

**SAINT DEMETRIOS PARISH NEWSLETTER  
JUNE 2026**

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REV. PROTOPRESBYTER NICHOLAS P. PETROPOULAKOS

**FATHER'S DAY – JUNE 21, 2026  
PTO FATHER OF THE YEAR CELEBRATION!**

**JUNE, JULY & AUGUST 2026 LITURGICAL  
CALENDARS**

Sunday	June 7	Sunday of All Saints	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	June 14	2nd Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	June 21	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	June 28	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

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Sunday	July 5	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	July 12	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	July 19	Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	July 26	8 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

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Sunday	August 2	9 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	August 9	10 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Saturday	August 15	Dormition of the Virgin Mary (Koimisis)	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	August 16	11 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	August 23	12 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	August 30	13 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

## FROM FATHER NICK'S DESK

### THIS YEAR DON'T TAKE A VACATION FROM GOD!

On Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, summer will officially begin. Schools will be closing soon, graduations will have taken place, and vacations are planned or have already started. I can still remember how excited I was as a kid for summer to come and for school to be over. School was ok, but summer was so much more fun. There was time to play outside, to go to the beach, and to visit my cousins. But the best part was probably the fact that I didn't have to be in school for a long time. No more classes and no more homework. Remember the adage, "No more pencils, no more books, no more teacher's dirty looks!" More time to have a lot of fun!

I am afraid that we have the same approach to our attendance at and participation in Church during the summer. Summer arrives and we get so excited for all of the fun things that we have planned: outdoor activities, vacations and the other things we find to fill out time. It's easy to feel like we are on summer vacation from Church, and this might be just as exciting to us when we were on summer vacation from school. It is as if we were saying to God, "You don't mind if I take a break during the summer, do You? You understand, don't You! I need a break, why don't You take one too?"

That's not really the best way to look at summer vacation. We should never take an extended vacation from Church and from God. God does mind if we take a break. God doesn't understand why we would want to be away from him even for a minute, worse for a whole summer. God never takes a break from us. We would be in a lot of trouble if He did!

Right about now, you are probably thinking to yourself, "Father Nick is saying all this because he is a priest. He has to say it!" I don't say it because I have to say it. I say it because there is no more important place us to be, whatever the season of the year, than with our loving, caring Father in His House, His Church!

I believe we can all understand that the relationship that we have with our fellow parishioners and the opportunity that we have to love, support, and encourage one another when we gather together for worship is of utmost importance to our growth as children of God.

Martin Luther said that each week we come into God's presence and we are carrying an empty sack. The troubles and problems of our life have just really taken it out of us. We have nothing to give and need to receive something to fill up our sack again. So we come into Church and begin worshipping with the other members of the Body of Christ. And before we know it, God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness is dropped into our sack. The Scripture readings are read, and God drops more grace,

mercy, and love into our sacks. Our sacks are starting to fill up. The Gospel, the Good News of life and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, is proclaimed in the sermon and this life and forgiveness is dropped in the sack. We receive the blessing of God at the end of the service and that is dropped into our sack too. We go to the fellowship, and our bag is filled with even more.

We carry the sack out with us as we go about our lives. Along the way we encounter all of those people and things that annoy us and cause us to react. Our first instinct is to take this sack and beat them over the head with it, but that's not why we have it. Instead, we can reach into the bag and pull out some of the grace, mercy, peace, and forgiveness that we have received and share it with the people who have upset or hurt us. We can show them the amazing love that we have received. By the end of the week our sack is empty again and needs to be refilled. If we stay away from God, if we take a vacation from Him, then we will be going about our lives with nothing to help us deal with our everyday lives.

There is a phrase that I really do not care for and yet I hear it every year when the summer months are approaching. It is "Καλο Καλοκαιρι!" (Good Summer). This tells me that I will probably not see these parishioners until the Fall.

This true story explains it all. A good friend of mine and parishioner, even though he and his family had been in Liturgy every Sunday from September to June, was missing during July and August. In September, when he was back, I asked him, "Where were you all summer?" He answered, "Oh Father, we don't do Church in the summer!" I responded with, "Do you believe that God takes a vacation from you during the Summer?" His face got red and he admitted, "No. And I shouldn't take a vacation from Him!"

So, let's have fun this summer. Enjoy our personal time off. Travel to see friends and relatives. Just don't take a vacation from God. He loves us more than we can ever imagine and He wants to keep filling our sacks up with what we need in our daily walks.

God bless you in Christ!

Father Nick

By the way, if you are travelling and you want to find a Church to go to, contact me or the Parish Office, and we will try to find a Church for you.





## SUMMER 2026 ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

Scheduled Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

**Sign-in:** 88085372002

**Password:** Padre

June dates are June 4, 11 and 25

July 1 through August 19 - No Bible Study

August dates are August 20 and 27

In June Father will present a series on "Ten Women of the Bible". If you want to read their stories they are: Sarah, Rahab, Abigail, Esther, The Virgin Mary, The Samaritan Woman, The Canaanite Woman, Mary of Bethany, Mary Magdalene and Sapphira.

### **NEW MINISTRY**

We are offering a new ministry to the members of our Parish family. This is an opportunity to put the first names of those who are ill and need our prayers on a prayer list. This is how works.

There will be a list on the Pangari counter in the Narthex. When you want prayers for anyone, you write their first name on this form. We will then list these names on a prayer list which will be included with the Sunday bulletin. We ask that you take this list home and pray for the people listed, asking God and the healing Saints to help them in their illness.

A name will not be removed from the list unless you ask us to remove it.

Prayer is a most important part of our Orthodox life and a gift which we are encouraged to give to others in Jesus' name.

I thank you in advance for your gift of prayers for those who are ill.

Father Nick

## *President's Message ~*

Foremost on my mind this week are thoughts on the church festival which came to a close this past Sunday night. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your extraordinary efforts in making the festival a success. We had a record year, and I believe teamwork was the key to this accomplishment. Each one of you lent your special gifts and talents to our effort as in the Bible verse Romans 12:6-8:

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in his generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

I would like to add that we will be emailing everyone a date for a post-festival meeting to discuss the good, the not-so-good, and the ways that we can improve.

Wishing you all a safe and happy summer. May our beloved St. Demetrios protect and guide you in your travels.

Thank you.

Nick Giannakopoulos  
Parish Council President



## 2026 ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK FESTIVAL BY THE BAY

Thank You for an Incredible Festival Weekend!

As another St. Demetrios Perth Amboy Greek Festival comes to a close, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who helped make this year's Festival such a beautiful success.

Throughout the weekend, our parish grounds were filled with faith, fellowship, laughter, music, dancing, delicious food, and the spirit of *Philoxenia* that defines our community. From the kitchen and bakery, to the coffee station, boutique, bar, loukoumades, setup and cleanup crews, youth volunteers, dancers, performers, parish organizations, sponsors, and countless helping hands behind the scenes — this Festival was truly a labor of love.

What makes our Festival so special is not simply the food or entertainment, but the people who come together each year with generosity, dedication, and heart to create something meaningful for our parish and the greater community.

To our volunteers, committee members, sponsors, donors, dance groups, youth, clergy, parish council, and every individual who gave their time, energy, talents, and support: thank you.

We would also love to continue sharing the memories from this special weekend with our parish community. If you have any photos or videos from the Festival, please send them to us so they may be included in upcoming newsletters and social media highlights.

Thank you again for your continued love and support of St. Demetrios Church. May God bless our parish family, and we look forward to welcoming everyone again next year.

Thank you!

Olga Mantsis - On behalf of the St. Demetrios Greek Festival Committee



2026 ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK FESTIVAL BY THE BAY





# STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Dear Parishioners,

Thank you to all who have already submitted their 2026 Stewardship pledge and continue to support St. Demetrios through your time, talent, and treasures.

If you have not yet pledged, we prayerfully invite you to complete your 2026 Stewardship commitment and submit a pledge form to the church office. Please note that stewardship does not renew automatically each year, and all parishioners are asked to recommit annually.

**Ways to Give:**

- Zelle: [saintdemetriospertthamboynj@gmail.com](mailto:saintdemetriospertthamboynj@gmail.com)
- Check payable to St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
- PayPal: <https://www.stdemetriospertthamboynj.org/donate/>

Thank you for your faithful support of our parish.

With gratitude in Christ,

**The Stewardship Committee**  
**St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church**

### My Commitment to St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church Our Spiritual Home

Giving to His Church is a way to thank God for His grace and generosity. The question is not, "How much do I give to stay in the club?" or "What are the dues?" but "How can I thank God for my many blessings?"

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/We commit to Christ and His Church the following amount:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per  year  month  week

Give online with Zelle to [saintdemetriospertthamboynj@gmail.com](mailto:saintdemetriospertthamboynj@gmail.com)

## INFORMATION

NAME

NAME OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

EMAIL

EMAIL OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED)

## PTO NEWS

Graduation Sunday that took place on May 17<sup>th</sup> was a beautiful and memorable day! Congratulations to all the graduates and honorees!

Thank you to our Parents, Teachers and Supporters who donated and gave their time to help so generously. These events just cannot happen without you!

Our next and last PTO (Parent/Teacher) sponsored event of the year is on **Father's Day, June 21<sup>st</sup>**! On this day we will announce our **Father of the Year** at the completion of Church service. Following this will be an enhanced coffee hour to celebrate the 2026 Father of the Year!



## GOYA NEWS

May was very busy for the GOYA. We hosted the annual Indoor Olympics.

In attendance were 114 Goyans and their advisors from 12 different churches. It was a great day with friendly competition and fellowship. We introduced a new game called Spikeball.

Perth Amboy placed third overall behind Union and Piscataway! Jace Kanellidis placed 2nd in Senior Boys Table Tennis, Madi Katsilis placed 1st in Just Dance, Jace Kanellidis and Luca Regan placed 1st in Spikeball, and Milo Kanellis placed 2nd in Junior Backgammon.

Congratulations to all of our participants and winners.

A big thank you to all of our judges, helpers, and GOYA parents for all of your help and support.

In addition, thank you to Evan's Restaurant for breakfast bagels. We could not have such a successful event without all of you!



(cont'd)

Congratulations to Diana Regan and Luca Regan! They are this year's Youth Worker and Youth Member honorees for the Metropolis of New Jersey's Grand Banquet Award dinner, which took place on May 11. Please join us in congratulating them on receiving this award!

Congratulations to all the other recipients this year!



# GREEK SCHOOL NEWS

Celebrating Our Youth & Welcoming Summer! ☀️

On Sunday, May 17th, after the Divine Liturgy, we gathered to celebrate the graduation of our wonderful Greek School, Sunday School, and GOYA students. The room was filled with bright smiles as our young people received their certificates. You could truly feel their joy—and their excitement—for the summer days ahead!

We extend our deepest gratitude to our dedicated teachers, supportive parents, and amazing students. Your hard work and cooperation made this year truly special.

Have a blessed, fun, and safe summer break. We cannot wait to see everyone back in our classrooms this September!



## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

### **Graduation Sunday 2026**

It was a glorious day at our beloved St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church on Graduation Sunday 2026. Sunday School students each received their certificates of promotion and demonstrated their pride through their infectious smiles as they posed on the soleas.

Our Sunday School Graduate, Luca Regan, received memorial scholarships from the Eleni and Byron Stoimenides Memorial Scholarship Fund, as well as the George and Rose Marie Protonentis Family Scholarship Fund. He plans to attend Rutgers University as a finance major in their School of Business, and we are confident that he will be extremely successful in his future endeavors.

Our Best Attendance Award was presented to Angelo and Petros Tsivelis who attained perfect attendance this year! We are very proud of them!

Sunday School Teachers were recognized and presented with Appreciation Certificates for their devotion and dedication to our Sunday School program, which could not possibly function without their commitment every Sunday of the year! We are very fortunate to have their service of teaching our faith, traditions and customs to our wonderful students.

Father Nicholas Petropoulakos gave a very heartwarming message to our high school graduates and presented them with a special gift and token of his love and appreciation. Also, Appreciation Certificates were presented by Father Nicholas to our loyal Altar Servers who assist him in the delivery of our Divine Liturgy every Sunday.

Our Philoptochos Society, Three Hierarchs of St. Demetrios, also participated in Graduation Sunday by presenting high school and college graduates with gifts and awards.

Greek School students ended the school year by singing Greek songs relaying a wonderful summer to all. Their teachers presented them with their promotion certificates and good wishes.

Congratulations to all our graduates and students for a wonderful year at our beloved St. Demetrios Church. We are so extremely proud of every single one of our precious youth!

A lovely reception was sponsored by our St. Demetrios PTO, and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts! ❤️

Everyone is wished to have a very happy, healthy summer!

# GRADUATION & APPRECIATION SUNDAY

## Best Attendance



Petros & Angelo Tsivelis

## High School Graduates



Sophia Zamouzakis, Luca Regan, Zoe Fotiou

## Sunday School Graduate, Luca Regan



## Sunday School Students



## Sunday School Promotions and Graduates



## Sunday School Teachers



## Philoptochos Awards/College Graduates



Susan Spillman accepting for Lianna Rasimowicz  
Tessie Simatos accepting for Kali Simatos  
Dean Giannakopoulos

## Greek School



## Altar Servers



## OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



Zoe Fotiou

Zoe is graduating from St. Joseph Hill Academy High School in Staten Island, NY. Although Zoe is new to St. Demetrios this year, she attended Sunday school through high school, GOYA and the junior and senior Hellenic Greek dance groups at her previous church. She is thrilled to have joined this church to be able to finish her high school years with the wonderful kids she has met here.

In high school, Zoe is a member of the National and Spanish Honors Society. She is the president of the photography club, member of the American Cancer Society club, a Kairos retreat leader and the captain of the Cross-Country team.

There are so many things that Zoe enjoys doing in her spare time. She loves to read, get chai and sushi with her friends, loves the beach and nature, making playlists, and going on walks.

Zoe will attend University of Scranton and will be majoring in Nursing. She is very excited to start this next chapter of her life and is so grateful for the past year spent with her new St. Demetrios family.



Sophia Zamouzakis

Sophia is graduating from Sayreville War Memorial High School and plans to be a correctional officer in the near future. She hopes to lead a selfless and Christ-centered life, along with a strong passion for everything she does.



Luca Regan

Luca Regan will graduate this May from Christian Brothers Academy High School, where he had been deeply involved in both athletics and the arts. His athletic pursuits included baseball, fencing, and powerlifting, while his musical talents were expressed playing Trombone for Jazz Ensemble and Modern Band. Luca developed his interest in Finance while at CBA, serving as Vice President of the CBA Investing Club and Co-Founder and Vice President of CBA's "Wharton Investment Team".

Luca has been active here at St. Demetrios since early childhood as a student in Sunday School and serving as an altar server. From middle school through the present, he has greatly valued the strong bonds formed with fellow youth through Greek dancing and GOYA. This year, Luca proudly served as GOYA President and was honored to be selected as Mr. GOYA in October, as well as being recognized this month as an honoree at the Northern New Jersey Honoree Grand Banquet.

Luca looks forward to continuing his academic journey this fall at Rutgers University School of Business.

## OUR COLLEGE GRADUATES



Dean Giannakopoulos

Dean Giannakopoulos graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in cyber security from NJCU in May 2026. He had previously earned an Associate Degree in Homeland Security from Middlesex County College. Dean grew up in St. Demetrios Church and was an active member of the GOYA, Sunday School and Greek School.

Lianna Helen Rasimowicz

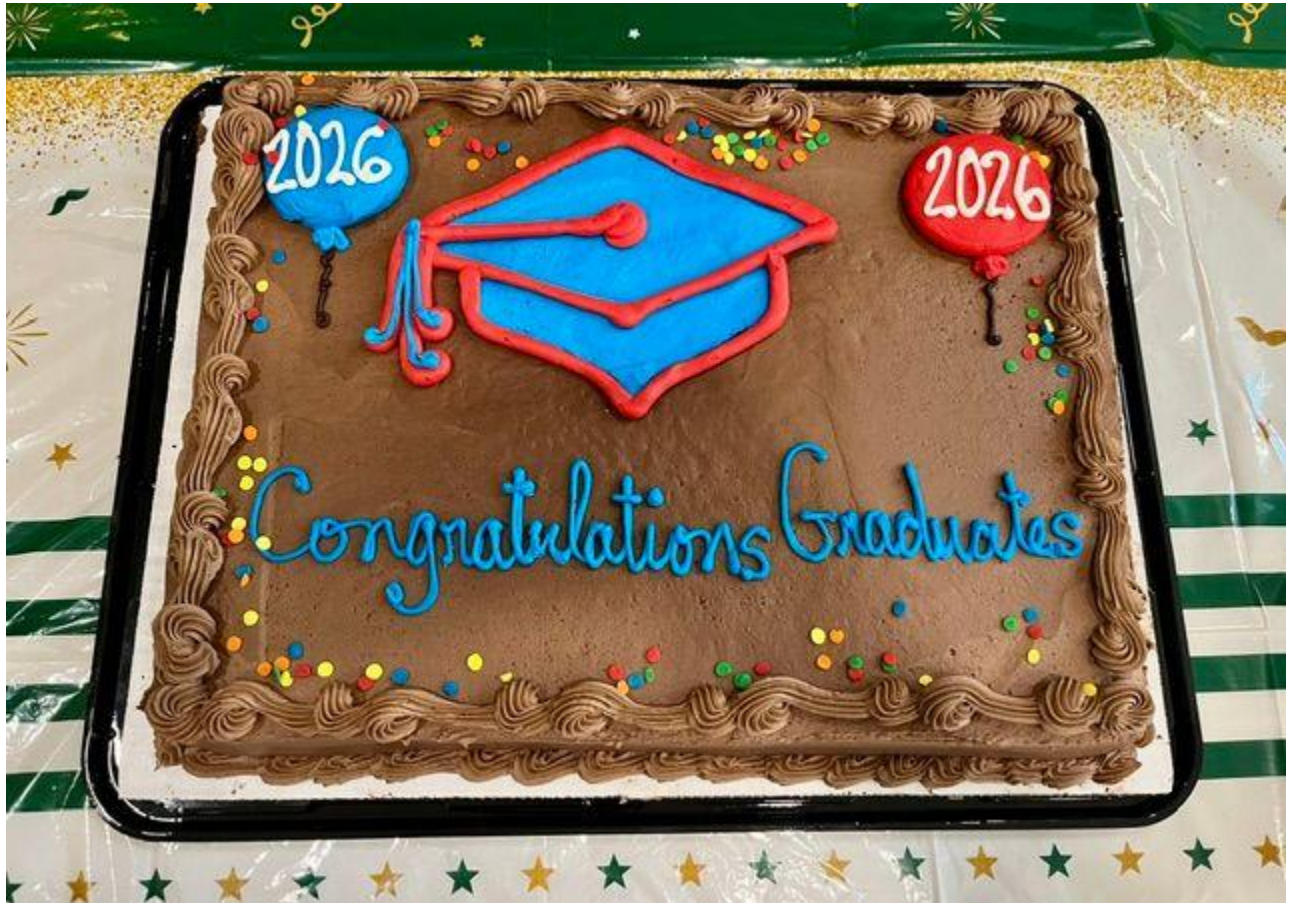
Lianna is graduating from Nova Southern University in Florida with a Bachelor of Science degree in marine biology and environmental science.



Kalomira (Kali) Simatos

Kali is proud to share that she will have graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Thomas Jefferson University with a Bachelor of Science in Law & Society and minors in Real Estate Development and Psychology. During her time at TJU, she served as Senior Class President and founded and led She Speaks Society, a women's advocacy organization on campus. She will be pursuing her Master's degree in Real Estate Development in the coming year, while continuing her work at a boutique law firm.

Congratulations to all!



Helen (Coutros) Horan  
Sunday School Superintendant



## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

The Philoptochos was delighted to announce that Aphrodite (Afroula) Kanellidis received this year's Mother of the Year Award! Afroula is a dedicated member of the Philoptochos. She is always willing to offer her help and experience for our many activities. She also cooks and bakes delicious foods whenever necessary for the Philoptochos as well as for multiple church events. Afroula has been a devoted Philoptochos Board member for many years and is a beloved member of our community. Please join us in congratulating our Mother of the Year – Aphrodite Kanellidis – for this well-deserved award!



On Monday, May 11, 2026, at the Annual 2026 Metropolis of New Jersey Banquet, Mary Lou K. Rivera was this year's Philoptochos honoree. Mary Lou served three terms as our Philoptochos' previous president and is now the Advisor to the current Board. Her hard work and dedication help our organization meet its mission goals and is truly appreciated. Congratulations to Mary Lou and all the other honorees of our church!



On Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Philoptochos members will meet for dinner at [AGAPI RESTAURANT](#) in Rahway, NJ. It's a lovely way to end the ecclesiastical year and to recognize the many accomplishments we've done during this time.

**GENTLE REMINDER:** Please note that checks submitted to the Philoptochos for membership/donations, etc. should be payable as follows: **PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY 3 HIERARCHS OF ST. DEMETRIOS**. Otherwise, we will have to return your check to you.

## *COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS!*

OPA! Greek dancing is not just for the youth! Adults, if you'd like to learn, improve, or refresh your memory on how to dance to Greek music, there will be dance classes taking place over the summer. We will provide more information as details are finalized.



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.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2026

