



*Parish
Newsletter
December 2018*

Saint Demetrios

41-47 Wisteria St., Perth Amboy, N.J. (732) 826-4466 Rev. George Parsenios

Hours for Service

Orthros: 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

December 25 - The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

25 Δεκεμβριου – Η Γεννησης του Χριστου



The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10).

Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox

knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib" (Esaias 1:3).

But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

Philoptochos - Vasilopita Sale

(From Agia Skepi)

\$17.00 each (one size)

Last day to order: December 2nd Pick up date: December 23rd

Please call Marietta Khalil at 732-925-9699





Message from Father George

Christmas and Easter are the two great poles of the liturgical year, and everything else in our Church life spins around them. The entire fall season leads up to Christmas, and the entire spring leads up to Easter. And like two separate poles of the globe, Christmas and Easter seem like opposites in many ways. One focuses on birth; the other focuses on rising from the dead. One is celebrated in the icy cold of winter, the other in the warm sunlight of early spring. The two feasts seem so very different. But they are actually very similar. The Church connects them in various ways. For instance, we have a 40-day fast period only two times per year: one before Christmas and one before Easter. Many other liturgical similarities exist, but need not be counted here. The Bible also connects the birth and death of Christ. Even when Jesus is born, for instance, his coming death is never far from view. Herod the Great kills all the children in Bethlehem looking for Jesus, while the son of Herod succeeds later in killing Jesus himself. His death is, thus, already signaled at his birth. Why, then, is this so? Why are Christmas and Easter so closely connected? The answer is simple. In both Christmas and Easter, we see God renewing and remaking his creation. St. Paul says that those who are in Christ are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17), and we see in the birth and death and resurrection of Christ, the renewing, not only of our humanity, but of the entire created world. The curse of Adam is reversed. Adam was created directly by God with no earthly Father, and the world is recreated in Christ, who also has no earthly Father. The disobedience of Eve is reversed by the obedience of the Theotokos. The whole world is made new in Christmas. In Pascha, this work of renewal is brought to completion. If Adam ate of the tree and fell away from God, Christ is suspended on a tree and returns us to the presence of God. All is made new, and the created world which fell into darkness has been recreated in glory. In these two great feasts of the Church – Christmas and Easter – we see the renewing of our humanity. Now, we need to live like people made new. When insulted, forgive. When tempted, resist. When filled with all good things, share with those in need. In this way, we proclaim the Lord's birth and resurrection until He comes. God be with you all! Merry Christmas!

December - 2018 - Δεκεμβριος

December 24 - Δεκεμβριου 24

Vesperal Liturgy 7:00 p.m.- Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

Λειτουργια 7:00 μ.μ.

December 25 - Δεκεμβριου 25

Christmas – Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 10:00 a.m.

Χριστουγεννα - Θεια Λειτουργια 10:00 π.μ.



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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Faithful of Saint Demetrios Church,

The Christmas canon tells us:

Make glad, O you righteous! Greatly rejoice, O heavens! Dance for joy, O mountains; for Christ is born!

Let the joyous news resound that our Saviour, the Saviour of the world is born and through him, Salvation is possible.

The greatest gift God gave the world was His only begotten Son. It is through His example, of love and giving, that so many of you have been witnesses of the faith.

Over the last four years, it has been my honor and privilege to serve as your Parish President. I have been the administrative executive officer of a legal corporation formed by our predecessors in 1917, before an Internal Revenue Service, before a Metropolis, before any Uniform Parish Regulations. We were a group of Greek immigrants who loved their God and wished to erect a house of worship to HIM for themselves and their families to worship. And, they did so.

So, remember, when you think of the Church, ONLY CHRIST is the head of our Church. It is to HIM and HIM alone that we owe our allegiance and absolute loyalty. Presidents come and go, hierarchs come and go, these are merely shadows, for it is ONLY CHRIST who is the constant and unchanging in HIS devotion to God the Father.

So, do not concern yourself with the daily distractions of men who elevate themselves. In all things, be true to the Lord. Recognize and remember the miracle of Christ's birth, His Holy Life and HIS ultimate sacrifice for our Salvation. This is the one truism that will keep you on course towards Christ.

Over the last 4 years, I have been humbled by the deep devotion to Christ so many of you have exhibited from those who prepare artos for the Church, to those who have donated so incredibly generously on the paying off of all restoration projects. Some of you have contacted me for personal issues seeking advice or legal counsel. I hope I was able to assist in helping you find your answers.

For those of you who have not agreed with actions taken or directions where the Church has gone during my service, now is your time to stand up and be counted within the new administration.

I thank the Parish Council members for their loyalty and support, all those who volunteer to make our Church run, including but not limited to the Priest, Philoptochos, Seniors, G.O.Y.A., Sunday and Greek School faculty and students, Choir, Altar Boys, HOPE and JOY, PTO, the Newsletter Committee and members of the Philotimo Building Group THANK YOU!

To Froso and Ruben Morales, thank you for all you do and more.

Special thanks to Atef Azous, Afroula Kanellidis and, most especially, to Helen Horan who truly exemplified the beating heart of Saint Demetrios.

I thank Gerondissa Olympiada and the blessed Sisters of Agia Skepi who shared so many glimpses of holiness and prayerful devotion inspiring many of us.

I thank Stavros Tsapatsaris, our faithful psalti, for decades. His faith, loyalty and devotion to God inspired me to find unknown strength through Paraklysis to help sustain me and our Church through our restoration and building.

Lastly, I thank His Eminence, Metropolitan Evangelos, who had and kept the faith in allowing us the opportunity to save and redirect the Church into a positive future. Every time we asked for his help, support and presence, he was there for us.

So, this Christmas Season, be joyous from the lighting of our Christmas Tree on December 8th throughout the Feast Day of our Saviour's birth, and into Theophany, FOR CHRIST IS INDEED WITH US!

Hon. Marina Corodemus
President, Parish Council



Our Psalti, Stavros Tsapatsaris, Served Us Faithfully



Our beloved Psalti was born in Sparta, the son of a priest. He was educated in Greece and graduated as an engineer and also trained as a Psalti. He entered the United States and was employed by the government during the Vietnam War. As a little boy, he began to assist his father who serviced four churches. Stavros remembers, at the age of five, helping his father on Holy Fridays offer Epitaphio services four times in one day.

Stavros went into the restaurant business until he suffered heart attacks and continued with heart failure that, eventually, led to a heart transplant. He prayed continuously and with profound humility, prayed to Panagia. He feels Panagia heard his prayers and carried him through a miraculous recovery. He served as a faithful Psalti in several New Jersey Churches.

We, here at Saint Demetrios Church, were enormously blessed to have had Stavros chant for us Sunday after Sunday for 13 years. His chanting was always melodious and filled with a sense of deep, limitless faith. It is, however, time for him to rest and retire. He will be missed and we wish him well. We pray for his continuing good health, and we hope to follow his shining example of courage and deep faith.

Helen Catelanos

***Sunday School/Greek School - Christmas Pageant
and PTO Christmas Party***

**You are cordially invited to our Sunday School Christmas Pageant
followed by a PTO Christmas Luncheon Party on December 16, 2018**

Our Sunday School and Greek School children will delight you with
their beautiful portrayal of the Nativity scene, along with poetry readings and prayers.

Please do not miss this wonderful event directed by Helen Catelanos.

**Our Saint Demetrios PTO is providing a complimentary lunch party for
everyone to join together as one family during this very blessed
holiday season rejoicing in the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.**

We hope to see each and every one of you!

Santa Claus will be joining us in this special celebration, as well.



HOPE & JOY News

Our Saint Demetrios HOPE & JOY students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 participated in making Thanksgiving placemats as they learned the importance of giving thanks for all those people in our lives whom we love especially our Lord God. They were delighted with their colorful arts and crafts projects and, also, their Greek dancing lessons led by our Goyans, Kali Simatos and Julia Parsenios. All children in Grades K to 6 are welcome to join in the fun mostly every month during coffee hour. The next session is planned for January and will be announced very soon.

Kally Durso



Greek School News

Αγαπητοι Ενοριτες του Αγιου Δημητριου,

Τα παιδια του Ελληνικου Σχολειου, η δασκαλα Κυρια Αλεξανδρα, ο Προεδρος Κωνσταντινος Κακαδελης, και οι γονεις των παιδιων του σχολειου, ευχονται σε ολους εσας

Καλα Χριστουγεννα και Ευτυχισμενο το Νεο Ετος 2019.

Dear Parishioners,

The students of the Greek School, along with Mrs. Alexandra, Dean Kakadelis and the parents of the students of the Greek school, wish you all a

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year 2019!





SAINT DEMETRIOS LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

"Let us not get tired of doing good. As often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith."

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who donated toward the Thanksgiving Baskets. Your contribution, whether it was providing food and/or helping to prepare the baskets, enabled people in need of our help and love to celebrate the Thanksgiving season. Thank you.

Events:

December Vasilopita & Bake Sales:

- Philoptochos will be accepting Vasilopita orders up until **December 2, 2018**. There is just one size, which will be sold for \$17.00.
- Philoptochos will host a Bake Sale on **December 16, 2018**, after the children's Sunday School Christmas Pageant.

SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 6TH: VASILOPITA FOLLOWING THE EPIPHANY SERVICES AND THE BLESSING OF THE WATERS

Fr. George Parsenios will be Blessing the Waters on **January 6, 2019**. During the Coffee Hour, hosted by the Philoptochos, Vasilopita will be cut and distributed among the organizations of our Church and the community. All proceeds will go toward Saint Basil's Academy.

Thank you for your continued support, which has enabled us to achieve many of our philanthropic goals and efforts. However, we need your help. Please join us at the next General Meeting. More members mean more ideas, more helping hands, and more opportunities to help those less fortunate.

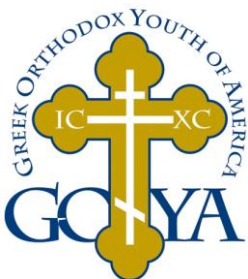
Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

In Christ,

Stella Wacker, Philoptochos President



G.O.Y.A. News



On Monday, November 12th, the Goyans went to a soup kitchen in Perth Amboy to help serve the needy. They enjoyed collaborating with Saint John the Baptist Carpatho-Russian Church in Perth Amboy.

On Sunday, November 25th during Coffee Hour, G.O.Y.A. will be presenting a History of our Church Founders and Past Parishioners. We hope everyone attends and enjoys our presentation.

On Friday, December 7th, we will be meeting with other Goyans throughout the Metropolis for BRIDGES. This is an event where Goyans put together care packages and make sandwiches for the homeless.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!
Julia Parsenios



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to our Sponsors!*


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Father George and our Saint Demetrios Parish Council surround President Marina Corodemus with warm congratulations and gratitude for the four successful years of her Presidency which revived and revitalized our Church to the majestic place of worship that exists today. President Corodemus is wished good health and happiness in her future endeavors.