

## 52nd Annual Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey GOYA Olympics Held over Memorial Day Weekend



With the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey proudly held the 52nd Annual GOYA Olympics over Memorial Day weekend. Drawing over 400 Orthodox youth, the event showcased a harmonious blend of fellowship and spirited sporting competitions.

The memorable occasion commenced with an opening prayer led by His Grace Bishop Apostolos of Medeia, who conveyed the paternal love and blessings of His Eminence to all of the faithful in attendance. The V. Rev. Fr. Chirstoforos Oikonomidis, Chancellor of the Metropolis of New Jersey, as well as area clergy, were also in attendance throughout the weekend. The prayer, led by His Grace, set the stage for an exhilarating parade of the parishes, followed by the official inauguration of the Olympic Games with the commencement of the first track event.

Throughout the weekend, participants engaged in a diverse array of track and field events, along with swimming competitions and an exciting volleyball tournament. The athletic prowess on display was matched only by the spirit of camaraderie, as

Orthodox faithful from various parishes came together in unity and support for one another.

Sunday marked a special day of reverence, as all participants gathered for the Divine Liturgy, celebrated by Rev. Protopresbyter Andrew Eugenis of St. George in Ocean Township, NJ. The Metropolis director of Youth Ministries, Rev. Dn. Konstantinos Loukas, delivered a heartfelt address to the faithful, emphasizing the significance of unity and mutual support, transcending parish boundaries.

The weekend was made possible due to the many volunteers from various parishes across the Metropolis of New Jersey. This includes the members of the GOYA Olympics Committee, Mr. Andrew Xios, Chairman of the Committee, Mrs. Elaine Xios, Archon George Moutis, Mr. George Savva, and Mr. Ted Georgousis.

As the event drew to a close on Sunday afternoon, participants, volunteers, and attendees gathered for the much-anticipated Christ Gacos 5k Memorial run. This spirited race, dedicated to the memory of Christ Gacos, embodied the determination and resilience of the GOYAns. The concluding highlight of the GOYA Olympics was the Fr. Dean Martin Memorial Awards Ceremony, honoring outstanding individuals who exemplified the spirit of sportsmanship and dedication throughout the event.

Photos: John Douglas Photography

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