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# THE TORCHBEARER

Great Lent, 2009

*From the Pastor...*

*Beloved in the Lord:*



On Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Orthodox Church begins Great Lent. As we make our way as a family, as a community, toward our Lord's empty tomb let us all strive to return to God, much like the Prodigal Son, and see what good God has to offer to fill the emptiness of the world. Please do something to observe this great gift that God gives to us. Don't let this time go by and fail to see the potential that you have within you to affect a change for the good of your mind, body and soul. Many "extra" liturgical services will be celebrated - become a part of them and become reunited with God and His Saints.

Below please find the most, in my opinion, uplifting, insightful, and hopeful sermon in the writings of the Fathers of the Church. Please don't read it! Rather, take the time to absorb these words and reflect on their meaning in our lives as Christians. You cannot help but see our Lord's Resurrection in a different light and context.

I very much look forward to seeing all of you during this most special time of the year. Please remember that I love you and pray for you. Please remember my family and me in your prayers, and remember that I am just a phone call away if you should ever need me. On behalf of my family, Khouria Joan, Alexander, Elizabeth, and Nathaniel, and in anticipation of the Great Feast, I want to wish each of you and those whom you love a most blessed Pascha, and a spiritually fulfilling Lenten journey. *With much love in Christ, Fr. John K. Teebagy, Pastor*

## **THE CATECHETICAL HOMILY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.**

If any are pious and lovers of God, let them delight in this fair and radiant festival. If any are honest servants, let them enter and rejoice in the joy of their Lord. If any are wearied with fasting, let them now enjoy the reward. If any have worked from the first hour, let them accept their just pay. If any have come after the third, let them feast with thankfulness. If any have arrived after the sixth, let there be no doubt, for they shall suffer no loss. If any come after the ninth, let them draw near, let them not waver. If any have arrived only at the eleventh, let them not be fearful for their tardiness, for the Master is gracious and accepts the last as well as the first. He gives rest to those who

worked from the first hour. He is merciful to the last and provides for the first. He gives to this one and to that one he shows kindness. He receives their labors and acknowledges the purpose, and he honors the deed and praises the intention. Therefore, let everyone enter into the joy of our Lord, and let the first and the second take part in the reward. Those rich and those poor, join hands together. Those sober and those sorrowful, honor this day. Those who fast and those who do not, be glad today. The table is full, indulge yourselves sumptuously. The calf is ample, let no one go away hungry. Let all enjoy the wealth of righteousness. Let none lament their poverty for the kingdom is revealed to all. Let none deplore transgressions, for forgiveness has dawned forth from the tomb. Let none be fearful of death, for the death of the Savior has set us free. By tasting his flesh, death has been quenched. He who went down to Hades despoiled Hades, and Hades was embittered when he tasted Christ's flesh. Isaiah, anticipating this, cried out and said: Hades was embittered when it met you face to face below. It was embittered, for it was abolished. It was embittered, for it was mocked. It was embittered, for it was cast down. It was embittered, for it was chained. It received a body and encountered God. It received earth, and met heaven face to face. It received what it saw, and fell where it saw not. O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and the demons have fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and there are no dead in the tombs for Christ is raised from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who were asleep. To him be glory and dominion to the ages of ages. Amen.

### **Church Records...**

*"As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ"*

- Steven James, son of James and Marlene (Ahto) Marcelonis of Norwood, was baptized on September 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Stephen Ward, son of Stephen and Stephanie (Ward) Saber of Dover, was baptized on November 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Alyssa Nicole, daughter of Glenn and Debbie (Chaiton) Medwar of Darien, CT, was baptized on December 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Annie Wang of Freeville, NY, was baptized on December 28<sup>th</sup>.
- James Kenneth, son of James and Amy (Krantz) Dow of Buzzards Bay, was baptized on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

*Many Years!*



*"Blessed are they whom thou has chosen and taken O Lord!"*

+Sadie Sabbag (84) of West Roxbury fell asleep in the Lord on October 18<sup>th</sup>. One son and two daughters, along with their families, survive her. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

+Jeanette O'Brien (78) of Somerville fell asleep in the Lord on December 25<sup>th</sup>. A sister, nieces and nephews, along with their families survive her. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

+Hafooz (Ann) Sabby (93) of Stoughton fell asleep in the Lord on December 29<sup>th</sup>. One daughter and four grandchildren, along with their families survive her. Burial was at Fairview Cemetery in Hyde Park.

+Russell Affsa (77) of Ft. Lauderdale, Fl fell asleep in the Lord on January 31<sup>st</sup>. His wife, three sons and daughter, along with their families, survive him. Burial was at Pine Hill Cemetery in Quincy.

### *Memory Eternal!*



*From the Executive Board...*

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

We are looking for parishioners to help us run this church effectively and efficiently. We have been aggressive at keeping our expenses and costs stable over the past few years. We have been successful in that the total amount to run the church has stayed at \$350,000. Below are some items that we can do to help:

Things everyone can do:

1. We cannot run a church with \$350,000 of yearly expenses, on pledges of \$152,000. Help us in a grass roots effort to remind all parishioners to pledge to the church. The Stewardship committee does a fantastic job, but at this time more than 200 parishioners have not made a 2009 pledge. Gently remind your friends and relatives of the importance of pledging and giving to the church annually.
2. Give generously. We understand that in tough economic times it is difficult to determine where your income should be spent, but your church should be the first place you give, after you meet your spending on necessities. Look for other discretionary items to cut.
3. Please talk to us. We want to hear from you when you have a concern or see a problem. We also want to hear your ideas for a solution to your concern or problem. Be ready to get involved and help us.

Things that we need volunteers for:

1. We would like to establish a committee of parishioners to act as spending watch-dogs. Basically, we need this committee to review the many accounts we have at the church, research other options, and determine if we are getting the best value for our dollars spent. The executive board has done this on our major accounts, but we would like it done on all our accounts.
2. We need volunteers to run socials each year that will serve as fundraisers. Dances, Variety shows, movie nights, etc. These events will help to bring our community closer, while raising needed income for the church.

I wish all of you a Holy Pascha season, and a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2009,  
*Respectfully Submitted, Wayne E. Zahka, Chair, Executive Board*

*From the VMS...* St. George, Norwood will be the site of the annual Lenten retreat hosted by the regional ladies on Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. The topic is "Orthodox Christina Unity: What, Why, Why not yet?" For more information, please call or email the church office.

*From the Stewardship Committee...* In these hard economic times, we are all cutting back; however, the New Testament does not give us a mandatory percentage for Christian giving. The Apostle Paul says, "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion" (2 Corinthians 9:7). There is a liberty of conscience in Christian giving. But its purpose is not to indulge selfishness but, rather, to cultivate voluntary generosity by God's people. This is a sort of freedom unfamiliar to the Old Testament Israelites. But it is a freedom to excel in good deeds, not a freedom to sin; a freedom to give more, not less. Please search your hearts and give back to God what he has bestowed on you..... in all aspects, not just with your Treasures but with your Time and Talents too. *Debbie Greenstein & the Stewardship Committee*

*From the Parent Guild...* The Parent Guild just hosted its Annual Godparents luncheon on February 1<sup>st</sup>, thanks to Elaine Sabbag and Cynthia Capobianco, and their many kitchen helpers. The luncheon featured a turkey dinner with all the fixings, and we had over 160 people in attendance. We thank all parishioners and friends who attended, supporting the efforts of the Guild. We are gearing up for the Annual Penny Sale scheduled to take place on Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, following church school dismissal. Loretta Borghi is once again chairing the Penny Sale, so if you would like to help, please contact Loretta. Also, during Lent, the Parent Guild will be hosting the breakfasts following Lazarus Saturday and Holy Thursday morning services. We are trying to increase attendance at our meetings, so will be starting our meetings directly after dismissal from Divine Liturgy rather than waiting for Church School dismissal. We meet approximately once a month, and hopefully, the earlier meeting time will allow more people to attend. We love to see new faces at the meetings. If you are interested in finding out how you may become involved with the Guild, please see or contact either of us. While the proceeds of our events are to support the Church School, all of our events are also a great way to promote fellowship amongst parishioners. *Yours in Christ, Carol Hazerjian and Bertina Kurker*

*From the Fellowship...* The Food for Hungry People Program is underway. Please remember the homeless throughout the world as we approach the holiest time of the year. The Alms boxes and cans will be available at the bengari. We depend upon your support. Please consider offering a generous donation to this most worthy cause. Make

your check payable to the church and earmark it F.F.H.P. and return by June 1, 2009. Thank you.

*From the Church School...* Greetings Church School Parents and Friends!

The Church School is a busy and crowded place these days! We are very excited that our Holiday Gift Shop raised enough money so that we could purchase a Legacy Walkway Brick, and we eagerly await its unveiling. While we follow a prescribed curriculum provided to us by our archdiocese, every class strives to augment our teachings with something a little bit different. Here are a couple of examples:

Coming up during Great Lent, our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be conducting a "Church Tour" one Sunday after Divine Liturgy (date TBD.) Come and listen to these bright students as they explain the significance of each part of the interior of our Church. Watch for details in upcoming bulletins – I think you will find this tour very enlightening – you won't want to miss it! Our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders have gone the extra mile as they learn about Old Testament teachings by mapping the actual locations of Biblical events and marveling at the geographic and political changes that have gone on since ancient times.

We are in the planning stages of our FAMILY GAMES NIGHT that we are co-sponsoring with Teen SOYO. This should be a terrific evening for "kids of all ages." Mark your calendar for February 20 and start brushing up on your ping pong skills!

We are so thankful for your interest in our Church School and for the generosity of all of our parishioners. Without a doubt, your support and love are key to our success and vitality! Many, many thanks. *In Christ, Nancy Close, Church School Director*

*From the Teen SOYO...* Teen SOYO has been very active, not only at St. John's, but within the New England Region as well. We just hosted the quarterly regional meeting at our church, and had the largest attendance record that we have had in a number of years. We organized an ice skating outing which followed the meeting. Teen SOYO members from five of our sister parishes participated, and we all had a great time.

We have had amazing attendance at our monthly meetings, which has allowed us to do many service projects and plan some great activities. We have been attending all of the family nights at our church and we are all learning to chant at Vespers. Currently we have a canned food drive going on to support our neighbors, the Dedham Food Pantry. We are planning on making pot holders to sell to support the food pantry. So if your potholders are getting old, don't buy new ones just yet because the Teen SOYO potholders will be coming soon!

Three of us will be attending winter camp at the Antiochian Village in Pennsylvania during February vacation.

Overall Teen SOYO has continued to flourish throughout the long winter and we hope to become even more active this spring. *In Christ, Cameron Close, Teen SOYO President*

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## *Lenten Liturgical Notes & Announcements...*

- **Confession** - Great Lent, which begins on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, is the perfect opportunity for you to receive Confession, especially if you plan on receiving the Eucharist on Palm Sunday (April 12<sup>th</sup>) and Pascha (April 19<sup>th</sup>). Confession is available *before* all Lenten services, during Matins on Sunday mornings (8:40 –9:40 am) or by appointment. Please don't wait until the last minute to come to confession. In addition, because of the many extra responsibilities Fr. John will have during Holy Week, he **WILL NOT** be able to hear confessions on Palm Sunday morning or from Holy Wednesday on (i.e. Holy Tuesday is the last chance for confession for Pascha). So please plan accordingly!
- **Lenten services** - During Great Lent, the Church calls us to increase and intensify our prayer life. Keeping this in mind, please note that we will celebrate the Presanctified Liturgy on *Wednesday evenings* during Great Lent at 5:30 p.m. If you wish to receive the Eucharist that evening, please begin your fast (from food, drink, and smoking) after a light lunch. In addition, on the first 5 *Friday evenings* during Great Lent, we will chant the Akathist Hymn to the Virgin Mary at 6:30 p.m.
- **Great Compline** - Please consult the weekly bulletin for the schedule.
- The Robert P. Zahka Memorial Scholarship and The St. John of Damascus Community Scholarship: Scholarship applications are now available from the church office and the St. John website. Applications are due by April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 and scholarships will be awarded at church school graduation on May 17, 2009. Applicants must be high school seniors planning to attend full time, a fully accredited college, university, or technical school. Applicants must be graduates of St. John of Damascus Church School.
- Make plans now to attend the 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Parish Life Conference, hosted by St. George, Lawrence from June 25-28, 2009 at The Wyndham Hotel in Andover. For reservations, please call the hotel at 978.975.3600 and mention the "PLC." Please consult the weekly bulletin for the more details as they become available.
- The 49<sup>th</sup> archdiocese convention will be held from July 19-26 in Palm Desert, CA. For complete information, please see *The Word* magazine or go to [www.archdioceseconvention2009.org](http://www.archdioceseconvention2009.org).

# **Annual Penny Sale & Luncheon**



**Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**  
Immediately following Church School

Join your family, friends and fellow parishioners for a delicious luncheon, the chance to win great prizes and show your support of our Church School.

*Roasted Chicken, Hashwa, Salad & Dessert*  
*\$8/Adult \$4/Children*  
*+ 2 Sheets of Penny Sale Tickets with each meal*

Lunch will be served immediately following church school. During this time you can purchase additional Penny Sale tickets, take a look at all of the great prizes on stage and purchase raffle tickets for your chance to win great prizes!!

Church of St. John of Damascus  
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**THE TORCHBEARER**

is the Monthly Newsletter of the Church of St. John of Damascus  
A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

The Very Rev. John K. Teebagy, Pastor

300 West Street  Dedham, Massachusetts 02026-5594

Telephone: 781. 326.3046  Fax: 781. 326.4473

Web Page: [www: stjohnd.org](http://www.stjohnd.org)

**Services:** Sunday-Matins 9:00 a.m.,  
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours...

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The deadline for the Sunday bulletin is Thursday at 10 a.m.

Please plan accordingly.

**DEADLINE** for the May/June, 2009 *Torchbearer*  
will be April 10<sup>th</sup> . This will be the final newsletter until September 2009.

Please consult the weekly Sunday bulletin for any changes, corrections, etc.



# Holy Week - 2009

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## April 11<sup>th</sup> Lazarus Saturday

Divine Liturgy @ 9 a.m.; Communion Breakfast, hosted by the Church School, to follow



## April 12<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday

- ❖ Matins @ 9 a.m. (**NO** Confessions)
- ❖ Divine Liturgy with procession @ 10 a.m.
- ❖ Bridegroom Matins @ 5 p.m.

## April 13<sup>th</sup> Great and Holy Monday

- ❖ Confessions 6 pm – 6:45 pm
- ❖ Bridegroom Matins @ 7 p.m.

## April 14<sup>th</sup> Great and Holy Tuesday

- ❖ Confessions 6 pm – 6:45 pm
  - ❖ Bridegroom Matins @ 7 pm
- Confessions will NOT be heard after tonight**

## April 15<sup>th</sup> Great and Holy Wednesday

- ❖ Sacrament of Holy Unction @ 7 p.m.

## April 16<sup>th</sup> Great and Holy Thursday

- ❖ Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great with washing of feet @ 9 a.m. Communion breakfast, hosted by the Church School, to follow.
- ❖ Twelve Gospels with procession @ 7 p.m.

## April 17<sup>th</sup> Great and Holy Friday

- ❖ Great Vespers with un-nailing of Christ from the Cross @ 3 p.m.
- ❖ Lamentations with procession @ 7 p.m.

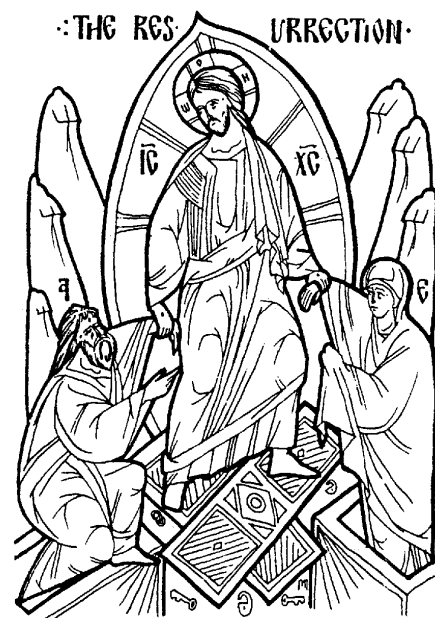
## April 18<sup>th</sup> Great and Holy Saturday

- ❖ Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great @ 9 a.m.

- 
- ❖ Rush Service @ 10 p.m.
  - ❖ Paschal Canon with Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and Agape breakfast to follow

## Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> PASCHA: The Feast of Feasts

- ❖ Agape Vespers @ 11 a.m. @ St. George, Boston with St. Mary's, Cambridge & St. John's
- 



# Donations for Lent and Holy Week

The Lenten Season will soon be under way and soon Holy Week and Pascha will be here as well. There are many things, as you know, that the Church will be needing for all of the special services coming up, and we ask for your participation and support.

If you would like to offer a donation to the Church of St. John of Damascus for the health of or in memory of any of your family members or friends, please fill out the form below and mail it back to the church office as soon as possible.

We thank you and pray that you experience a most joyfully rewarding and fruitful Lenten season and celebration of our Lord's Holy Pascha.



Dear Fr. John,

It would be a great joy for me/us (**envelope #** ) to offer a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for my Paschal gift to the church. Please accept this donation for:

(please circle one)

for the health of or in memory of:

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Given by:

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\_\_\_ **Please list in the Palm Sunday bulletin**

or

\_\_\_ **Please list in the Pascha (Easter) Bulletin**

Deadline for donations is Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008



# 2009 Stewardship Campaign

*"Every good and perfect gift is from above"*

A big **THANK YOU** to the parishioners of St. John's listed below and on the back of this page for sending back their 2009 Stewardship Pledge forms as of **February 4, 2009**. The parish truly appreciates your commitment and support as a steward of the Church of St. John of Damascus. To date, **408 out of 598** parishioners have sent in their 2009 stewardship pledge forms. Remember ... **every parishioner 18 years and older** must submit a pledge form each year.

If you have not submitted your 2009 pledge, you can get a pledge form by contacting the church office. You can also download the form or submit your pledge online at [www.stjohnd.org/stewardship](http://www.stjohnd.org/stewardship). We will continue to update this list periodically over the next month or so as more of our faithful and dedicated stewards of God's church at St. John's submit their 2009 pledge.

As always, please feel free to call the church office (781.326.3046) or e-mail [churchoffice@stjohnd.org](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnd.org) if you have any questions.

Diana Abdelahad  
Fred Abdelahad  
Joseph Abdelahad  
Mary Abdelahad  
Gail Abdelnour  
James Abdelnour  
Odette Abdelnour  
Antoinette Affsa  
Carole Affsa  
Doreen Affsa  
Fred Affsa  
Rose Affsa  
Russell Affsa  
James Ahto  
Mary Ahto  
Richard Ahto  
Douglas Arbeely  
Adele Ash  
Elysa Aswad  
George Aswad  
Gloria Aswad  
Herbert Aswad  
Lorraine Aswad  
Mitchell Aswad  
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Vivian Aswad  
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Matthew Bargoot  
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Christine Bezreh  
Dolores Bezreh  
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Rola Bezreh  
George Bezreh, II  
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Gloria Cahaly  
John Cahaly  
Joyce Cahaly  
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Susan Cahaly  
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Rosemarie Camerano  
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Louella Ann Cardoos  
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Stephan Cardoos  
Laurice Carty  
Lisa Cassarino  
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Lisa Derany  
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Gail Devine  
Sandra DiBacco  
Dianne DiFonso  
Elias Dikmak  
Georgette Dikmak  
Joan Dikmak  
Louise Dikmak  
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Karen Djerf  
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John Shagoury  
Joseph Shagoury  
Mary Shagoury  
Priscilla Shagoury  
Marie Shaker  
Annie Shimp  
Corrine Solomon  
James Solomon  
Paula Spada  
Linda Spruce  
Andronikos Stamboulides  
Rose Marie Stamboulides  
Dolores Tabet

Dorothy Tahmosh  
George Taksery  
Derek Tawa  
Ella Tawa  
Jennifer Tawa  
Kathleen Tawa  
Leslie Tawa  
Ms Lorraine Tawa  
Madelyn Tawa  
Michael Tawa  
Philip Tawa  
Rose Marie Tawa  
Thomas Tawa  
Alexander Teebagy  
Jean Teebagy  
Joan Teebagy  
Rev. John Teebagy  
Gail Tetelman  
Mark Tetelman  
Mary Topjian  
Susan Totten  
Deborah Tsillas  
Demetrios Tsillas  
Mary Turk  
Steven Turk  
Karen Vachon  
Kathryn Vachon  
Audrey Vogel  
Deborah Vogel  
Emily Vogel  
Haney Waishek  
Olivia Waishek  
Andrew Weinstein  
Barbara Weinstein  
Grace Wyshak  
Michael Wyshak  
Agnes Zahka  
Albert Zahka  
Alexandra Zahka  
Camille Zahka  
Dana Zahka  
David Zahka  
Derek Zahka  
Edward Zahka  
Edward Zahka  
Erica Zahka  
George Zahka  
Gloria Zahka  
Leila Zahka  
Lorice Zahka  
Marion Zahka  
Peter Zahka  
Robert Zahka  
Wayne Zahka  
Albert Zahka Jr.  
Mary Zelaway  
Mirna Zelic



The Virgin Mary Society invites you to their

## *Annual Lenten Dinner*

Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 from 5 pm – 6:30 pm

Donation: \$12 (adults) and \$6 (children)

Menu: Baked Fish, M'judarra (Lentils), Spinach Pies, Salad  
Dessert and Coffee

For reservations please call/email the church office at  
781.326.3046 or [churchoffice@stjohnd.org](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnd.org)

*All proceeds to benefit the 2009 project of the VMS – special needs children*