

National Shrine Essay Contest Winners Announced

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Mrs. Katherine Bacalis, chair of the St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine Essay Program, announced the results of the 15th annual writing competition that presents an opportunity for teens to witness their faith.

The new topic this year asked the essayists to articulate the impact, significance, and relevance of sacred and historic items in their lives. Some chose to compare the immigrant experience of 1768 with the immigrant experience of a family member or friend (without penalty).

Mrs. Bacalis reported that 12 teens, ages 13-19, responded to this competition with Justin Tatoes from St. Luke, Palos Hills, IL placing first; Andreas Lolis from St. Barbara, Westport, CT placing second; and Alexis Francis from The Church of Our Savior in Rye, New York placing third.

Each participant receives a certificate signed by His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, Hierarchal Proistamenos of St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine.

The Committee congratulates all essayists including Andreas Thompson from Holy Trinity, Clearwater, FL; Dayle Sokratis Frisk from St. Nicholas, Tacoma, WA; Edward Michael Dehelean from Holy Cross-Sts. Constantine and Helen, Huntsville, AL; Heidi Angelopoulos and Marianna Angelopoulos from Sts. Constantine and Helen, Palos Hills, IL; Arianna and Nicholas Drechsler from Holy Apostles, Westchester, IL; Noah Hays from Holy Trinity, St. Augustine, FL; and Nicholas Lines from St. Barbara, Toms River, NJ.

Mrs. Bacalis thanked committee members Dr. Tony Tsitos and Dr. Constantine Santas for their years of dedication to the Essay committee and judges Michelle Farah, Tom Gibson and Rev. Dr. Milton Magos. “Let us not forget the sponsors of this meaningful program,” said Mrs. Bacalis. “The importance of education and information as power was the vision of the V. Rev. Nicholas Graff and it was and is the support of his aunt, Kathie D’Anna of blessed memory, that funds the promotion and prizes of this program 15 years later. We also thank the AHEPA chapter #6 who directly reward the writers for their achievement.”

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