

OTTAWA G.O.Y.A.

Ottawa G.O.Y.A. is a very active and productive youth group. Ages range from 13 years to 18 years old. The group meets regularly once or twice a month: for a general meeting and for a social event such as movies, bowling or a gathering with Father Alex for group discussions on topics suggested by the youth. There are approximately 35+ active members.

The Executive of our parish "Dormition of the Virgin Mary" G.O.Y.A. for 2010-2011 consists of: Arete Zafiriou as President; Yanni Reklitis as Vice President; Paulina Ramphos as Treasurer; and Alexander Reklitis & Michaela Michalopoulos as Secretaries. Father Alex Michalopoulos is our Spiritual Leader. The Youth Advisors are: Maria K. Karadakis, Maria Merziotis, Nicoletta Michalopoulos, Soula Pezoulas & Tasia Reklitis, as well as the parents of the G.O.Y.A. executive.

Some highlights from recent years include:

Lenten Sleepover Retreats in Ottawa, visits to the Monastery Panagia the Comforter in Quebec, a visit to the Metropolis and Theological Academy in Toronto, a retreat in Montreal, Pan-Orthodox Advent Retreats at St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church, a 2 day trip to Niagara Falls, a 3 day trip to New York, annual participation in the Relay for Life (cancer), Hike for C.H.E.O., Christmas Carolling, making sandwiches for a local Mission, and assisting at the Hellenic Community's "March 25th" parade.

Ottawa G.O.Y.A. holds various fundraising initiatives such as "Coffee Hour" on Sundays, travel mug and entertainment book sales, a turkey raffle and 50/50 draws, bake sales and special fundraising events to help support our local children's hospital C.H.E.O., the Cancer Society, Autism & other organizations.

The group has adopted St. Anthony as its patron saint (celebrated on January 17th). We celebrate his feast day on the Sunday closest to January 17th each year with Artoclasia in Church and often a bake sale after Church; please keep posted for this date annually.

On Saturday of Lazarus, March 27, 2010, we were honoured to have a Vespers led by His Grace Bishop Christoforos and Father Alex, followed by a Lenten Retreat in the church hall. On Holy Friday, all the youth gather at the church for the decoration of the Epitaphios. Father Alex holds a youth group discussion about the meaning of Lent and Easter. Our year concludes with elections and annual pool party or social.

The G.O.Y.A. youth group is one of Ottawa's own pride and joy, and leaders for our future.