



STAMATOULA
MAVROMATIS
CHLENTZOS



1906 - 2013



STAMATINA CHLENTZOS

Following the Funeral Service of Mrs. Stamatina (Tula) Chlentos, Vikki Vrettos Fraioli asked if I would consider offering my Eulogy, in written format, to the *Kytherian Society of California*, so they could properly honor her at their annual luncheon held at the Resurrection Parish in Castro Valley on Sunday, September 29, 2013. Please accept this condensed version of my funeral eulogy in memory of the soul of the handmaiden of God, Tula Mavromatis Chlentos.

FR. MICHAEL PREVAS

Former Resident of Castro Valley
Stamatina (Tula) Chlentos passed away in Pleasanton January 15, 2013.

Tula recently celebrated her 106th Birthday with her family. Stamatina Mavromatis Chlentos was born in Christorforianika, Kythera, Greece on November 1, 1906. Her parents were Antonis Mavromatis and Giannoula Koulentianos. Her grandfather was the priest Fr. Dionisios Haralambos Koulentianos.

Stamatina had two sisters Lefkothea and Georgia and one brother Panagiotis. Stamatina came to America in 1931 when she was 25 and joined the Philoptochos Society shortly thereafter. She married Angelo Chlentos in 1931. She has two daughters, Teddi Zes (Tikey) from San Jose and Jeanne Argiros (Jim) from Acampo, five grandchildren and eight great grand-children. Her courageous life allowed her to be a founding member of the Resurrection Church in Castro Valley, but most importantly, one of the initial stewards who assisted and registered as a member of the Ladies Philoptochos Society of the Greek Archdiocese (at the time) of North South America in 1931 (at the age of 25).

Everyone who knew Tula recognized they were in the presence of a special person. From the time of her youth, Tula had a special place of honor in her Papou's heart. Every Sunday morning, the Rev. Fr. Dionysios Koulentianos (of blessed memory) would take his young, precious granddaughter to participate and assist in the Divine Services of the Churches on the island of Kythera. This special blessing afforded Tula the opportunity of literally memorizing countless church hymns. Often times when I visited Tula, either in San Jose or at her final home in Pleasanton, after reading many prayers, we would sing various church hymns. In her scratchy 106 (or so...) year old voice, Tula would flawlessly sing praises to God, His Mother, the Saints or even the Holy Cross. Several times I found myself listening and observing as Tula would sing with such joy that it literally seemed pointless for me to sing along. During the hymns Tula would often become emotional, especially when singing the Apolytikion (Dismissal Hymn) of the Panagia Myrtdiotissa.

As we all know Tula was a woman of tremendous faith, who loved her family. Like a good girl growing up in a traditional Greek family, Tula, like most girls was encouraged to get married and have a family. What most people don't know about Tula is, her desire was to lead a monastic (celibate) life. Knowing her parents would most likely not approve of her choice; Tula got married to Evangelos Chlentos and together they had two daughters.

While being a married woman carried many responsibilities, Tula was able to gel a prayerful monastic lifestyle and the dutiful housewife into one world. Rising early in the morning before the rest of the family, Tula knelt (even beyond 100 years old!) before our Lord in humble prayer, but yet found time to have breakfast prepared when the family awoke.

Now that the good stories are over, let me tell you another side of this faithful devout woman of blessed memory. Possessing Greek blood flowing through her veins, Tula could often times be a tad (gulp!) stubborn! One day out of the kindness of his heart, Tula's son-in-law Dr. Tikey Zes was trying to help his aging mother-in-law prune her trees. While he thought he was doing a good job, in fact turned out to be exactly the opposite. Tula not only critiqued his sincere efforts, but had him descend the ladder, while hastily climbed the very same ladder to show him how it's done (at about 100 years old...or so).

I feel very honored to not only have known Tula, but to offer her our church's holy sacraments. I do however feel most honored that upon our last gathering, after receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion Tula blessed me and said,

*“ΠΑΥΤΕΡ, Η ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑ ΜΑΖΙΝ ΣΟΥ,
(Father, may our Most Holy Lady be with you).*