

# Direct Archdiocesan District Hosts National Oratorical Festival

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual St. John Chrysostom Archdiocese Oratorical Festival took place June 5 in New York for the first time since its inception in 1984 when it was held in conjunction with the Clergy-Laity Congress.

Eighteen finalists, representing all the metropolises and the hundreds of other youth at the 213 parishes who participated in the 2010 Oratorical Festival, arrived on June 4 with their parents for the weekend activities at Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral.

Events surrounding the festival included a paraklesis service and dinner social on Friday, a bus tour of Manhattan and a dinner cruise around the island on Saturday and a farewell reception on Sunday.

## Awards luncheon

Following the Saturday morning round of junior and senior division speeches, the awards luncheon took place in the Cathedral Center with emcee Mike Emanuel, Fox News White House correspondent, who had participated in the Oratorical Festival when he was a youth in his home parish of Holy Trinity in Westfield, N.J.

The awards luncheon also included a surprise appearance by former American Idol contestant and Tony Award nominee Constantine Maroulis, who made a brief appearance to sing the National Anthem prior to leaving for his performance in the Broadway musical, "Rock of Ages."

The 18 finalists and their parishes were: (Junior Division) Alexandra Walsh, St. George Cathedral, Hartford, Conn.; Elias Selimos, St. Demetrios, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Alexa Kassos, St. Spyridon Cathedral, Worcester, Mass.; Jannike Papas Heide, Assumption, Madison, Wis.; Spencer Zeiler, St. Dionysios, Overland Park, Kansas; Andrea E. Tsatalis, Annunciation, Dayton, Ohio; Samantha Rafalowski, Sts. Constantine and Helen Cathedral, Richmond, Va.; Nicholas Bilotto, Kimisis tis Theotokou, Aliquippa, Pa.; and Alicia Gavrilis, Assumption, Modesto, Calif.

(Senior Division) Eleni Efstathiadis, Archangel Michael, Port Washington, N.Y.; Christopher Lloyd, Sts. Markella and Demetrios, Fort Walton Beach, Fla.; Anastasia Kourtis, St. Demetrios, Weston, Mass.; Rebecca Morris, St. Demetrios, Libertyville, Ill.; Anne Elise Dimas, Annunciation; Kansas City, Mo.; Clint Montgomery, Annunciation, Memphis, Tenn.; Emanuel Anagnostiadis, St. George, Bethesda, Md.; Emmanuel Maginas, Kimisis tis Theotokou, Aliquippa, Pa.; and Arianna Aram, Sts. Constantine and Helen, Cardiff-by-the-Sea, Calif.

Also in attendance were Archbishop Demetrios, Bishop Philotheos of Meloia, Dr. Anton C. Vrame, director of the Department of Religious Education, Consul General of Greece in N.Y. Evangelos Kyriakopoulos, Archons National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, and Minerva Stergianopoulos who, along with the late Ernest Villas, established the Oratorical Festival Program for the Archdiocese Department of Religious Education.

## The top speakers

Emmanuel Maginas was the first place speaker in the Senior Division (grades 10-12) and a recipient of a \$2,000 college scholarship.

Anne Elise Dimas placed second and received a \$1,500 college scholarship.

Clint Montgomery finished third place and won a \$1,000 college scholarship.

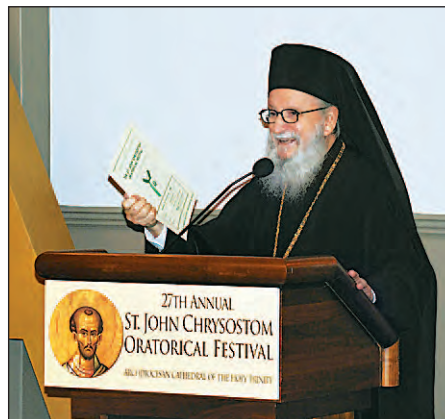
Placing first in the Junior Division (grades 7-9) and winning a \$2,000 college scholarship was Alexandra Walsh.

Second place and a \$1,500 college scholarship was awarded to Elias Selimos.

Third place and a \$1,000 college schol-



Participants in the Senior Division (above) and Junior Division (below) flank Archbishop Demetrios. Also shown (from left) Archdiocese Co-chairs Fr. John and Presbytera Margaret Orfanakos, Dr. Tony Vrame, and NY festival Co-chairs Presbytera Haidee and Fr. Frank Marangos.



White House correspondent Mike Emanuel (left) emcees the luncheon. (center) Archbishop Demetrios displays a copy of the program from the first festival in 1984. (Right) Constantine Maroulis performs the National Anthem at the luncheon.

# Junior, Senior Oratorical Festival Winners' Speeches

## Alexandra Walsh

Junior Division • Topic #5

St. George Cathedral  
Hartford, Conn.

*In the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14) we see that the prayer of the Publican was pleasing to God. Discuss the importance of humility in our prayers and in our daily lives.*

*"...For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."*

That verse, from the Parable of the Publican and the Pharisee in the 18th Chapter of the Gospel of Luke, reflects one of the Lord's most famous teachings. In this parable, two men enter the Temple. One, a Pharisee, proceeds to the front and the other, a publican, or tax collector, stands far away. The Pharisee exclaims, "God, look at me! I fast and give ten percent of my profits to the poor. I follow the teachings of the Jews and do all I am supposed to do. I give thanks that I am worthy and not like the tax collector sitting at the back of the temple." Simultaneously, the Publican, who will not even lift up his eyes, prays, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." Although the Pharisee was a wealthy and respected man, it was the Publican's prayer that was most pleasing to God.

During the March 25 celebration at my parish, I was asked to lead the Greek School in singing "Ti Ipermaho." I received a great deal of praise and I was full of pride for knowing the hymn when my classmates didn't. Rather than focusing on honoring the Theotokos, the Mother of God, I was thinking about my own accomplishment. I was the Pharisee.

During Lent, the special time of year given to us by the Church for repentance, we all need to focus on how much we are really like the Pharisee, so full of pride and so far from the humble nature God wants us to have. How often have we patted ourselves on the back for doing a good deed, or for making a charitable contribution, or even for attending Church?

In this world, we are pressured to be successful. Success and power, however, can be grave spiritual dangers. They can drag us away from God and our Orthodox Faith, as pride fills our minds and hearts. Because of our trivial achievements, we often forget the humble way of life God



The junior and senior division winners Alexandra Walsh and Emmanuel Maginas.

wants us to lead. We proclaim our accomplishments aloud, hoping that someone will notice. Stop! Why do we even worry about who finds out? Is it to make someone jealous? Is it to make others feel inferior? Do we think that we, rather than God, are responsible for the gifts He has given us? Sometimes, we show off by wearing expensive clothes, and name brands, even to Church events. Does wearing that pair of Hollister jeans or an Abercrombie T-shirt make us any better? It is not our brothers and sisters we should be hoping to impress!

In everything we do, especially in acts involving charity and kindness, we should be discreet. The right hand should not know what the left is doing. God is the only one who should know—and He always DOES know. Don't hope for others to notice. That, without a doubt, is the opposite of being humble. Living a Christ-centered life is our goal, not the knowledge that other people have discovered the good deeds we have done.

Rather than focusing on our accomplishments and gifts, all of which come from God, we should keep the humble words of the Publican in our hearts and minds throughout the year and, particularly during Great Lent. The words spoken by him should remind us of the importance in our lives of the prayer of the heart, "Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner."

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Emmanuel Maginas

Senior Division • Topic #4

Kimisis Tis Theotokou Church  
Aliquippa, Pa.

*St. John Chrysostom closes his Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Homily 32) with the following words: "Paul was a human being, sharing the same human nature with us and having everything else in common with us. But because he has shown a great love for Christ, he surpassed heaven and stood with the angels.... Let us then not only be amazed at and admire him but imitate him." In what sense can we imitate St. Paul?*

"None of you girls and young ladies are called to be the Mother of the Messiah. That's already taken care of. None of you guys are called to be John the Baptist. That's taken care of. But there are things in the 21st century that have to be taken care of." These words were spoken by Fr. Thomas Hopko on June 24, 2009, during the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. He was addressing young people who were seeking guidance in their lives. What did Fr. Hopko mean when he said that none of us is called to be the Theotokos or St. John the Baptist? What is there in the 21st

century that has to be taken care of?

The Saints of the Orthodox Church are those whom we know are in Heaven with God. They intercede with Him for us. The saints are real people who are alive in Christ. They had real bodies and walked on the earth. It is helpful for us to imitate the saints and pattern our lives after their holiness. They are models for us of ordinary people who lived for God and loved him wholeheartedly.

One saint whom I would like to focus on particularly is St. Paul the Apostle. We often hear in church, "The reading is from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to" an early Christian community. But do we really know anything about who the Holy Apostle Paul is and what his life means? St. Paul wasn't just a bald, bearded Jew who lived 2000 years ago and wrote a bunch of letters. He was a Jew-become-Christian who preached to Jews and Pagans alike, and wrote letters to church communities. But that is not his whole life story by any stretch of the imagination. The Holy Apostle Paul was a normal human being just like each one of us who became holy through his love for God. In the words of St. John Chrysostom, "Because he [showed] a great love for Christ, he surpassed heaven and stood with the angels."

To paraphrase Fr. Hopko, none of us is called to be the Holy Apostle Paul. But that doesn't mean we're not called to be like him. What is the best way to imitate St. Paul in the 21st-century?

In the Ladder of Divine Ascent, St. John Climacus says the following: "To admire the labors of the saints is good; to emulate them wins salvation; but to wish suddenly to imitate their life in every point is unreasonable and impossible." St. John here is telling us that we are called to imitation of the saints' holiness, not mindless mimicry. In the words of one of my friends, "Don't be a wanna-be."

St. Paul was called the Apostle to the Gentiles. While all the Holy Apostles had a zeal for the Gospel and preached to many people in many different cultures, St. Paul exceptionally fulfilled the command of the Lord to "Go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19 NKJV). St. Paul undertook three missionary journeys to young churches and wrote many Epistles. Only 14 appear in the Bible but doubtless he wrote countless others.

One way in which we can imitate St. Paul is by not being afraid to evangelize by showing our Faith. I don't mean flaunting it ostentatiously; rather, for example, not being ashamed to make the sign of the Cross before a meal in public or not being embarrassed to wear a cross outside our shirt.

If someone asks us what we believe, we can articulate the fundamental truths of Holy Orthodoxy; if someone visits our church, we can welcome them, show the love of Christ to them, and invite them back.

The Holy Apostle Paul told the Corinthians, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ" (I Corinthians 11:1 NJKV). Let us heed this exhortation and look at him as an archetypal Christian who followed Christ to the best of his ability.

We need not imitate St. Paul in the details of his life and death, but rather in his zeal for the Holy Orthodox Faith and for the salvation of the world.

If we do this sincerely from our hearts, we will be able to say with him, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing" (II Timothy 4:7-8 NKJV).

## National Oratorical Festival Held at Archdiocesan Cathedral

arship went to Nicholas Bilotto.

The remaining participants received Honorable Mention certificates and \$500 savings bonds.

The Rev. Dr. Frank and Presbytera Haidee Marangos co-chaired the 22-member host committee that organized the weekend events. The Festival received support from many contributors, including individuals, parishes and church organizations.

In a first for the Oratorical Festival, the speech presentations were broadcast live over the Internet.

In conjunction with the festival, 15 alumni finalists from previous years were invited to attend and introduced the 2010 speakers.

In comments after his homily, Archbishop Demetrios praised the participants and expressed his desire for increased participation by more parishes.

Among them was Michael Goodfriend, the Junior Division first place speaker from the first Oratorical Festival in 1984. Now an actor and radio program producer of programs on Sirius XM Radio. He said in brief comments to the participants that the festival "made me aware of the importance of words. It helped me to appreciate the power of words." He also noted that the Church "has been a pillar of strength all my life." The awards luncheon program included the invocation and the presentation of the flags by the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts of the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting. After Constantine Maroulis' rendition of the Star Spangled Banner, three Metropolitan Youth Choir members sang the Greek national anthem. Following the Sunday morning Hierarchical Liturgy celebrated by Archbishop Demetrios at the Cathedral, the farewell reception took place in the Cathedral Ballroom.

### Many supporters and contributors

The festival received support from numerous benefactors and contributors, including: (Grand Benefactors) Mr. and Mrs. Michael Jaharis, Nicholas J. Bouras, the Archdiocesan Cathedral Philoptochos, Peter Rezos, Thalassa Restaurant and the Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral.

**Grand supporters** Nicholas J. Bouras and Stephen and Areti Cherpelis.

**Supporters** Direct Archdiocesan District Philoptochos Board, Dora and Fred Salusbury, Archangel Michael Church Port Washington, N.Y., Peter and Dimitra Manis, James and Stella Pantelidis, Holy Trinity Philoptochos, New Rochelle, N.Y.; and Philoptochos of Church of Our Savior in Rye, N.Y.

**Patrons** Antonia Antonopoulos, Harry G. Kaptalos, Theodore P. Kingos and



Archbishop Demetrios presents his address on Hellenism and Orthodoxy at St. Vladimir's Symposium.

## The Connection Between Hellenism and Orthodox Christianity

CRESTWOOD, N.Y. – As part of St. Vladimir Orthodox Seminary's "Hellenism & Orthodoxy" symposium, held on the campus June 10–12, Archbishop Demetrios delivered the keynote address on June 11 titled "Hellenism and Orthodoxy: A Linguistic and Spiritual Journey."

On June 12, Archimandrite Elpidophoros Lambriniadis, chief secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate gave a keynote on "Greek Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Church in the U.S.A."

The Archbishop discussed the meaning of Hellenism as it is understood today and as it was in ancient Greece and how it facilitated the acceptance of Christianity in the Roman world.

He said that, in contemporary English usage, it is thought to pertain to ancient Greek culture, the imitation or adoption of Greek language, customs, art and other characteristics, including Greek culture as expressed in the Hellenistic period of history.

His Eminence noted that Greek was the "lingua franca" – the commonly used language in the Roman world that facilitated the spread of the Christian faith from Palestine to the far reaches of the empire.

Archimandrite Lambriniadis outlined the development of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the growth of the Christian Church that brought about changes in the administrative structure of the institution as the centuries progressed to the present

day and that the ethnic subdivision of the Church is contrary to that which is called for canonically that is necessary for one unified Church.

Archbishop Demetrios noted that, "At its core, Hellenism is concerned with the Greek language, alphabet, idiomatic forms of expression and its literature. His Eminence noted that scholars define the term as pertaining to ancient Greek culture or ideals, the imitation or adoption of Greek language, thought, customs, and art, the characteristics of Greek culture, especially after the time of Alexander the Great and the civilization of the Hellenistic period.

He said the definitions "capture the sense of the word Hellenism as it is used in modern English. But they leave out the true and original sense of the word as it came to us from ancient Greek. And this true sense, it to be found back in the Greek language itself."

He cited the important role played by the Greek language in the context of the Epistle reading from Galatians 4:4, which notes that when the "fullness of time" came, God then sent his Son into the world.

"The fullness of time came in an era when the lingua franca, the commonly understood language, was Greek," the Archbishop said. "This meant the Apostles could bring the language of the Gospel in a single language.

"This was an important point of encounter between Hellenism and Orthodoxy," he said.

## Saint Basil Academy Graduation Held

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is the ultimate absolute destiny for any human life."

Also speaking was National Philoptochos President Aphrodite Skeadas. She told the students to "Enjoy the advantages of your youth and the benefits of your contemporary lifestyle offered in this high-tech period of facebook, twitter and texting and whatever is the du

jour item; however, do so constructively, responsibly and ethically. "Proceed forward cautiously with learned knowledge, with confident security, with passionate understanding and with God's blessings. Live your dreams royally and practice your Orthodoxy with faith and accountability. Be NOT a spectator. BE a doer. All doers stumble or sometimes even collapse; but doers rise with humility and continue their mission. BE A DOER. YOU will succeed.

Alexios of Atlanta 5/30/10

### Receptions

Fr. Paul Fedec - April 20, 2010 (from the Orthodox Church in America/OCA)

### Suspensions Rescinded

V. Rev. Fr. Gabriel Karambis 5/12/10

### Returned to status of Layman

Rev. Fr. Nicholas Kasemeotes 5/03/10

### New Monastic Communities

Direct Archdiocesan District  
All Saints Monastery, Calverton, N.Y.

## CLERGY UPDATE

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of Archimandrite, bestowed by Archbishop Demetrios of America 5/09/10

Fr. Efstathios Varvarelis – Office of Confessor, bestowed by Metropolitan

## Young Adults Visit Holy Land

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the Wailing Wall; and the highlight of our day, the Church of the Nativity.

Following our day in Jerusalem, young adults returned to the hotel for dinner and a presentation from IOCC staff in Jerusalem about their amazing work and ministry in this region.

The next stop was a two-day excursion to St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai in Egypt. The group participated in vespers lead by Bishop Savas, visited the world-renowned museum of beautiful icons and rare texts, venerated the relics of St. Catherine, and had an opportunity to see the burning bush. The next morning, half of the group endured a 1:30 a.m. departure for a three-hour ascent of Mount Horeb, where Moses received the Ten Commandments, while the others participated in a beautiful early morning hierarchical liturgy at the monastery.

Pilgrims spent the remaining days in and around the old city of Jerusalem, including a private audience with Patriarch Theophilus III of Jerusalem.

The group walked through the Lion's Gate into the city, visiting the Pools of Bethesda, the Stations of the Cross, the Praetorian, and finally, a tour of the Holy Sepulcher.

Our final day in Jerusalem was a fitting end to the trip, as young adults were privileged to experience a Patriarchal Liturgy for Pentecost at the Holy Sepulcher. The church was packed with Orthodox Christians worshipping from around the world—it was truly an amazing blessing and experience for the participants.

For more information about young adult opportunities across the United States, visit [www.youngadult.goarch.org](http://www.youngadult.goarch.org). If you would like to read more about the National Young Adult Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the trip was documented on the blog [www.orthodoxyouthministry.blogspot.com](http://www.orthodoxyouthministry.blogspot.com).

*Christina Meares is national programs and special projects coordinator for the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.*

## Students Take Part in 'Mathitiada'

JAMAICA, N.Y. – Two students from the St. Demetrios Day School participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> annual "Mathitiada Olympics" program in the mountainous region of Serres, Greece during the week of May 6-13.

This year the program consisted of 870 Greek students from all 52 districts of Greece and from 35 countries all around the world. In total there were over 1,000 students who took part and competed in the Olympic Games. The program unites and brings together Greek students from different parts of the world, not only to compete against one another in athletic games, but to get to know one another, and learn about each others' different cultures and traditions.

Each school exhibited its own booth which represented its culture and was decorated with products and reading material of the country or region they were from. The Jamaica school, which represented New York, was decorated with pictures of

the state, essays and poems written by the students in Greek and English describing their life here in America, as well as drawings of famous sites in New York.

The opening ceremony began with a parade of countries and regions of Greece around the stadium, and the Olympic torch was lit by Olympic basketball player Frangiskos Alvertis. There were 34 Olympic athletic events and 14 Special Olympic events that were available for the athletes to compete.

The Jamaica students, Pantelis Zioulis from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and John Ades from the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, competed in target shooting, swimming, triathlon, badminton, soccer, basketball and field hockey.

The boys formed teams for soccer, basketball and field hockey with students from other countries, who were also small in number.

The students won the gold medal in field hockey. For more information visit the website: [www.mathitiada.com](http://www.mathitiada.com).

## St. John Chrysostom National Oratorical Festival

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Philoptochos of St. Demetrios Church, Jamaica, N.Y. **Friends** Justin Bozonelis, Daniel Marten DeVeers, Athanasia Gregoriades, Demetra Kristy, Dena Sarris, St. Paul Cathedral Church School, Hempstead, N.Y.; Sts. Constantine and Helen Church, West Nyack, N.Y.; Three Hierarchs Church Philoptochos, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Kyriaki Christiania, Richard and Athena Economou, Katherine Kaye, M.D., Mary Makrogiannis, Bill Yialamas, Holy Trinity Church, Bridgeport, Conn.; Prophet Elias Church Philoptochos, Yonkers; and Sts. George Cathedral Philoptochos, Hartford, Conn.; and (other) Gregory and Elaine Stamoulis.

### Committee members

The following persons served on the Host Committee for the Oratorical Festival: Antonia Antonopoulos, Fr. Vasilios Baskyros, Effie Butler, Herbert Butler, Carol Contos, Angela Giannopoulos, Jim Golding, Steve Hantzarides, Karen Kalkines, Eleni Karatzas, Ted Klingos, Pauline Kotsilimbas, Kirsten MacDonald, Catherine Moutoussis, Stella Pangelidis, Yanni Paulus, Dorothy Poli, Antoni Saravanos, Alexandra Scuro, Eleni Thomas, Viola Valvis, and Christina Zachariadis.

### Seven Judges

The following served as judges

for the Junior Division: Eleni Daniels, president of DanielsMedia public relations and corporate communications firm and the executive producer of the Hellenic radio program "All Things Greek; Dorie Klissas, director of media relations at New York University's Langone Medical Center; Dr. Themistocles Protosaltis, MD, clinical assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at Langone Medical Center; and the Very Rev. Sebastian Skordallos, chief secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese, and a former president of the Metropolis of Atlanta Clergy Council.

Senior Division judges were Dora P. Kontogiannis, Ed.D., principal of Tenafly High School, New Jersey; James Mallios, former attorney, now general manager of Michelin-rated Resto restaurant; the Very Rev. Nathanael Symeonides, Ph.D., pastor of Annunciation Church in Manhattan, adjunct professor of ethics and bioethics at St. Vladimir Orthodox Seminary, and a former deacon to Archbishop Demetrios.

An eighth person, Anthoula Katsimatides, host of a biweekly radio program "Color Yourt Life" and a Sunday School teacher at St. Demetrios Cathedral in Astoria, was to have served as a judge but a family emergency prevented her from doing so.