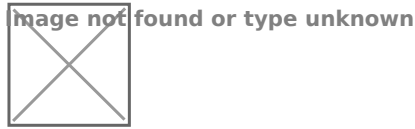


11/12/2023

Saint Basil Academy Hosts Annual Christmas Pageant



Saint Basil Academy had a wonderful start to its Christmas season with a festive celebration hosting their Christmas pageant on December 9, 2023. Esteemed guests included His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Consul General of Greece to New York Konstantine Konstantinou, President of the Board of Trustees of the Academy Dr. Steven Gounardes and other dignitaries. Also in attendance was Executive Secretary Philippa Condakes and Board Member Matina Pappas from the National Philoptochos Society, and Grand President of the Daughters of Penelope Marianthi Treppiedi and Supreme Governor Dimitris Rozanitis from AHEPA, as well as local clergy and faithful.

The day commenced with a warm welcome from Executive Director Rev. Fr. Constantine Sitaras and an opening prayer led by Archbishop Elpidophoros. The children of Saint Basil Academy and Sunday School students from Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church showcased their musical talents in a special presentation directed by Presvytera Hannah Palamara.

The Christmas Play, "Amahl and the Night Visitors," was a highlight, directed by Ms. Alyssa Thomas, Family Program Manager. The audience, including the honored guests, actively participated by singing along to the Christmas carol featured in the play. The United Cyprians of America added to the festive atmosphere with an impressive Hellenic Dance program, captivating the guests with their joyful enthusiasm and dance steps. After their performance, the dance group invited guests to join them as they energetically circled the room with traditional Greek dance.

Archbishop Elpidophoros emphasized the importance of the ministry of Saint Basil Academy. His Eminence thanked Philoptochos and Fr. Constantine for their tireless work in protecting and caring for the children of Saint Basil Academy and encouraged visitors to support Saint Basil any way that they can. "In the eyes of God, of our Lord, anything that we contribute for the children is of equal value. Is this gold? Is this the time we offer? Is this the service we offer? Is this any kind of

volunteer work and support that we do for the children is the gift of the Magi and of equal importance and value for our Lord Jesus Christ.” Read His Eminence’s full remarks here.

The day concluded with a delicious luncheon and the opening of gifts generously sent by donors for the children of Saint Basil Academy. The Archbishop took the opportunity to spend time with the children, sharing in their joy and speaking individually with each child. The Academy expressed gratitude for the ongoing love and support from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and Archbishop Elpidophoros.

Overall, the Christmas pageant and luncheon at Saint Basil Academy was a heartwarming and joyous occasion, bringing together the community in celebration of the holiday season.

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