

SINOS - SKADARESE

Patras, Achaia, Greece is a busy port city located on the Western end of the Gulf of Corinth leading out to the Ionian Sea. Passenger ferries from Patras to Venice, Bari, and Brindisi in Italy and to the Greek Ionian Islands of Corfu, Cephalonia and Zakynthos, have run for over a hundred years. Above the city is an important wine region principally producing Achaia Claus wines. Although most Greek immigrants reaching Omaha had been raised in small rural village environments, Louis Sinos was one of the few who hailed from a rather cosmopolitan area of Greece having been born in Patras on May 27, 1893.

Louis Sinos arrived at Ellis Island in 1913 and proceeded to New England where he became employed in the shoe manufacturing industry in Holyoke, Massachusetts. At that time, Massachusetts towns were the shoe factory for the United States. So many Greek immigrants became employed in this work that several cities had more than one Greek Orthodox Church by the 1920s. Thereafter Louis worked on the railroads as they were being built. He lived in Omaha and Council Bluffs where he met Maria Skadarese, a native of an Ionian island not far from Patras, Cephalonia.

Louis and Maria were married on November 4, 1923 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Moving to South Omaha (then a separately incorporated city), they both became employed in the packing plants and raised four children. Having some thespian bent with a necessary language facility, probably born of his experience as a young man in a large Greek city, Louis produced Greek plays including Athanasios Diakos and Golfo in Omaha. Production proceeds benefited the church. Savings from packing house employment later allowed the couple to purchase several homes near a "Greek Corner" at 25th and I Streets in South Omaha. They then owned an operated restaurants, including the Nash Cafe also in South Omaha.

The couple were active in St. John's Greek Orthodox Church on 16th Street and on Park Avenue. Louis Sinos' name appears as Secretary on the Articles of Incorporation of "St. John Greek Orthodox Church" recorded October 29, 1927. Joe Georges was President at this time. This was the royalist parish of Omaha led by Archbishop Vasilios. Articles of Incorporation for a Venizelist parish had been signed on October 26, 1927. Politics of Greece at the time completely influenced church politics but the

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two churches later rejoined as St. John's. During this difficult period much time and energy were required of church directors. Of all the 1927 officers and directors only the Sinos and Georges descendants remain as active communicants of St. John's. Constantine L. Sinos, the son of Louis and Maria, who married Helen Sinos (born on the Ionian Island of Corfu) later became President of St. John's. Louis Sinos, the son of Constantine Sinos, matched the difficult 1927 service of his grandfather during a local church division as a stalwart member of the Board of Directors of St. John's in 2006. The great grandson of Louis and Maria, Deacon Dino Sinos, became the first graduate of Holy Cross Seminary to have been born of an Omaha Greek family and presently serves as Deacon at St. John's.

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