

2021 Inaugural Children's Drawing Contest

Made possible through the generosity of The Toundas Family
"Hagia Sophia – The Jewel of the City"

59 Contestant Submissions



In conjunction with the annual commemoration of the Fall of Constantinople, the Saint Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine is proud to display the entrants' submissions to the inaugural Drawing Competition open to children ages 9-12 of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

An enduring symbol of the Imperial Capital and of the Orthodox Church is the "Jewel of The City," the magnificent Church of the Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia. Built under Emperor Justinian I in Constantinople in the 6th century, the "Great Church" was the cathedral of the Ecumenical Patriarchate until the

Fall of the City about 900 years later when it was forcibly changed to a mosque under the Ottoman conquerors. After the end of the Ottoman Empire, it was converted into a museum at the beginning of the 20th century, though recently converted back to a mosque under the current leadership of modern Turkey.

Participants submitted drawings of the famous Hagia Sophia, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, still



a symbol of the vibrant faith, culture and spirit of the Hellenes and the Ecumenical Patriarchate that continue in Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul, Turkey.

The annual commemoration of the Fall of Constantinople is not only a remembrance of the Fall of the capital of the Roman Empire on May 29, 1453 by the Ottomans who finally took the "Queen of Cities" established by Saint Constantine the Great some eleven centuries earlier; rather, it is also a celebration of Byzantine culture and the Hellenic culture that sprang from this pivotal event in world history.

