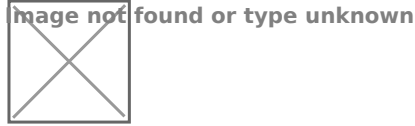


Archbishop Elpidophoros Invocation - Paternal Exhortation - Benediction Executive Committee 33rd Annual Leadership 100 Conference



My Dear Friends,

Let us commence our meeting today, by together reciting the Prayer par excellence that our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to pray:

Πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου, ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου, γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν, καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ρῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

Ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα, τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

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I am, of course, delighted to be with you again here at the annual Leadership 100 Conference – the thirty-third in the forty year history of this incredible organization. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America – as it stands today – would be unthinkable without Leadership 100. You have traveled with this Eparchy of the Ecumenical Throne for forty percent of its timeline, but you certainly count for more than forty percent of its life and progress.

Leadership 100 is a most robust backbone for our National Ministries, especially Hellenic College and Holy Cross. I continue to marvel at the foresight and wisdom of the ever-memorable Archbishop Iakovos in cultivating the lay leadership of our Sacred Archdiocese to make such an investment in an endowment fund for the Church.

Many great figures of our Church in America, who were instrumental in the establishment of Leadership 100, have passed away, but their vision and their

execution of this vision remain in place. Now, we have a new generation of leaders - all of you who serve on this Executive Committee - to guide Leadership 100 and to expand that vision for the future. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your service. The past forty years have truly been amazing! I will repeat what I am about to say more than once these next few days: Our founders may have passed on, but the foundation that they built remains firm and strong. They were giants of business and titans of industry, and their contributions will never be forgotten.

And let us remember that our Church is also strong. I have just come from a pastoral visit to our community in the Bahamas, and I can tell you that this small parish is a model of local ministry and global consciousness. Our parishes from coast to coast - and in the case of the Bahamas, beyond the coastline! - they have not only recovered from the limitations of the pandemic, but they are thriving. Everywhere I go, I see vitality and I see youth. Four thousand at the Metropolis of San Francisco Folk Dance Festival just two weeks ago.

We have much to be grateful for as a Church, and as Leadership 100. I want to express to our Chairman, Jim Logothetis, -my heartfelt and abiding gratitude for his steady hand on the rudder of the ship, and for his unwavering support to me personally.

I commend all of you, the Members of the Executive Committee, who work together in extraordinary cooperation. And as ever, many, many thanks go to our Executive Director, the unparalleled Paulette Poulos, and to the Leadership 100 Staff.

You all should be very proud of your service to our Church, and the impact you have made by your munificence. As we ready ourselves for this Conference, and the fellowship that it brings, I once again express my profound thanks to all of you. May God bless our deliberations today and throughout the week.

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O Lord Jesus Christ our God, You have promised that when "two or three" are gathered in Your Holy Name, there You will be in the midst of them. We come before You today as your servants and stewards of the Household of God. We entreat Your Majesty: Accept our thanksgiving and our service, for they are offered in sincerity of heart and without reservation. Bless this gathering of faithful stewards of Your gifts, and grant us the wisdom and vision to perceive Your will for Your own People; through the prayers of Your All-Holy Mother, and of all the Saints. Amen.

Photos: GOARCH/Dimitrios Panagos

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