

## First-Ever Vasilopita Celebration at St. Photios National Shrine



ST AUGUSTINE, Fla. – In an effort to maintain the traditions and customs of the first Greek settlers that arrived on the American continent, St. Photios National Shrine hosted its first-ever Vasilopita Cutting Celebration with a standing room only crowd of almost 100 people.

The event, hosted by His Grace, Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, Hierarchal Proistamenos of the Shrine, drew faithful from throughout the nation including Archon Nick Furriss, who served as the emcee of the event, and Bishop Demetrios of Xanthos.

“Events like these are important to share the mission of the Shrine, as well as to keep our ancient faith and traditions alive in this country and keep Greek Orthodox traditions as a living experience,” said Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos.

The Vasilopita cutting was preceded by a tour of the historic center of old St. Augustine. Guests then arrived to a harpist and choir with enchanting musical

arrangements of traditional Greek and Byzantine hymns and carols.

Eight loaves of Vasilopita were cut, first for all of the area Greek Orthodox ministries and parishes, then for each guest in attendance. The lucky winners received an authentic St. Basil coin and were blessed by Bishop Demetrios.

His Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta sent a greeting which was read to the guests in attendance, thanking Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos for, “carrying on the beautiful Hellenic Orthodox tradition of the Vasilopita” and keeping the light of the recent holiday season in our hearts.”

— Source: [goarch.org](http://goarch.org)