



## GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

### ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 190/2022

#### **Archepiscopal Encyclical on the Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross**

September 14, 2022

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America:

*Καὶ γὰρ ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἐμαυτόν. (κατὰ Ἰωάννην 12:32)*  
*And I, if I be exalted from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself. (John 12:23)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Sacred Feastday, which reminds every parishioner from coast to coast of our beloved Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology, speaks to the love of God for every human being. But it also speaks of our service to the Holy Cross by being Σταυροφόροι – those who bear the Cross. And how do we do carry His Cross? First, by picking up our own and carrying it with all the love and compassion we can muster for ourselves and for those around us.

To elevate, to exalt, to raise the Cross as did the saintly Archbishop Makarios on that first September Fourteenth in Jerusalem so many centuries ago, is to exalt the One Who died upon it in order to redeem our lives. Our Lord Jesus Christ *willingly* ascended the Cross to die for us, as we chant in the Kontakion of the Feast: Ὁ ὑψωθείς ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ ἐκούσιως. The question for us, then, is what are we willing to do?



Are we willing to sacrifice, to give of ourselves generously, to show compassion, mercy and forgiveness? This is what the Lord did on the Cross, the Cross to which He was nailed by the hands of every human being who has ever lived or will live. His mercy and grace creates a spiritual vortex of love that draws all people into its whirling effulgence, which is the nature, the mission, and the glory of the Church.

My dear brethren in Christ: we could have no better name and purpose for our beloved Σχολή, for it is to this magnetic and powerful grace that our future clergy are called. Their vocation is nothing less than to continually raise up the Cross of Christ, as Saint Paul says: *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world* (Galatians 6:14). Therefore, let us exalt the Cross of Christ in our lives, and lift up our School – with prayers, support, and above all, committed students, who will carry the Cross on high and bring glory to our Lord and God.

With paternal blessings and love in Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America



## ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ

### ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ. 190/2022

#### Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκύκλιος για την Παγκόσμια Ύψωση του Τιμίου και Ζωοποιού Σταυρού

14 Σεπτεμβρίου 2022

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τοὺς Μοναχοὺς καὶ τὶς Μοναχές, τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Κοινοτικῶν Συμβουλίων, τοὺς Ἐντιμολογιωτάτους Ἄρχοντες τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου, τὰ μέλη τῆς Ἡγεσίας τῶν 100, τὰ Ἡμερήσια καὶ Ἀπογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὶς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴ Νεολαία, τὶς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὄργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμο πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

«Κἀγὼ ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἐμαυτόν.»  
(κατὰ Ἰωάννην 12:32)

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Ἡ εὐσχημος ἡμέρα τῆς ἐορτῆς τῆς ὑψώσεως τοῦ Τιμίου καὶ ζωοποιού Σταυροῦ ἀποτελεῖ θαυμάσια εὐκαιρία γιὰ κάθε πιστὸ τῆς Ἱ. Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς νὰ στρέψει τὴν προσοχή του στὸ ἀγαπημένο μας Ἑλληνικὸ Κολλέγιο καὶ τὴ Θεολογικὴ Σχολὴ τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ νὰ ἀντιληφθοῦμε τὴν σταυρικὴ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ γιὰ κάθε ἀνθρώπινη ὑπαρξη. Σήμερα, ὅμως, τὸ εὐαγγέλιο τῆς ἐορτῆς μᾶς μιλάει καὶ γιὰ τὴν ἀποστολή μας ὡς χριστιανῶν σταυροφόρων. Μὲ ποιὸ τρόπο μποροῦμε νὰ φέρουμε τὸ σταυρὸ τοῦ Κυρίου μας; Πρωτίστως φέροντας τὸ δικό μας σταυρὸ ἀγογγύστως, μὲ ἀγάπη καὶ συμπάθεια γιὰ τοὺς γύρω μας.

Ύψώνουμε σήμερα τὸν Τίμιο Σταυρὸ, μιμούμενοι τὸν μακαριστὸ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπο Ἱεροσολύμων Μακάριο, ὁ ὁποῖος πρῶτος ὑψωσε τὸν Τίμιο Σταυρὸ στὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα,



πολλούς αιώνες πριν, δοξάζοντας τὸν Ἕνα πὸν πέθανε ἐπάνω στὸ Σταυρό, γιὰ νὰ ἐξαγοράσει τὶς ζωές μας. Ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐκουσίως ἀνήλθε στὸ σταυρό, πεθαίνοντας γιὰ ἐμᾶς, ὅπως ψάλλουμε στὸ κοντάκιο τῆς ἐορτῆς: «Ὁ ὑψωθείς ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ ἐκουσίως». Τὸ ἐρώτημα ὅμως πὸν ἀπευθύνεται σὲ ὅλους ἐμᾶς εἶναι τί θέλουμε στὴ ζωή;

Θέλουμε μήπως νὰ θυσιαστοῦμε φιλανθρωπῶς, δείχνοντας ἀγάπη, ἔλεος καὶ συγχωρητικότητα πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μας; Αὐτὸ ἀκριβῶς ἔπραξε καὶ ὁ Κύριός μας ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ, κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου ὑπὲρ κάθε ἀνθρώπινης ὑπαρξῆς στὴ γῆ πάντοτε καὶ εἰς τὸ διηνεκές. Τὸ ἔλεός Του καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη Του δημιουργοῦν ἓνα πόλο ἔλξης, ὁ ὁποῖος ἔλκει κάθε ἄνθρωπο στὴν ὑπέρτατη λάμψη. Αὐτὴ εἶναι ἡ φύση, ἡ ἀποστολὴ καὶ ἡ δόξα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας!

Ἀγαπητοί μου ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοί, δὲ θὰ μπορούσαμε νὰ ἔχουμε καλύτερο ὄνομα γιὰ τὴν ἀγαπημένη μας Σχολὴ ἀπὸ αὐτὸ τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ, γιὰτὴν αὐτὴ εἶναι πόλος ἔλξης τῶν μελλοντικῶν μας κληρικῶν. Ἡ κλήση τους δὲν εἶναι τίποτα ἄλλο παρὰ ἡ διαρκῆς ὑψωσὴ τοῦ Σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅπως ὁ Ἀπόστολος Παῦλος λέει: «ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ τῷ κόσμῳ» (Γαλ. 6:14). Ἄς ὑψώσουμε λοιπὸν τὸ Σταυρὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ στὴ ζωὴ μας, καὶ ἄς ἀναδείξουμε τὴ Σχολὴν μας, ὑποστηρίζοντάς την μὲ προσευχὴ καὶ γενναιοδωρία, ἀλλὰ κυρίως μὲ ἀφοσιωμένους νέους φοιτητὲς, οἱ ὁποῖοι θὰ φέρουν ψηλὰ τὸ Σταυρὸ, δοξάζοντας τὸν Κύριο καὶ Θεό.

Μετὰ πατρικῶν εὐχῶν καὶ τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπης,

† ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος