



Parish
Newsletter
February 2019

Saint Demetrios

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

Hours for Service

Orthros: 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.

Θεια Λειτουργία 10:00 π.μ.

February 17 – Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion begins today

17 Φεβρουαριου – Τελωνου και Φαρισαιου



The Pharisees were an ancient and outstanding sect among the Jews known for their diligent observance of the outward matters of the Law. Although, according to the word of our Lord, they "did all their works to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5), and were hypocrites (ibid. 23: 13, 14, 15, etc.), because of the apparent holiness of their lives they were thought by all to be righteous, and separate from others, which is what the name Pharisee means. On the other hand, Publicans, collectors of the royal taxes, committed many injustices and extortions for filthy lucre's sake, and all held them to be sinners and unjust. It was therefore according to common opinion that the Lord Jesus in His parable signified a virtuous person by a Pharisee, and a sinner by a Publican, to teach His disciples the harm of pride and the profit of humble-mindedness.

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility, and the greatest hindrance to it is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called Harbinger, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read today, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all

his virtue, and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest heights.

All foods are allowed the week that follows this Sunday.

Kontakion of Sun. of the Publican and Pharisee: **Fourth Tone:** Let us flee from the boasting of the Pharisee and learn through our own sighs of sorrow the humility of the Publican. Let us cry out to the Savior, "Have mercy on us, for through You alone are we reconciled."

Η πρώτη Κυριακή του Τριωδίου, ονομάζεται Κυριακή του Τελωνού και του Φαρισαίου. Την εβδομάδα του Τελωνού και του Φαρισαίου δεν υπάρχει η παραμικρή νηστεία. Γίνεται «καταλύση στα πάντα», σύμφωνα με την εκκλησιαστική ορολογία, δηλαδή τρώγεται ελεύθερα κάθε φαγητό ακόμα και την Τετάρτη και Παρασκευή.

BECOME A SPONSOR

We are searching for business owners and/or individuals to sponsor and support our monthly newsletter which will allow us to continue publishing current news to our Church Community and our surrounding community through our on-line version. If you know of anyone who may be interested in participating as a sponsor, please provide him/her with our Church Office telephone number, 732-826-4466, for further information and details. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated and will allow us to continue providing our newsletter to our parishioners.



Message from Father George

The Forty Day Fast of Great Lent begins in early March. A few weeks before that date, we begin a period called the Triodion in mid February. The term Triodion means “three odes,” and it refers to the fact that we now sing three odes and not nine in the Orthros before the Divine Liturgy. Even if you don’t know what that means, it is enough to understand that this is a big change in the Church’s liturgical life. It should also mark a great change in our personal lives. If we can’t make a big change, we can make a small change. We do not need perfection. But we do need progress. We cannot change our lives in a single day, but we do need to change them. As we sing “three odes” in the Triodion period, let us also sing the three great odes of *prayer*, *fasting* and *almsgiving* in our daily lives. As we look toward the Forty Day Fast, let us turn to God more in *prayer*, let us *fast* from gluttony and from sin, and so let us be open with *alms* to those around us who are in need of material comfort, spiritual encouragement or simply emotional support. Again, while we sing the three odes of the Triodion in the services of the Church, let us sing the three odes of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in our daily lives.

Hope and Joy News

Encouraging our children to celebrate our Orthodox Faith and Greek Heritage!!

Our next Hope and Joy Ministries event is scheduled to take place on Sunday, February 10, 2019 directly after Church Services. The students will participate in a special arts and crafts project and then they will engage in Greek dance lessons. I look forward to seeing all of our Hope and Joy students there!

God Bless,
Kally Durso

Parish Council Member
Hope and Joy Facilitator



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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Faithful of Saint Demetrios Church,

As we await His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos's approval of elected candidates for Parish Council, I write a final Presidential letter to the Parish. It is a simple but vital request: **PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH AND ITS LEADERS.**

With a new Parish Council comes a new start to two more years of leadership in the Church. Such positions, occupied by volunteers need your support, patience and prayers.

SUPPORT those people who leave their families and leisure time to serve their Church. Support means respecting them, they are not slaves or employees. They are members of the Church family shouldering responsibility beyond the norm.

Please be patient with plans, suggestions and actions taken by the new Parish Council. No one is born to a job, and a learning curve is expected.

Most important of all, pray for our Church leaders, clergy and laity. Say a Paraklysis for intervention for wisdom, and guidance by a Saint for the new Parish Council. Pray for success with our building program. Pray for God to ease the burden of leaders and volunteer to support new projects. Prayer is the key. Please remember to pray for our Church today.

Hon. Marina Corodemus
President, Parish Council



Epiphany Service and Blessing of the Waters



Father George Parsenios delivered one of the most beautiful, symbolic services of the Greek Orthodox Faith on Sunday, January 6, 2019. The Epiphany Service is in celebration of the Baptism of Jesus Christ by Saint John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The Epiphany or manifestation of the Lord is witnessed through the presence of the Holy Trinity which is, also, called Theophany. The voice of God, our Father, is heard as He says, "This is my Son of Whom I am well pleased", the Holy Spirit is



present, symbolically, through the appearance of a dove and the Son, Jesus Christ, is present in the water of the river. Father George, ceremoniously, blessed the water and, subsequently, blessed our Church and all parishioners by sprinkling Holy Water throughout the entire Church along with spiritual prayers and hymns. Parishioners received their own bottles of Holy Water at the end of the service to bless their homes.



Continuing with the celebration, Father George led the entire congregation across the street to the Raritan River where he prayed, sang hymns and tossed a Cross into the water. Several youth dove into the river to retrieve the Cross as the diver who surfaces with the Cross is blessed with good luck for the entire year! Congratulations to Dean Giannakopoulos who was the lucky retriever of the Cross!



G.O.Y.A. News



Happy New Year from our G.O.Y.A.! We started out the year by braving the cold waters in pursuit of the cross on the day of the Vasilopita. Dean Giannakopoulos retrieved the cross! Congratulations to him and all the Goyans that participated on that day! We are also preparing for our Sights and Sounds Celebration in March. Please pray that we are able to grow our G.O.Y.A. as we embark on our membership drive for this year!

Father George congratulates Dean Giannakopoulos for his recovery of the Cross during the Blessing of the Waters.

Ελληνικο Σχολειο



Την Κυριακη, 27 Ιανουαριου 2019, τα παιδια του Ελληνικου Σχολειου θα γιορτασουν την γιορτη των Τριων Ιεραρχων και των Ελληνικων Γραμματων μετα την Θεια Λειτουργια. Θα ειναι μια ωραια γιορτη για τα παιδια, τους δασκαλους και τα Ελληνικα Σχολεια μας. Ευχομαστε σε ολους σας μια χαρουμενη και ευτυχισμενη χρονια 2019.

Κυρια Αλεξανδρα Βελμαχου



SAINT DEMETRIOS LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed." ~ Proverbs 19:17



We were deeply saddened by the passing of Lynn Markus, who was a member of the Philoptochos for over 50 years. She was a board member and served on the Executive Board. She was always generous with her time and efforts to help wherever and whenever she could. She was the epitome of the Philoptochos spirit and will be deeply missed. Our condolences go out to the Markus family.



On January 6, 2019, the Philoptochos hosted a Vasilopita Brunch, which followed the Epiphany Services and the Blessing of the Waters. Congratulations to GOYAN, Dean Giannakopoulos, who fished out the Cross from the cold Raritan Bay! Congratulations also go out to Tana Kizides and Mary Lou Rivera whose Vasilopita pieces contained the gold coins. Thank you to all who supported and/or donated toward this event. All proceeds will go toward **Saint Basil's Academy**.

In Christ,

Stella Wacker
Philoptochos President



G.O.Y.A. Spaghetti Luncheon

Sunday, March 3, 2019
(snow date: March 10, 2019)

\$10.00 Donation

Be entertained by our 2019 Sights and Sounds, American Play, Music/Sights. All of the Sights will be on display for viewing numerous winning ribbons and trophies. Come celebrate our youths' accomplishments with food and fellowship.

Ελάτε να διασκεδάσετε και να δείτε όλα τα τροπαια των νικητων της Νεολαιας.



SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, February 24, 2019

for our **APOKRIATIKO GLENDI**

FOOD, MUSIC & FUN!

(Directly after Church Services)

Details will follow.



Stewardship

Your Stewardship gift is an important way of offering gratitude to God, and it is essential to the ministries of our Church Family. Make your stewardship commitment today by filling out a stewardship card or calling the Church office. In making your commitment, please be aware that it takes approximately \$1,200 per family to cover the operating expenses of our beloved, Saint Demetrios Church.

Your stewardship is a tangible expression of heartfelt gratitude to God. Consider that our very existence, all that we have, all that we are, and all that we do are gifts from God. We are called to be co-workers with God in the ministry of His Church. Financial stewardship is one of the primary ways by which we offer our thanks to God for His Blessings.

All commitments of stewardship are truly appreciated. We are confident that you will do your best to honor and support our House of Worship and we thank you very sincerely.



The 100th anniversary wall is up. Place your orders now.

Small Bricks \$150

Large Bricks \$350

Expansion to the front and side of the church means replacing new bricks at a premium expense. Space is now very limited. Place your brick orders now before the walls are filled and you miss this last chance to have your family name, for yourself, your family, and your friends, in honor of a beloved family member, as tribute to a mentor or in memory of a relative that has passed- the bricks are precision engraved to last a lifetime.

Since 1917, when Saint Demetrios opened its doors, it has been a place of worship for central New Jersey Orthodox Religion. The meditation garden overlooks the water of the Raritan Bay surrounded by the history of our present and past loved ones. Their memories shall truly be eternal in this most special area. Adorning the garden will be the mosaic of St. Gabriel, one of Seven Archangels. The name Gabriel means God is Strong, God is Powerful God is Mighty.

Questions? Please contact Froso Morales at 732-826-4466



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
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Pictured with Father George in the center are the divers from left to right: Julia Parsenios, Kali Simatos, Dean Giannakopoulos (the retriever) and Nick Parsenios.