



THE LAMENT OF RACHEL

# ZOE

for Life!

## An Orthodox Christian Initiative

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440/893-9990

hotline number 877/436-LIFE (5433)

[www.zoeforlifeonline.org](http://www.zoeforlifeonline.org)

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## Welcome Olga!

Everyone at ZOE is pleased to introduce our newest Board Member to you! Her name is Olga Rafidi, and she will be working with our birth parents, as well as those who seek to expand their family through adoption.

Olga was born in Jerusalem, Palestine, and grew up in the Antiochian Orthodox Church. She came to the United States as a teenager, and has participated in the life of the church through teaching Sunday school, acting as parish Youth Director, and as a counselor at the Orthodox Camp at Antiochian Village since 1985.

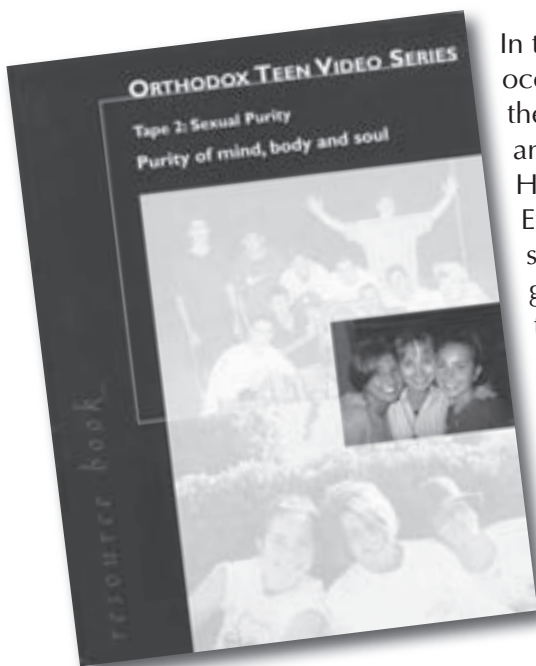
Professionally she has earned her BA in Psychology and MA in Counseling and Human Development from Walsh College. She has worked in clinical settings and domestic violence shelters for more than 15 years, before being led to adoption work. She holds an Ohio Supervising Counselor License, a National Counseling Certification and a Tier I and Tier II Assessor Certification. Maternity and adoption have been her focus over the past seven years. Her passion for adoption, both for the birth and adoptive families, she believes is a ministry. "Most importantly, for the infants who need good, stable and loving homes. I have witnessed God's hand at work in every adoption I have managed." We could not be more blessed than to have her join us in our work. Welcome, Olga!



## Sexual Purity by Bill Sinis

In the past several months, Mrs. Pauline Koplín had come to me on different occasions and asked if I would be interested in speaking to our youth about the importance of sexual purity in one's life. I was interested, I felt it was an issue that had to be tackled not only at home but at the church as well. How can we as Orthodox Christians not address the issue of sexual purity? Everywhere we look in our church we see icons of saints who didn't just struggle to keep their virginity until their wedding day but until their graves. So I felt instead of just showing off our sexually pure saints to those who come into the church from other denominations and speaking glowingly of their superhuman struggles we might actually need to start emulating them. As the saying goes "We reverence the saints only by emulating them".

So about a month ago, after a Sunday service, Father Paul Christy, Micah Hirshy, Leah Apalodimas, and I rounded our youth up to discuss and answer questions regarding the role of sex in our lives from an Orthodox perspective.



Story continues on page 7

# Milissa's Story

For starters, my name is Milissa. I come from a small town in New Jersey, along with three brothers, all of which are younger than me. This is my story...

When I was four years old I was put into a children's home, where I would be raised until I was sixteen. My brother Jacob came two years later and we resided there together with many other children who came from broken homes. When Jacob turned fifteen, he decided to go live with his father in New Jersey. I never had a father to run to and my mother was very unstable. Soon after my brother left I was sent out to live. This was because I had gotten pregnant and had an abortion. Somehow they found out and what I had done was completely aside from everything they had taught me. I was sixteen and so afraid for my future. I didn't see any other options at the time. My guilt made me promise to myself and to God that never would I ever make a decision like that again. If I happened to get pregnant again I would have to put all my trust in fate and in the Lord.

For almost two years, I had been moving in and out of friends houses to avoid living with a mother that I hardly even knew. I couldn't go to school because I was underage and didn't have a guardian. After moving to Harlem New York, I realized that my life and my habits needed to change. God had more hope in me. I had more hope in me. I had to get out or I would never get anywhere. There was one problem ... I had nowhere to go. I had run out of options. I was so desperate for change that I called my mother, but at the time she was living in a women's shelter. I decided to call my youngest brother's father, and he said I could stay with him and his family. Texas was a long way from home, but this was the perfect opportunity for me to change my lifestyle, meet new people, and most importantly to finish school.

Five months passed and I got pregnant. I knew I couldn't take the easy way out this time. I had to do this. I promised. Now it was time for me to take responsibility. Despite their best efforts, the baby's grandparents could not convince me to get another abortion. I had my mind set and it wouldn't change. Their anger and rage drove them to kick me out literally onto the streets. I had no family so far away from home, so I was stuck. Again I resorted to staying with friends until my mother could somehow get me a ticket to live with her in Virginia. By this time she had gotten her own town home under sections eight. Finally the churches in New Jersey and New York got together and agreed to get me a ticket to get to Virginia. I was so scared. What would it be like to live with my mom?

When I got to Virginia, I had a sense of relief. I had somewhere to stay and best of all I was reunited with my youngest brother. What an angel he was and still is. The baby's father and I continued a long distance relationship until one day, three months later he sent me a long text message telling me we couldn't be together because his



parents despised me. What could have been a simple as a break up turned into my desperate call for help. After spending a week in a mental home, I came home three and a half months pregnant and ready to let go of the baby's father and his family, who were in no way willing to help me with my baby. It hurt me to know that at one point I trusted and loved these people.

**For four months, I was so scared. I felt so helpless.**

For four months, I was so scared. I felt so helpless. My job had cut my hours. How was I going to get enough money together to support my baby? My mom couldn't help me any more than she already was. I didn't know what to do. One day I got a phone call. Someone from ZOE for Life wanted to meet me. Finally I had hope. Maybe they could help! And they did!

The help I received was beyond what I ever would have expected in a million years. Alyssa was such a nice girl. We spent hours discussing things about ourselves, our journeys, and our goals in life. After coming home that night, and putting away all my sons' new things, I sat in my bed with tears streaming down my face. God had answered my prayers. He sent me those angels I had been praying for and I will forever be so grateful.

So, here we have a story far from the average story of an average teenager. We have a story of struggle, betrayal, and massive heartache. It's the story of a now eighteen year old girl, scared, but full of prayer, hope and faith. Faith in a Lord, who only asks for patience. My life has changed tremendously. I continue to trust that everything falls into place. For some reason, God thought I was ready now to nurture a child. I was lucky enough to have ZOE for Life as a stepping stone to my

Story continues on page 7

From November, 2008 through June, 2009,  
Our Angels have spread their wings! THANK YOU!



The Standing Conference of the  
Canonical Orthodox Bishops  
in the Americas  
His Grace IRINEJ, Bishop of  
Australia and New Zealand  
Erievue Metal Treating  
Company  
Thano G. Pasalis  
The D'Amore Tatman Group

**Our Archangels \$2,500 and Above**

Ladies Philoptochos Society of St. Nicholas Greek  
Orthodox Church, Troy, MI  
St. Nicholas Philoptochos Society, Ann Arbor, MI

**Our Seraphim \$1000 to \$2,499**

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh Ladies  
Philoptochos Society  
Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos  
Society, Marietta, GA  
Nick and Kathy Lekas  
Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church, Novato, CA  
St. Nectarios Benevolent Fund, Seattle, WA  
St. Paul Ladies Philoptochos Society, North Royalton, OH  
SS. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral,  
Cleveland Heights, OH  
SS. Constantine and Helen Philoptochos Society,  
Cleveland Heights, OH  
Kory Warr

**Our Cherubim \$500 to \$999**

Rev. Joseph Kreta  
John C. Murton  
St. Barbara Philoptochos Society, Dallas TX  
St. George, Rancho Mirage, CA  
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Charlottesville, VA  
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Fort Wayne, IN  
St. Olga's Sisterhood, Pittsburgh, PA  
St. Paul Apostle Orthodox Christian Church, Dayton, OH

**Our Guardian Angels \$100 - \$499**

All Saints Orthodox Church, Hartford, CT  
Anonymous  
Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos  
Christina Books  
Gerald and Sandra Boonstra  
Christ and Photia Boukis  
Dean and Sandy Boyaci  
V. Rev. Gary Breton and Family  
Very Rev. Robert and Pani Kathleen Buczak

**Our Guardian Angels \$100 - \$499 (continued)**

Christ the Savior Church, Southbury, CT  
Katina Columbus  
Nancy Domiano  
Eastern Orthodox Women's Guild, Cleveland, OH  
Peter and Marie Eliades  
Dr. James E. Elliott  
Elpis Philoptochos Society, Memphis, TN  
B. Fairbanks  
Dmytro Farion  
Margaret and William Gall  
Greek Ladies Philoptochos Society of  
St. Haralambos Church, Canton, OH  
Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation Ladies  
Philoptochos, Kansas City, MO  
Deborah L. Grysiak  
Tolina and Charles Hennighausen  
Holy Taxiarchai and St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox  
Church,  
Niles, OH  
Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church, Livonia, MI  
Dr. and Mrs. Mark Horattas  
Image and Likeness Iconography  
Inter-Orthodox Council of Greater Cleveland  
Janet and John Ivanovich  
Clara Karagiozos  
Andrew and Katherine Kartalis  
Ken and Jeanine Kozak  
Ladies Philoptochos Archangel Michael Church,  
Roslyn Heights, NY  
Ladies Philoptochos Kimisis Theotokou, Brooklyn, NY  
Ladies Philoptochos of St. Nicholas, Flushing, NY  
Ladies Philoptochos Society of Holy Cross Greek  
Orthodox Church, Pittsburgh, PA  
Ladies Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity Greek  
Orthodox Church, Indianapolis, IN  
Paul Laskovich  
Charlie and Lorraine Lehman  
Nick and Kathy Lekas  
David Macko  
Marjorie and Bert Moyar  
David and Ulli Nelson and Family  
Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration  
Nicholas and Barbara Pangrace  
Nicholas and Barbara Papas  
Philoptochos Ladies Society of St. Nicholas,  
Bethlehem, PA  
Philoptochos of St. Barbara, Troy, NY  
Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox  
Church, Raleigh, NC  
Philoptochos Society of The Annunciation, Tampa, FL



# MORE of Our Angels that have made a HUGE difference!

## Our Guardian Angels \$100 - \$499 (continued)

Philoptochos Society of Church of Our Savior Rye, NY  
Philoptochos Society of Winston-Salem  
V. Rev. and Mrs. Daniel Rohan  
Fr. Yakov Rohrer, MD  
St. Andrews Philoptochos Society, Randolph, NJ  
St. Barbara Philoptochos Society, Chapel Hill, NC  
St. Catherine Philoptochos Society, Camp Hill, PA  
St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Rocky River, OH  
St. Demetrios Philoptochos Society, Baltimore, MD  
St. George Church Ladies Philoptochos, Southgate, NY  
St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Eugene, OR  
St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church, Hudson, OH  
St. Irene Philoptochos, Chandler, AZ  
St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church, Brecksville, OH  
St. Mark Antiochian Orthodox Church, Hubbard, OH  
St. Nectarios Greek Orthodox Church, Roslindale, MA  
St. Nectarios Greek Orthodox Church Philoptochos Society, Roslindale, MA  
St. Stefanos Philoptochos Society, St. Petersburg, FL  
St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Ambridge, PA  
St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Pittsburgh, PA  
SS. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Merrillville, IN  
SS. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Richmond, VA  
Julia Simko  
Angelo and Susan Stames  
Katherine Strakes  
Transfiguration of Our Savior Greek Orthodox Church, Florence, SC  
Mike and Mary Vasilakes  
Dr. and Mrs. Andrew Vendelis  
Dick and Anna Warren  
V. Rev. Fr. Alexander F.C. Webster, PhD. and Matushka Kathleen M. Webster  
Women of St. Ignatius, Twin Falls, ID  
V. Rev. and Mrs. Michael Zahirsky

## Angels up to \$100

Anonymous  
All Saints of America Antiochian Orthodox Mission, Homer, AK  
Thomas L. and Gail A. Allison  
Fr. and Mrs. Cosmin Antonescu  
Raymond Asik  
John and Cynthia Asimakopoulos  
Assumption Greek Orthodox Church Philoptochos Ladies Society, Town & Country, MO  
Catherine Bartzis

## Angels up to \$100 (continued)

Nicholas and Kimberly Belessis  
Eleni Bizoukas  
John and Judy Bleba  
Valerie Bockman  
David and Linda Boltauzer  
Thomas and Evelyn Broslawik  
Anna Burnosky  
John and Jane Cap  
Helen K. Carbon  
Cathedral Agape Fund, Birmingham, AL  
Frank A. Chirakos  
Christ the Savior Orthodox Church, Harrisburg, PA  
Rev. German Ciuba  
Bess Comber  
Katherine and Peter Cordon  
Rev. German Ciuba  
George and Manal Dahdouh  
The D'Fantis Family  
V. Rev. and Mrs. Basil Duesenberry  
Vasiliki Filippousis  
Olga Sokur Foight  
Catherine Fygetakis  
Gregg and Grace P. Geanuracos  
Mr. and Mrs. John Gidicin  
Aleksandra C. Gopsill  
Greek Ladies Philoptochos Society of St. Nicholas, Atlantic City, NJ  
Greek Orthodox Philoptochos, Burlington, VT  
George and Mary Halkias  
Steve and Nancy Hall  
Rev. and Mrs. Stanley Harakas  
Steven and Janene Hatch  
Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Helgens  
Margaret Hocosky  
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Maitland, FL  
Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society, Ambridge, PA  
Jeanne Homik  
Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Hopko  
Inter-Orthodox Council of Greater Cleveland  
Robert and Sharon Jackson  
Emiley Jensen  
Fr. Nick and Anastasia Jonas  
Rev. Fr. and Mrs. Charles Joanides  
Christopher and Frances Kalavritinos  
Michael Kapeluck  
Clara Karagiozis  
Mary Karagiozis  
Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Kazich  
Paul and Elizabeth Keith  
Linda Keriotis  
Judy M. Khoury

# Thank you! Thank You!! Thank You!!!

## Angels up to \$100 (continued)

Theodore E. Khoury  
Mr. and Mrs. Alexis Klimoff  
Nancy Knudtsen  
Xenia and Symeon Kobal  
Michael and Kathleen Kolberg  
Peggy Kontos  
Angelo and Anna Koukoulis  
Mary and Stephen Krill  
Helen Ksenyak  
Ladies Philoptochos of SS. Markella and Demetrios  
Greek Orthodox Church, Ft. Walton Beach, FL  
Fr. Michael Laffoon  
Mina Lardas  
Tamara P. Lesnick  
Matthew and Olga Lobas  
Mary Lytle  
Rosanne and Peter Maragos  
Lillian Mardis  
Rev. and Mrs. Paul Martin  
Fr. and Mrs. Michael Massouh  
Paul and Joan Maty  
Irene Mazanek  
Monks of New Skete  
Rev. and Mrs. John R. Nakonachny  
Connie L. Navarro  
Stas and Jennifer Nicholaides  
Carrie Nickolas  
Joseph and Marilyn Nucci  
Rev. John and Mrs. Margaret Orfanakos  
Our Lady of Kazan Skete

Fr. Herman Rusky Palomnik  
Paula H. Pangrace  
Irene Pashesnik  
Jonathan P. Patronik  
Louis Petcu  
Stephen and Margaret Pinchot  
Jimmy and Kate Prescott  
Pauline Proctor  
Marian Prodes  
David and Rajka Ries  
Georgia Roach  
Andrew and Yuliya Rodzianko  
Rev. Daniel Rohan  
St. Andrew Iconography School  
St. Barbara Philoptochos, Daytona Beach, FL  
St. Catherine Sisterhood, Hagerstown, MD  
St. Constantine Hellenic Orthodox Church,  
Palos Hills, IL  
St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, Platina, CA  
St. Matrona Ladies Society, Carnagie, PA  
St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral,  
Brooklyn, NY  
St. Paisius Orthodox Seminary  
St. Sophia Ladies Philoptochos Society, San Antonio, TX  
St. Xenia Monastic Community  
SS. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox  
Church, Palos Hills, IL  
Walter and Nina Samijlenko  
Aristotle and Collette Sarlas  
Maria Sarris  
Betty Fesnak Scherry  
Rev. Fr .Basil and Linda Shaheen  
John and Angela Skinner  
Rev. Robert Stephanopoulos  
Rev. Raymond and Dorothy Sundland, Jr.  
Ted and Irene Theodore  
Drs. George and Anne Thomas  
Fr. and Mrs. Patrick Tishel  
Anthony Vasilas  
Boris and Kathy Vuksanovich  
Fr. and Mrs., F, Stephen Walinski  
Nancy Westermann  
Rev. and Mrs. Gorge Wilson, Jr.  
Rev. and Mrs. Milan Zobenica  
Violet M. Zunmich

## *One Perfect Baby*

*Two little feet,  
so tender and sweet*

*That have walked with the angels  
On heavenly streets*

*Ten little fingers, and ten little toes,  
With every new day continue to grow.*

*One little mouth that sings to our Lord.  
And two little ears to hear His word.*

*One perfect baby for us to love,  
With wisdom and guidance from our Father above.*

*- Kelly Maloney*



## In Honor of

100th Anniversary of the birth of  
V. Rev. Mother Alexandra 1-05-09  
All the newborns and their Guardian Angel  
Benjamin Michael, Irene Rachel and Luke Aaron Grysiak  
Jeremiah and Mary Anya Haugh  
Paula Kappos  
St. Nectarios Philoptochos

## In Memory of

Alexandra  
Margaret and Steve  
Mary Antonakos  
Angeliki Capous  
Henry Grabowski and Francis Chamberlin  
Milan and Lenka Chorovich  
Pauline Economou  
Henry Grabowski and Frances Chamberlin  
Peter Homik  
George Keriotis  
The parents, grandparents, sister and  
brother-in-law of Mina Lardas  
Anya Macko  
Anastasia Maggelakis  
Nicholas Nicholaides  
Winefred Roberts  
Walter and Mary Rohan  
Walter and Nina Samijlenko  
Joyce 'Zoe' Sarlas  
Eugene Simko  
Petro and Maria Suschenko  
William J. Schneider  
Unborn Victims of Abortion  
Jessica Prescott Viscount  
Milena Vuksanovich  
Ruth Weaver  
Particia F. Zouyras

## For the Special Occasion of

Bill Jonas' 60th Birthday  
Christmas  
March for Life  
Thanksgiving  
The Birth of Our Savior Jesus Christ  
The Needs of ZOE  
Right to Life Walk

## Greetings,

My brother and I attended the Right to Life March and Rally in Washington, D.C. yesterday. We wanted to thank ZOE for Life! for making it possible. The trip coordinator and the clergy on board the bus were fantastic. It felt like one big family from start to finish.

Thanks again for allowing us to attend,  
Your friends in Christ,  
Peter and George Vardakas

**Editor's Note:** ZOE sponsors a bus to the March for Life every January. Why not make plans with friends, and join us? Please contact Kathy at 440-888-9990 for your RSVP.

## *Double or even triple* your gift to ZOE for Life!

Make your gift go even further! Many companies participate in gift matching programs. Some companies will even match gifts by retirees and spouses of employees. To find out if your company has a matching gift policy, please contact your Human Resources representative or Charitable Giving/Grants Department. If your company is eligible, request a matching gift form from your employer, and send it completed and signed with your gift. We will do the rest. The impact of your gift may be doubled or possibly tripled!! Thank you!

## To All Parish Council Presidents and Board Members

Please consider our urgent request to add the SCOBA endorsed ministry of ZOE for Life! as a line item on the 2010 budget for your community. ZOE serves those in need across the country. Your support will change lives forever!

## Milissa's Story...continued

success as a mother. My faith is much stronger now because of their great generosity and at the time when I needed it most. Because of ZOE for Life, my baby will have a bed to sleep in. He'll have diapers and he will be clothed, but most of all he will have assurance that there is someone that can help in times of need. He will grow to understand that the works of God can go a long way. He works directly through ZOE for Life, which in essence is the perfect name for an organization like theirs. Zoe translated means *life* in Greek. So the name is really "Life for Life", and that explains it exactly. These people dedicate their lives to helping other lives

progress. Thank you so much ZOE for Life. My gratitude is tremendous and your generosity will never be forgotten...

*With Love, Milissa*



**Editor's Note** – Since the writing of this letter, Milissa has welcomed her son, Damian, into the world. Damian escorted his mother to her high school graduation.

## Sexual Purity...continued

We first split them up and the boys came with Father Paul, and the girls and I stayed with Leah and Micah. Father Paul spoke to the young men about some of his own struggles growing up and how they should focus more on what they want to achieve and not so much what they want to avoid. We watched the video Sexual Purity and Healthy Relationships. Then he told a wonderful story to illustrate his point, a story about when he and his friend were riding a bicycle and his friend crashed into a parked car. He said that as they were riding his friend got fixated on the car because that was precisely the object he wanted to avoid. So instead of watching the way the road turned he watched the car and despite all of Father Paul's warnings at the end that's what he crashed into. The point Father Paul was trying to make was that young adults these days are told so many times how and why they should avoid sex they sometimes go crashing into it. As parents and teachers we should explain the consequences of sex before or

## ZOE Christmas Tree



The Tsirambidis family celebrated the meaning of giving with their extended family and children over the holidays 2008. They traditionally gather on Christmas Eve to exchange gifts with one another; but this year, a twist was added. The children put up a Christmas tree and decorated it and labeled it the "ZOE" tree. As they learned about the meaning of "life" and giving to others, the Christmas story was read, they decorated stockings as a craft and filled them with items they had each purchased with their own money from earnings at home. They told how their "gifts" were to be given to babies and infants born to families in need. Afterwards they all sang carols and rejoiced together. We hope and pray that our children, who are blessed in health and love, remember the outpouring of love they can offer, even in small ways!

outside of marriage. It's important and the fear of these consequences keep many youth on the right road. But we should also show them the road as well. The positives of the struggle, the rewards and blessings that God gives to those who are brave enough to withstand the many temptations of this present world. The blessing of peace of mind, and clarity of thought and of a life that is not highlighted by fears and anxiety but one that is full of a natural joy born of a natural struggle.

This was the opening discussion on sexual purity for our Orthodox youth and one I feel was very beneficial. We will continue with these discussions in the future because we know the road is long and bumpy and unfortunately many parked cars await those struggling for sexual purity.

All we can try and do with God's help is point towards the road that leads to life.





# ZOE

for Life!

3352 Mayfield Road  
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

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## Our Mission Statement

ZOE for Life! is a non-profit, Christ-centered organization with three major goals:

1. To help women who need confidential emotional and spiritual support during crisis pregnancies
2. To assist Orthodox Christians seeking to adopt; and
3. To provide an Orthodox Christian education for Pure Living and other resources.



## Generous Donation from St. Nicholas Philoptochos

Dear Ladies,

Please accept this check in the amount of \$5,000.00 from our 15th Annual Yassou Golf Outing, which was held the end of September at the Stonebridge Gold Club in Ann Arbor.

The main beneficiary this year was ZOE for Life! We know the money will be put to good use in your mission to support girls through a very difficult time in their lives, as well as to answer the prayers of couples who want to provide a loving home to a child.

May God bless you and your good work,  
Sincerely,

Margaret Yates,  
St. Nicholas Philoptochos President

## ZOE Needs You!

Are you blessed with office and computer skills? ZOE would love to hear from you. Perhaps you would consider sharing your talent with our office. If you have a few hours a week to share, contact Kathy at ZOE House at 440-888-9990. We would be so grateful.