



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

25th Anniversary of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy,
Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,
Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council,
Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood,
Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools,
Directors and Participants of all of the Youth Organizations, and all devout
Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Communities of our
Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved,

It is truly with profound joy that Orthodox Christians around the world are preparing to celebrate with one mind and one soul the 25th Anniversary of the 270th Successor of the Apostle Andrew, His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who was elected by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on October 22, 1991, and Enthroned as Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch on November 2, 1991.

During these past 25 years, His All Holiness has distinguished himself as not only a dynamic and visionary Spiritual Leader of worldwide Orthodoxy, but has also proven to be a blessed World Leader, becoming a living bridge between nations and peoples. Perhaps as no predecessor before him, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has been a foundational catalyst for ecumenical dialogue amongst the world's religions, and has especially advanced the dialogue with our sister Christian Church, the Roman Catholic Church and in particular with its Pontiff, Pope Francis.

Heralded as the "Green Patriarch," His All Holiness has brought global attention to our ailing environment by hosting a plethora of environmental symposiums throughout the world. As an Apostle of Love and Reconciliation, he has boldly spoken out against terrorism and religious oppression, ignoring the potential dangers and repercussions to himself and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. His outreach to religious leaders beyond Christianity, such as Judaism and Islam, are just a few examples of his willingness to truly be a Disciple of Christ and to proclaim convincingly the Good News and the Truth to all nations.

Numerous Universities, Colleges and Academic Institutions have bestowed honorary degrees upon His All Holiness in recognition of the invaluable work and progress that he has contributed to on the world stage, and in particular, in promulgating peace and conflict resolution across the globe. An erudite scholar, His All Holiness has authored various books and articles, not only concerning our Orthodox Faith, but also on contemporary social, biomedical, ethical, educational, and political issues that confront not only Orthodox Christians, but indeed, all inhabitants of the Earth.

His crowning achievement, among many, is the recent Holy and Great Council that was held on the island of Crete this past June, which brought together Orthodox Leaders from the various jurisdictions throughout the world, under the sage leadership of His All Holiness. After so many years since a Holy and Great Council was held, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was indeed blessed by God to preside over this historical event, which has cemented his unparalleled and unequivocal seal of vision and perseverance in the annals of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and of Orthodoxy.

Hence, it is with particular joy that I invite all of you to a special Divine Liturgy celebrating the 25th Anniversary of His All Holiness' Election and Enthronement as the "First Among Equals" to be held on Saturday, October 22, 2016 at the Metropolitan Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Theologian in Tenafly, NJ. The Orthros will begin at 9:00am followed by the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. I look forward to celebrating with all of you this most jubilant occasion in the life of our Church.

Praying that Almighty God continues to bestow many more years of strength and divine illumination upon our Spiritual Father and Leader, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, I remain,

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Evangelos". The signature is written in a cursive style. The word "Metropolitan" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Evangelos" is written below it in a similar style. The signature is centered on the page.

† E V A N G E L O S
Metropolitan of New Jersey