

## Perth: The End-of-Year Celebration for the Greek Language and Culture Institute (GLCI) of Evangelismos



"The End-of-Year Celebration for the Greek Language and Culture Institute (GLCI) of Evangelismos was another grand affair, signalling the near conclusion of the 2024 academic year held at the Belmont City College Auditorium on Saturday the 23rd of November and attracting an audience of between 200 and 250 people. Among them, the special guests included His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Perth, Fr Emmanuel Stamatiou, Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne, Deacon Nicholas Kakulas, The Honourable Consul of Greece, Mrs Eleni Georgopoulou and her family, Naval Attache, Mr Antonios Manoussos, and other dignitaries.

The opening address was offered by the principal of the school, Dr Polichroni Koutsakis, who mentioned the Nobel prizes winner's poem Giorgos Seferis called "Άίγο ακόμα" ("Just a bit more"), which was also turned into a song by Mikis Theodorakis. The principal explained that Seferis got it wrong! Because as the GLCI

of Evangelismos has proven through the excellent work of our students, the support of the parents and the Evangelismos community, together we can rise much higher.

This address was followed by one in Greek from His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Perth, who conveyed the Blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia, to the GLCI community. His Grace then gave the very strong message of the spirit of giving that Christmas holds, not just in material things but in acts of kindness and generosity towards others. The speech ended by congratulating the school on its successes and pleasing the students and teachers who represented the school and took part in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese parade held in Melbourne last October, in honour of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. His Grace presented a memorable GLCI poster signed by His All Holiness with His blessings for the school's progress.



Fittingly, the message was followed by Byzantine Hymns from the Evangelismos Church Chanters. The student presentations began with the Christmas-themed performance of "Peter and the Holy Night" then continued with "The Mouse that wanted to touch the Star", by the younger year groups. The well-delivered lines by the students, along with the costumes and props were very well received by the audience.

This was followed by the dramatic dance performance of the St George's Pontian Brotherhood Group. Two traditional songs, performed by the more senior students then ended the first part of the concert.

After the short break, the audience was addressed by the Chair of the GLCI School Board, Mr Georgios Tsitiridis, who presented a video summary of the school's activities and outlined the exponential growth in student numbers since the inception of the school three years ago. He proceeded to thank all those members of the school and wider Greek community for their support of the school. Special thanks and Certificates of Appreciation were offered to His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Perth, Father Emmanuel Stamatiou, Parish Priest of the Church of Evangelismos, the former President of the Evangelismos, Mr John Karakatsanakis and Vice Chair of the Board, Dr Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis. The GLCI P&F President, Mrs Erifili Ciombras and her team of parents was also acknowledged for her effort and that of the association in fundraising for the school throughout the year.



The new Consul of Greece, Mrs Eleni Georgopoulou then gave a heart-felt address, expressing her enthusiasm and awe at the level of Greek language competence displayed by the students through their respective items, and her amazement at the growth of the school in only three years. Mrs Georgopoulou was presented with a beautiful present by one of the Kindy students at the end of the concert.

Then followed a short comedic film, prepared by the principal, Dr Polichroni



Koutsakis and his senior students, and one which elicited much laughter from the audience.

The Afternoon Class of the GLCI and their teachers presented a play called “From 1980 to 2024” that delivered the poignant message about the social isolation felt by today’s youth, a stark contrast to the natural joy of raw playtime of previous decades.

The audience continued to be engaged by the polished dance performances of the GLCI’s own Dance Group, comprising students from across the year levels. This was followed by the singing of the traditional song “Ta Kalanta” by the senior classes.



The final segments of the event included a presentation of the Certificate of Attainment in Greek to the 13 successful GLCI candidates of the Centre for the Greek Language (CGL) Examinations in May. The certificates delivered by the Consul of Greece along with the Principal.

Certificates of Honour and Special Awards were then presented to students from each of the classes by their teachers. The event concluded with the song “I mera den tha argisi” from all the GLCI students. A whole school photograph, with the GLCI Staff, Board Members, P&F and VIP guests capped off the performance. The audience was then treated to a full Lenten spread that catered to all tastes and ensured that no one left the event hungry.

























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