



**SAINT DEMETRIOS PARISH NEWSLETTER**  
**JUNE 2024**

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V. REV. ARCHIMANDRITE FATHER PHILOTHEOS TOMCZEWSKI

**GRADUATION & APPRECIATION DAY – SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2024**

*Father's Day Celebration – Sunday, June 16, 2024*

*Images from Good Friday Services ~*





Christos Anesti!



PIC•COLLAGE



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## *A message from Father Philotheos ~*

Dear beloved Faithful of St. Demetrios,

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ! It is with tremendous joy in the risen Lord that I greet all of you as we prepare to enter the summer months. This past year has been truly a most beautiful and blessed year for our community and our faithful. Throughout this Ecclesiastical Year, you the beloved parishioners have come together in a spirit of fellowship and faith to accomplish great wonders, offer beautiful ministries and tremendous works for our sacred parish of St. Demetrios.

This spirit of working together for our community was truly exemplified with our annual Greek Festival, which was truly a most successful event, a wonderful weekend of beautiful weather, fellowship, faith and hard work. I offer my deepest sense of gratitude to the co-chairs Demo Simatos and Nick Giannakopoulos, the festival committee, and all of the dedicated volunteers who worked so hard, offering their time and their talents to ensuring the success of this most important fundraiser for our Church.

We must also stop and give thanks and congratulations to our wonderful GOYAns, who have so proudly represented our community throughout the year at all of the regional GOYA events. Recently they hosted the highly successful Indoor Olympics and participated in the annual GOYA Outdoor Olympics, and I congratulate each and every one of them for their amazing accomplishments throughout the year.

This weekend we have the great privilege of recognizing and honoring our most beloved youth of the parish as we celebrate Sunday School and Greek School Graduation. I offer my congratulations to all of the children for their wonderful efforts throughout the year in our Greek and Religious Education Programs. I thank the parents for bringing their children and recognizing the importance of these wonderful ministries I especially thank and offer my warmest gratitude to the all of the directors and teachers of these important schools, as without them we would not have this vital programs for our youth.

I wish all of you a most blessed, happy and healthy summer and for those of you who will be traveling, I wish you safe travels. Remember though that just because it is summer and there is no Sunday School does not mean we will not have Liturgy. Therefore, I encourage you all to continue to come to the church, continue to pray and worship together and continue to participate in the sacramental life of the church throughout the Summer.

May God bless you all. With much love in the Lord,

+Fr. Philotheos

## President's Message ~

Our main goal this month was to have a successful festival. Thanks to our small but mighty team, we did! Thank you to everyone who took the time to help prepare and continued working through this event, as well as all those who volunteered to help during our three-day Festival. But it's not too late to help - regardless if it is physical or monetary - any assistance will be deeply appreciated. Please contact the church office for more information.



***Congratulations to our Honorees receiving the Metropolis of New Jersey's Grand Banquet Awards!***

***Bottom Row Recipients:***

Zefie Filindras - Community Steward  
Evelyn Mariolis – Senior Steward

***Middle Row Recipients:***

Alexandra Velmahos - Greek School  
Jennifer Simatos – Youth Worker  
Mary Lou K Rivera - Sunday School

***Top Row Recipients:***

George Kane – Parish Council  
Luka Simatos – Youth Member  
Peggy Helen Coutros - Philoptochos

## PTO NEWS

Well rain certainly did *not* stop the fun - nor the Easter Bunny- on Easter Morning at our annual PTO Easter Egg Hunt!! Following Easter Morning Agapi service, children came downstairs to find the Easter Bunny and lots and lots of eggs filled with treats! And that wasn't all... The Easter Bunny gave out chocolate bunnies and chocolate crosses and took pictures with everyone! He even brought a friend! A sincere thank you to all who supported this special event!

Upcoming Events: Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup> for GRADUATION SUNDAY** and **Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup> for FATHERS DAY & FATHER OF THE YEAR!** PTO and fellow ministries will be reaching out for the special coffee hour support for these events.

Thank you to all who have been so supportive of the children's events throughout this school year! Enjoy your summer!!







## G.O.Y.A. NEWS

May was very busy for the GOYA. We hosted the annual Indoor Olympics. In attendance were 125 Goyans and their advisors from 13 different churches. It was a great day with friendly competition and fellowship. Constantine Katsilis took 3rd place in Jr. Checkers and Layna Albino-Ortiz placed 2nd in Switch Just Dance. Congratulations to all of our participants and winners. A big thank you to Callie Vosinas, Mary Lou Rivera, Marietta Kahlill, George Kane, Mike Koudis, Nick Vosinas, Jadyn and Kali Simatos, Nick, Cindy, Zach and Dean Giannakopoulos, Rachel Giannakopoulos, Debbie Mattos, and our Goya parents, Zoe Katsilis, Diana Regan, Jessica Ritzitis, Demos and Jennifer Simatos, Jennifer Kanellidis, and David Haring for all of your help and support. We also had great help judging from Angelo Tsimpeds, our chess master, Dionysi Aravaitinos, from Piscataway, Phil Nicholas and Angelo Vrohidis, from Union, and Fr. Michael Diamond. In addition, thank you to the Barge Restaurant for providing a delicious lunch for all and Evan's Restaurant for breakfast bagels. We could not have such a successful event without all of you.





Congratulations to Jennifer Simatos and Luka Simatos! They are this year's Youth Worker and Youth member Honorees for the Metropolis of New Jersey's Grand Banquet Award dinner, held May 13. Please join us in congratulating them on receiving their awards.



Congratulations to all the other recipients this year!



On May 25 & May 26 the Goya participated in the Outdoor Olympics. We led the parade and enjoyed the overnight stay at Monmouth University. Events included track and field, swimming, and volleyball. For the first time in a long time we had a volleyball team to represent Perth Amboy. The Goyans once again stepped up to try something new. No one has ever played volleyball on a team before. They went in with a great attitude to try something new and have fun. That's what it's all about! Lucas Estella placed 3rd in 50m freestyle, 50m backstroke, and 50 m butterfly- Way to go!!



Our annual festival was a big hit! We had so much fun performing for you!



We are so proud of our Goyans! They have had an amazing year. Congratulations to Lucas Estella for representing us well this year as Perth Amboy's first Mr. Goya and on graduating high school. May he have continued success at Rutgers University, where he'll be attending school in the fall.

If you know of any youth aged 12 and entering 7th grade in the fall, join our group. Contact Jen Simatos 732-343-2266 or email at [jsimatos9815@gmail.com](mailto:jsimatos9815@gmail.com)

We have several fun events planned over the summer. Come join us!



## GREEK SCHOOL NEWS

Dear Parishioners,

With the grace of God, we reached the end of the school year again. Our young students, after a tiring but enjoyable year, are ready to start their summer vacation!

The last class for this year will be on Wednesday June 5th and Graduation Day will be on Sunday, June 9th where after the Divine Liturgy we will have a special celebration. Our students will receive their certificates, and then we will all enjoy lunch together which will be provided by the parents of our students.

Congratulations to Mrs. Alexandra Velmahos, who was this year's Greek School Teacher Honoree at the Metropolis of New Jersey's Grand Banquet held on May 13th.



On behalf of the Greek school, we wish you a wonderful summer full of health and happiness!!! See you in September!



**St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church**

**OUR ENTIRE CHURCH COMMUNITY  
IS CORDIALLY INVITED  
TO CELEBRATE  
OUR SPECIAL DAY!**

# **GRADUATION Sunday**



**JUNE 9, 2024**

**Greek School and Sunday School Graduation  
Teacher Appreciation Altar Boy Appreciation  
Recognition of Graduates  
Philoptochos Awards  
Memorial Scholarship Awards**

**Refreshments sponsored by our PTO**



## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



### CONGRATULATIONS 2024 GRADUATES!



#### Megan DaCunha

Megan DaCunha graduated from Colonia High School and will attend Fairleigh Dickinson University for Vascular Sonography. She was involved in numerous programs including Heroes and Cool Kids, Spanish Honor Society, Tri-Music Honor Society, and Robert Wood Johnson Hospital Safety Ambassadors. She was also on Varsity Softball since her freshman year. We wish Megan good luck and best wishes in college and her plans for a career to provide specialized ultrasound diagnostic testing for vascular patients. She will certainly be an asset in the medical field one day.

Congratulations, Megan!



## Lucas Estela

Lucas graduated Magna Cum Laude from Saint Joseph's High School, Metuchen NJ. Lucas was a member of the National Science Honor Society. Lucas will be attending Rutgers University in the fall majoring in Biology with a minor in Marine Science.

With his degree, Lucas plans to become involved in research projects studying ocean life, hoping to make significant contributions to ocean toxin research and, one day, hopes to have his own research ship to sail all over the world.

Lucas has been actively involved and extremely helpful to Father Philotheos as an Altar Server. He competed in the Mr. and Miss GOYA event and was selected as "Mr. GOYA"! Additionally, Lucas retrieved the Holy Cross during our Blessing of the Waters on January 7 and was blessed by His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos.

Lucas is a wonderful role model for our youth, and we wish him the best of luck in all his endeavors.



## Marie Khalil

Marie Khalil graduated from Kean University with a Masters Degree in Occupational Therapy. She worked diligently to attain this specialty degree and certification to assist people who are struggling with particular deficiencies. Currently, Marie works in the Edison School District teaching children with learning disabilities. She is now capable, skilled and entitled to assist those with medical or cognitive disorders to improve the quality of their lives. Marie is approaching a wonderful career and a bright future! Congratulations, Marie!



Mary Lou K. Rivera was this year's Religious Educator Honoree at the Metropolis of New Jersey Grand Banquet. She has been a devoted teacher for 28 years now and still exudes her responsibility and reliability in her own quiet but steadfast manner. Our children love and respect her tremendously, as do each of us as her colleagues who witness her diligence and dedication. Congratulations, Mary Lou!





## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

### *Congratulations to Mrs. Diana Kostopoulos – Mother of the Year!*

Please join us in congratulating Diana Kostopoulos as the Philoptochos Mother of the Year, a well-deserved honor! Diana has always been - and continues to be - a strong supporter of the Philoptochos, helping whenever and wherever she is needed. We are delighted to extend this honor to her.



A special Coffee Hour, chaired by Helen Catelanos and her team, followed the announcement to celebrate Mother's Day.



### ***COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS!***

Michael Koudis had a special birthday on Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. On Saturday, family and friends celebrated his big 6-0 birthday here at the church hall. Guests wore costumes from the 60's, 70's, and 80's dance eras. Happy Birthday, Mike!

Do you have any announcements you'd like to share with the community...Milestone birthdays or anniversaries? Weddings? Births? Graduations? Special Awards?

If yes, please contact the church office (by phone, email, or drop by the office with the information), and it can be included in the next distributed Newsletter.