

Christmas Celebration at Saint Demetrios in Astoria (Video & Photos)



In the midst of the Christmas celebration at St. Demetrios in Astoria on December 20, the school's tremendous prospects for further development through the \$25 million donation from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) were noted by Chairman of the School Board Nick Andriotis. In his remarks, he noted how the donation will help the school realize its long-term mission, the preservation of the Greek language and community education, and expressed his appreciation to SNF Co-President Andreas Dracopoulos.

Andriotis said, "We are doing very well... there are procedures to be followed for such a great donation... we have already received \$500,000 for expenses. Mr. Dracopoulos, whom I met 15 years ago, does not say many things, he gets impressions and after a while he proves it in actions."

For his part, Andreas Dracopoulos gave credit to the children, noting that "they did a great job," adding that "we are proud to be Greeks," and recalling that although they live such a great distance from the homeland, "the children speak and sing in

Greek.”

“They will continue,” he told The National Herald, but “not only because of the Foundation’s contribution but thanks to people such as Nick Andriotis, Anastasios Koularmanis, and the teachers who give it all for the Greek soul.”

The annual Christmas celebration highlighted the magic of the holiday season with the students of St. Demetrios Astoria’s day school performing in the packed Petros G. Patrides Cultural Center.

The youngsters sang religious hymns and traditional Christmas carols as well as the purely festive songs so typical of the holidays in New York City.

The student choir performed the Nativity hymn, the Apolitikio of Christmas, the traditional Greek carols, the kalanta, O Come All Ye Faithful in Greek, as well as the most famous popular songs, like Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.

The dancing also impressed the audience, after they began with a spectacular presentation of Oh Holy Night and continued with intricate choreography, with the participation of pupils from the 2nd to the 9th grade. In the finale, the 12th grade students performed the waltz to the song Once Upon a December from the animated film, Anastasia. They received thunderous applause and concluded yet another successful event for the school.

“Our children gave us the message of Christmas as a message of joy, singing, dancing, and optimism for today and tomorrow. Congratulations to the teachers and children who produced tonight’s program,” His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios said in his brief remarks following the performance and told TNH, that the celebration was “full of light, joy, rhythm, and strength [that] combined art with the spiritual element.”

Among those present were the Consul General of Greece in New York Konstantinos Koutras, Consul of Greece Lana Zochiou, the Consul General of the Republic of Cyprus Alexis Phedonos-Vadet, and other prominent members of the Greek community.

Source: The National Herald

Photo: TNH/Kostas Bej





