen by the Philistines, I
Samuel**



Ancient Practices of Faith which are with us today:

- **And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.**
- **But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with bleeding tumors, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.**

1 Samuel 6:4

- **Then said they, What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return to Him? They answered, Five golden tumors, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on you all, and on your lords. (KJV)**

Gath today



The background of the slide features a pattern of stylized, overlapping leaves in various shades of yellow and orange, creating a warm, autumnal feel.

The Great Physician of Souls and Bodies

Apostolic Tradition and Healing



Matthew 10:1

- **“And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.”**

Matthew 10:8

- **“The Lord said: “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”**

The Lord, Healing the woman with an issue of blood (gynecological cancer?)

- **Mark 5:25-34**
- **Matt 9:18-26**
- **Luke 8:40-56**

Insights into modern Cancer Care:

- At that time a large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.
- She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors
- and had spent all she had,
- Yet instead of getting better she grew worse.
- When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

Acts 5:16

- **“There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.”**

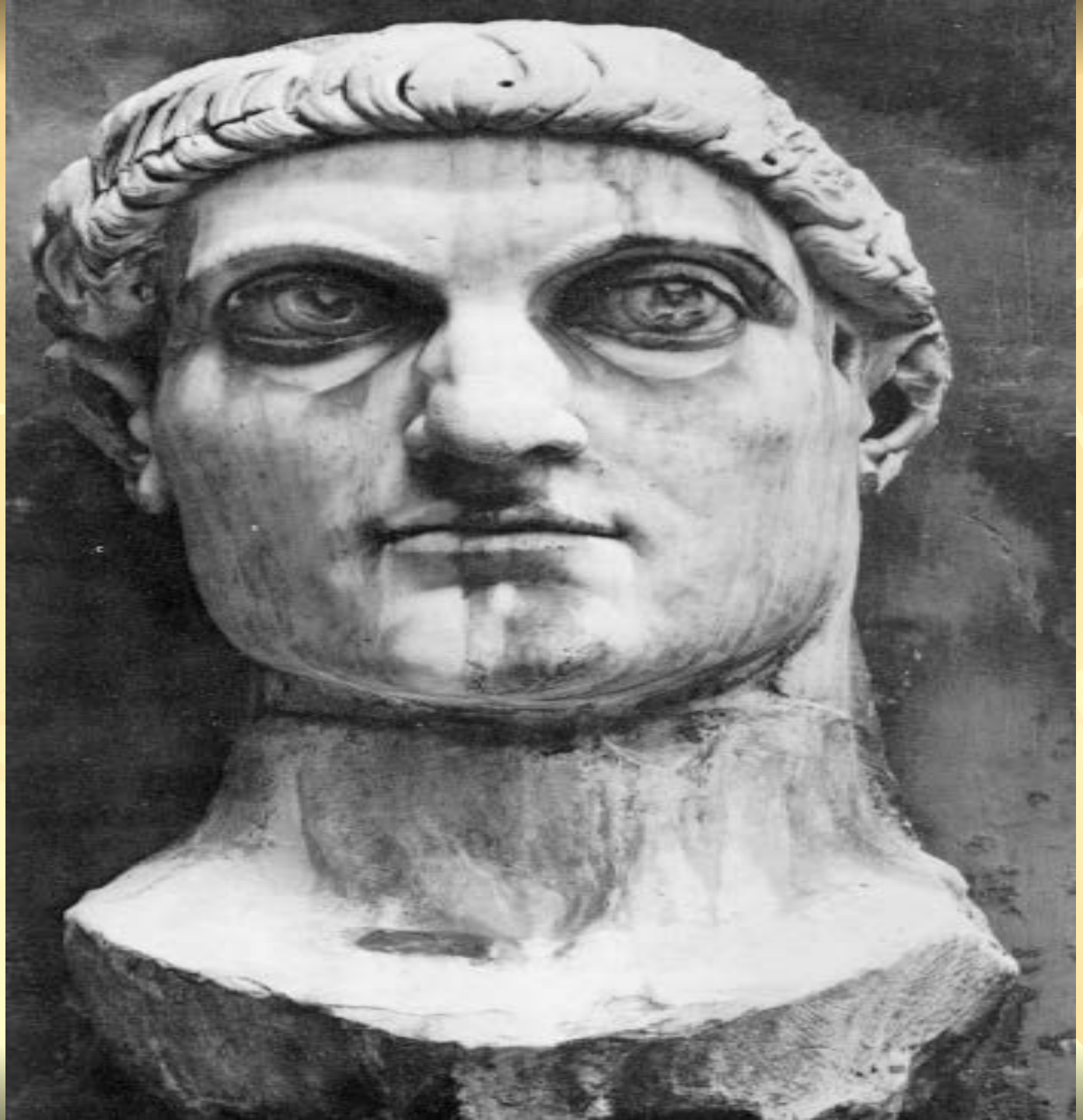
James 5:14

- **Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.**



The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the bodies and relics of the Holy Martyrs





The First Ecumenical Council

Canon 75



The Monastic Tradition in Egypt

- **Hermits begin the life simultaneously with the Martyrs**
- **St. Anthony the Great, etc.**
- **Sketes developed in the Oasis regions**
- **Small “kelia”**
- **Large Koinovia**
- **The Rule of St. Pachomios**
- **The Building of a guest house complex first priority**
- **Hospital**
- **Caring of the sick and poor**

Nitria a Monastic Hub



Syria



The Great Fathers

- **St. Nicholas the Wonder Worker**
- **St. Spyridon the Wonder Worker**
- **St. Basil the Great**
- **St. John Chrysostom**
- **St. John the Merciful**
- **St. Theodore the Studite**





**“Christians are the Hands
and Feet of Christ”**

**“In each person who suffers we find
Christ”**

St. John Chrysostom

The Acts of Care in the Name of our All Holy Lady, Theotokos



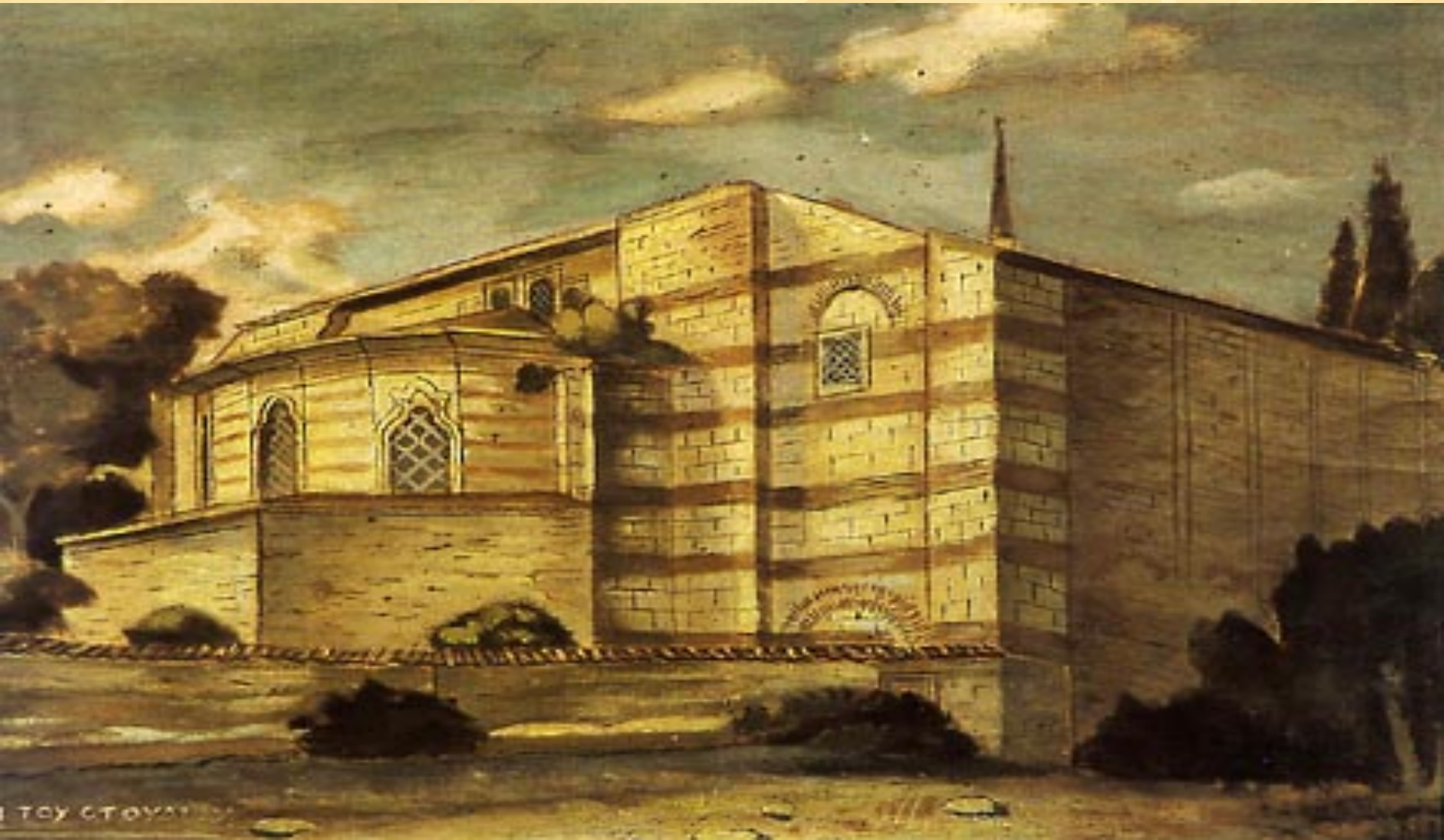




Breast Cancer in Constantinople



The Monastery of Studium





The Great Monastic Communities:

- **Centers of Learning**
- **Centers of Science**
- **Centers of Medical Care**
- **Hospitals**
- **Hospices for the extremely ill
(especially cancer)**
- **Centers of Humane Care and Charity**

The Monastery of Pantocrator















The Monastery of the Life Giving Font, “Zoodohos Pege”





The Monastery of Blacherna



**The Monastery Center for Disease Prevention,
“Panagia Philanthropini”**

www.ormyliacenter.gr





A brief History

- 1982 The Monastery Center is founded by the Very Reverend Abbot, Elder Aimilianos as the Philanthropic Center of the Convent of Ormylia.



Cancer Prevention Begins

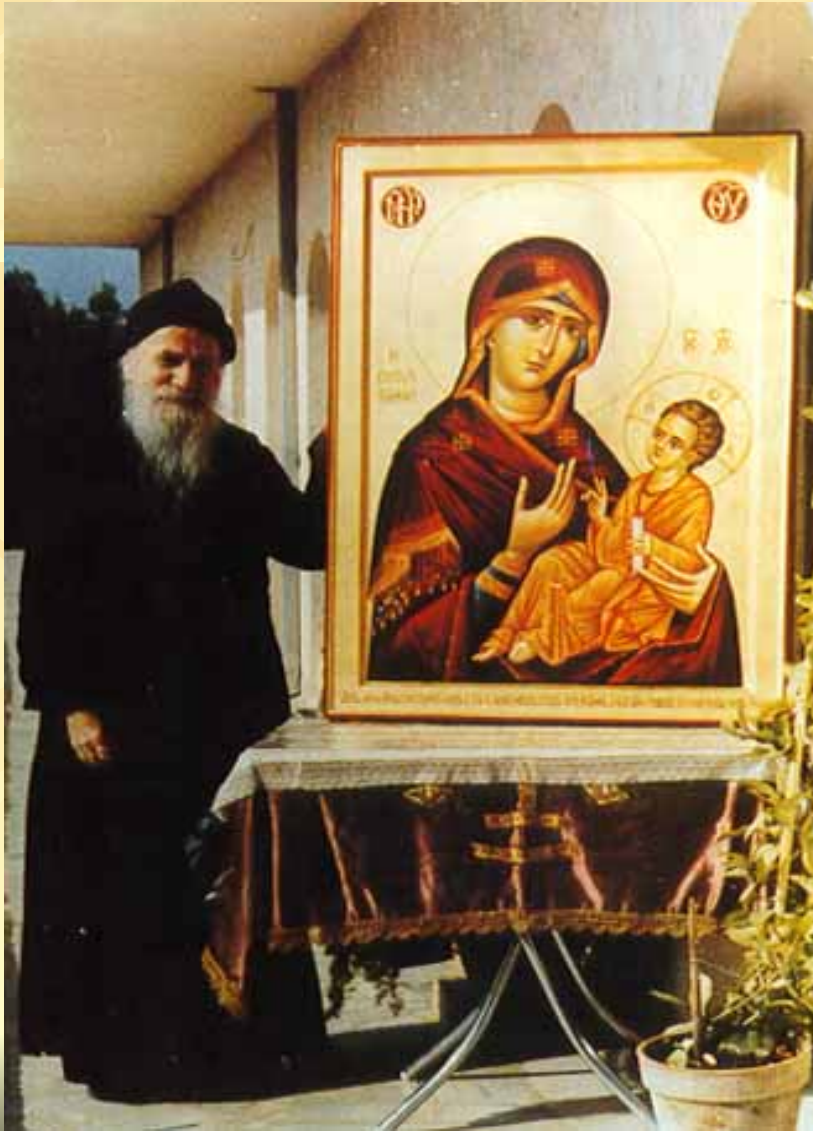
- 1991 The Center begins working with the “Europe Against Cancer Program” of the European Union



The Prayers of Holy Elders



Holiness and Compassion



- "Christ is Everything. He is joy, He is life, He is light. He is the true light who makes man joyful, makes him soar with happiness; makes him see everything, everybody; makes him feel for everyone, to want everyone with him, everyone with Christ."

Cancer Services:

- 1991 Cervical Cancer
- 1993 Breast Cancer
- 1994 The Center becomes a member of the European Networks of Centers of Excellence in both Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening
- 2002 BRCA1 & 2 assessment begins
- 2005 Skin Cancer
- 2006 Colon Cancer (being planned)



The special insight our people give the Ormylia Center:

- The majority of are village dwellers (most villages are under 2,000 persons)
- 85% are farmers
- 55% have only a primary school education
- 35% are formally uneducated
- 10% make up high school grads and higher learning, or technical training
- 9% are immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Albania

Some useful data:

- **The Ormylia Patient base: 25,000 + women**
- **150,000 + Screening Examinations**
- **7,000 women screened annually (all services rendered without payment)**
- **Some women in their 9th round of Screening**
- **20-25 breast cancers annually (most Stage 1 and under)**
- **5-10 cervical cancers annually**
- **5-7 HPV's annually**

The foundation for new developments:

- 92% patient return rate (we do not lose the patients that come to be screened!)
- 95% > five year survival rate for positive patients
- 150 fields of epidemiological data collected on each patient
- Very personal relationship with all the persons screened and their families




Promising New Activities:


- **Breast Care Workshops for the Broader Eastern Mediterranean region developed in collaboration with the EC-The Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2000-**

The Monastery Center For Disease Prevention
PANAGIA PHILANTHROPINI

**A HUB FOR ADVANCED
BREAST CARE EDUCATION**



The diagram features a central circular icon of the Virgin Mary with the Christ Child, surrounded by twelve olive-green, leaf-like shapes. Each shape contains the name of a collaborating institution or professional group: Radiologists, Stanford University, Administrators, Susan G. Komen Foundation, Social Workers, American College of Radiology, Family Physicians, General Practitioners, Radiographers, Leuven University, Nurses, and European Breast Cancer Network.



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Senior Experts as Faculty



Reaching Out through Research

- **EFTA- EU support of a major molecular cancer research project 2004-2007.**
- **The use of FT-IR Spectroscopy for the Advanced Diagnosis of Cancer**
- **The Department of Molecular Medicine, The University of New York, Suny at Stony Brook**

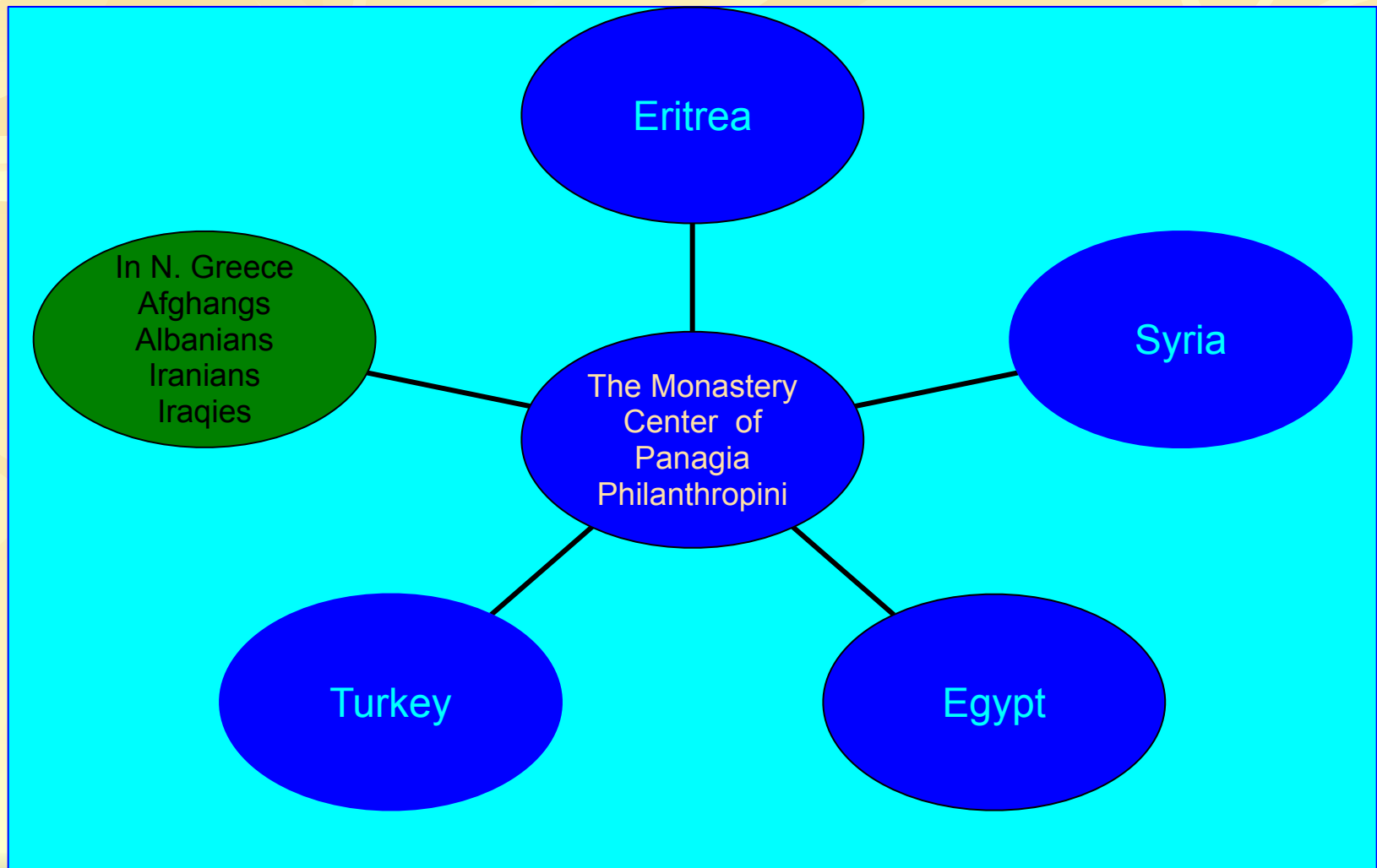
A Development of Great Importance:

- **The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation** support, for clinical services and workshops

The work of Love in Christ Expands:

- **The European Aid Program for Developing regions of the world.**
- **Enables the Monastery Center to reach out further.**
- **The pilot work done at the Monastery Center becomes a prototype for others.**
- **The Center becomes a Reference Center Scientifically for developing medical centers.**

International Services reaching out to the Poorest of the Poor

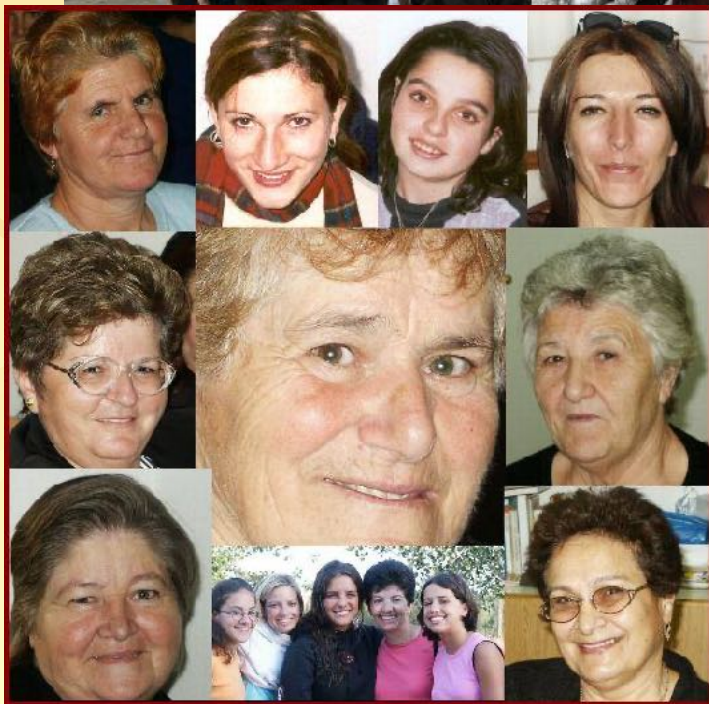


A Very Special Blessing:

- **At the Official Inauguration of the Project in Turkey, the honor of having present:**
- **His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios I**

**Faith and Love, united against cancer,
brings peoples together**





The importance of the Alliance between Faith and Medicine:

- The Church can make a powerful difference in modern society by giving without expecting back
- What we each do in our tiny corner for health care matters, it becomes a vehicle of the Gospel of Love and Peace to others
- Bringing together people of all walks of life through medical science, the Church becomes a dynamic life force for goodwill and love among peoples
- All human beings are brothers and sisters, with one Heavenly Father is reinforced with actions



The Vision must be clear:

- CA Screening enables the Church to save lives, care and comfort the sick in practical humane service
- Each human being is unimaginably precious, this is the Gospel Message
- Early detection will alleviate needless suffering for the patients and their families granting hope and peace

The Monastery Center's Positive Message:

- Screening is not about "cancer"
- Screening is about LIFE!
- This care will grant comfort and "peace of mind"
- Is an "insurance policy" for the family
- This Christ-like love will have "a ripple effect" for generations



Cancer Care at Ormylia is:



- A work of LOVE that touches all
- devout
- nominal believers
- estranged children of God



**Practically how is this
achieved?**

Works not theory

The Network of 450+ Volunteers:

- The Public Media
- The Church/ Mosque
- Schools
- City Hall
- Societies
- Rural Physicians
- "Regular" folk

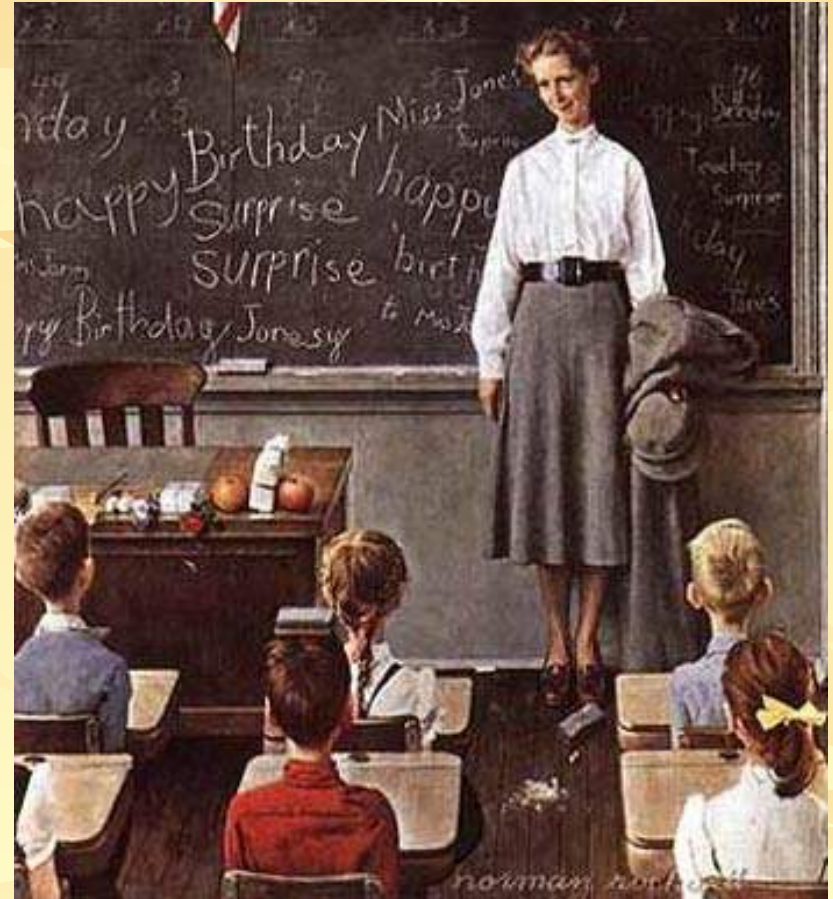


Communication based on love and sincerity:

- Recruiting people of good will from all walks of life to help
- Speaking with people who are on the “inside track” of the local community, regardless of faith
- Making each supporter feel important (after all they really are!!!)
- Emphasis that local supporters can help their community in a life saving endeavour

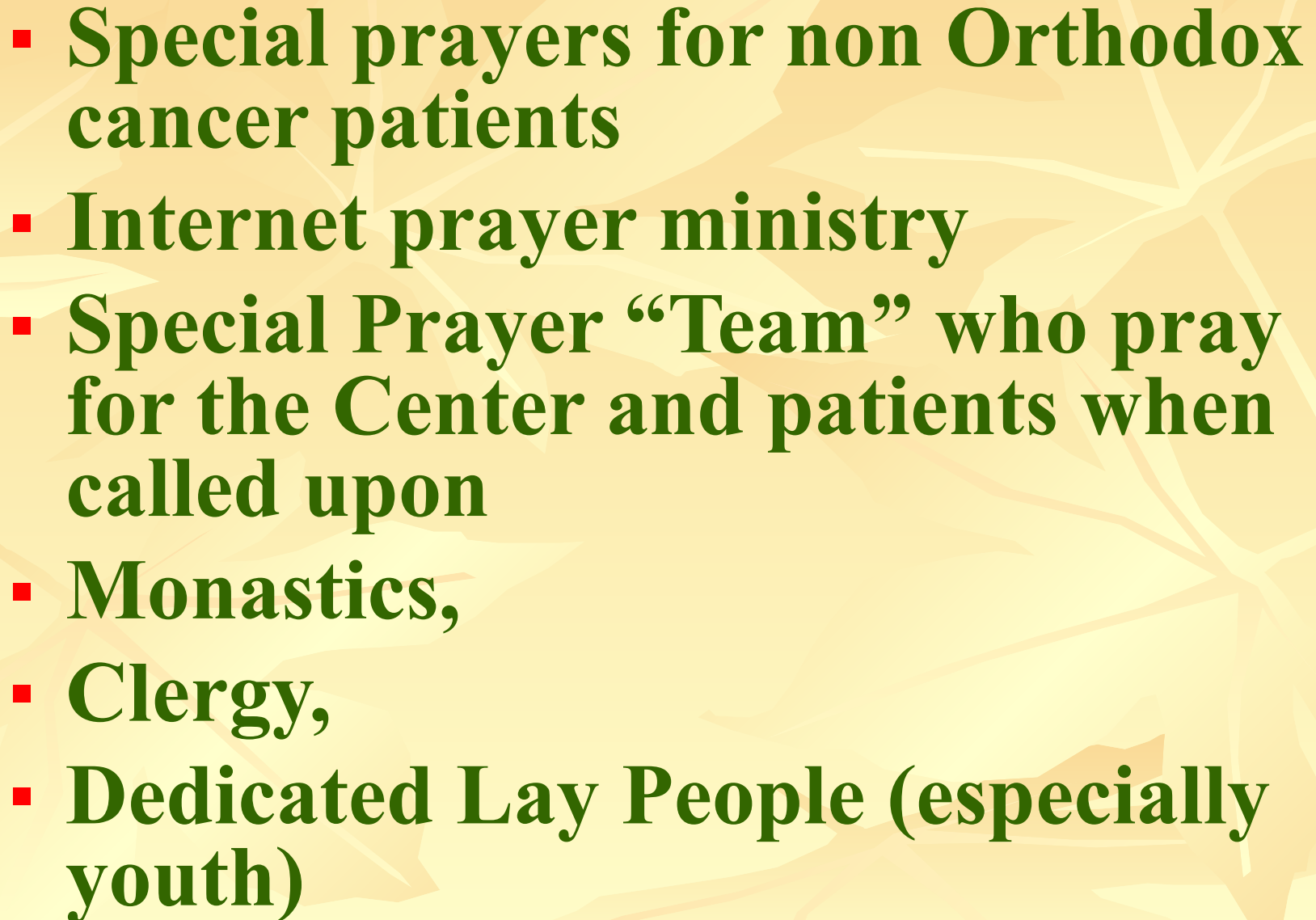
An unique tool that has developed at Ormylia
that gives us special joy:

- Letters to school children asking them to tell their grandmothers and mothers about screening!



Spiritual Exercises are the Foundation of the Work:

- **Prayer for all those who are screened and/or diagnosed with cancer**
- **Holy Unction performed frequently**
- **40 Liturgy commemoration for cancer patients and their families who are Orthodox Christians**
- **Supplication Services and special commemoration to the All Holy Lady Theotokos**

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- **Special prayers for non Orthodox cancer patients**
 - **Internet prayer ministry**
 - **Special Prayer “Team” who pray for the Center and patients when called upon**
 - **Monastics,**
 - **Clergy,**
 - **Dedicated Lay People (especially youth)**

In the face of limited resources, things to remember:



- **Humble beginnings, small acts of love, can lead to success as long as we persevere**
- **All hurdles can be overcome as long as people do not loose heart and stick together**

Focus on essentials:

- **Every life touched with prayer and faith in Christ is a REAL SUCCESS!!!!**
- **The seed of comfort and love is planted in simple ways!**
- **Have Faith: Leave the growth to God!**

**Only God knows how tall the Tree of
Faith and Prayer will grow**



Giants in the mist - Long Meadow grove.



Thank You for Your Kind Attention!