

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 22 January 2018

The 36th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Shrine

St. Augustine, FL – St. Photios Foundation will be celebrating the 36th anniversary of the dedication of the Greek Orthodox National Shrine on February 3 and 4, 2018. The trustees will recognize Shrine Volunteer of the Year, Constance Fotiou Gaitanis and long-term employee, Evgenia Mercado.

Mrs. Gaitanis, was born in Detroit, Michigan to George and Olga Fotiou. Her parents retired to St. Augustine in the 1960's with an active life of volunteer work with many organizations, including the St. Augustine Historical Society. They are listed among the group who are founders of St. Photios National Shrine.

"Connie" would visit and assist them in their activities and after moving to St. Augustine herself, dedicated years of service to many organizations, including St. Photios. She is a welcoming Shrine Greeter for touring visitors, she contributes to the four bake sales held each year, she assists in the gift shop book store and helps wherever needed, being a steadfast Shrine ambassador wherever she goes.

"Gina" was interviewed for a docent position on July 6, 2006. She has worked permanent part time off and on for almost 12 years because she feels "blessed to witness the Orthodox Faith and has watched people become Orthodox through their Shrine experience." Gina is the Shrine Gift Shop Manager and is responsible for the degree of excellence that it has attained. Gina manages the yearlong requests received through the Light A Candle program. She believes there is no greater honor than "doing work for God's Church."

The Foundation recognizes Connie and Gina's commitment this year with gratitude for their dedication to the Shrine and its mission.

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