

## **Dimitrios and Georgia Kaloidis: A Legacy of Culture Preservation at Holy Cross Greek American School est. 1980**



The year 1956 witnessed the birth of the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church of Bay Ridge, an endeavor inspired by a group of visionary Greek immigrants. Their shared conviction stemmed from a recognition of the profound need for a Greek Orthodox Church in the heart of Brooklyn's Bay Ridge. Amidst a flourishing community of Greek Orthodox Christians, the establishment of the church was more than a spiritual sanctuary; it was envisioned as a conduit for the transfer of their cherished Greek heritage to the next generation.

In a continuous endeavor to safeguard and nurture Greek culture, the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church embarked on a significant cultural preservation effort in 1965. The inception of a Greek afternoon school within the church's premises served as a platform for young Greek-American children to immerse themselves in the rich tapestry of their heritage – tradition, culture, and language. In an era of cultural diversification in America, these afternoon schools stood as resilient bastions of history and heritage, ensuring the perpetuation of Greek language, culture, and spiritual values beyond the borders of Greece.

The year 1980 marked a pivotal transformation for the Holy Cross Greek American

School. Evolving from its origins as an afternoon school, it emerged as a distinguished private day school. Since that transformative juncture, this institution has been nurturing the intellectual growth of children from nursery to 8th grade, all while maintaining its vibrant afternoon program. Beyond the realms of mathematics and sciences, the school remains an ardent advocate for the Greek Orthodox culture that has been an intrinsic part of its ethos from the outset. The school's unwavering mission, conceived at its inception, encompasses a comprehensive Greek Curriculum, with an emphasis on art, music, and history – an embodiment of the holistic approach to preserving Greek heritage.

In 1991, the school's legacy received a significant infusion of support from Greek immigrants Dimitrios Elias Kaloidis and Georgia Christou Manolacos, a devoted husband and wife. Their generous pledge of \$400,000 over five years demonstrated their profound commitment to the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church's community school. Remarkably, the fulfillment of their pledge within three years led to the parochial school being named in their honor – a testament to their enduring impact.

Dimitrios and Georgia Kaloidis, renowned for their entrepreneurial ventures including the Georgia Diner on Queens Boulevard and the iconic Terrace on the Park banquet facility, carved a legacy that extended beyond culinary excellence. Mr. Dimitrios Kaloidis, in particular, emerged as a dedicated philanthropist, channeling his resources into a range of causes – from churches and monasteries to hospitals and schools, both in the United States and Greece. His advocacy for the preservation of the Greek language in the United States highlights his profound commitment to nurturing the rich tapestry of Greek culture.

The Dimitrios and Georgia Kaloidis Parochial School in Brooklyn stands as a living testament to the dreams upon which it was founded. More than a school, it stands as a beacon of Greek values, ensuring the preservation of Greek heritage through the education of successive generations. In their dedication to cultural preservation, Dimitrios and Georgia Kaloidis have woven a thread that binds the past, present, and future of the Greek-American community.

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