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Archbishop Elpidophoros Offers Benediction at the “Day of Gratitude” Honoring Veterans



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America offered the Benediction at the “Day of Gratitude”, a special event honoring veterans, the armed forces and their families. The event, held at the Allegiant Stadium Las Vegas, Nevada on June 8, 2024, brought together thousands of military men and women to give thanks and show appreciation for their service to the United States of America. Following a full program, including remarks by Greek-American Lieutenant Governor of Nevada Stavros Anthony, a welcome by Greek-American Peter Palivos, and the presentation of a number of medals of valor, Archbishop Elpidophoros prayed:

“As we prepare to close this truly miraculous day of gratitude for our men and women of the Armed Forces and their families, I greet each and every one of you with the Orthodox Christian salutation: Christ is Risen!

Let us bow our heads in prayer:

O Almighty and Ever-living God, You have assembled us today in this physical arena, so that in a spirit of thanksgiving and gratitude for our wonderful Veterans, we might offer our humble supplications to You, the God and Creator of All, on behalf of those who serve at the greatest risk to themselves in arenas of conflict around the world.

O Lord, they serve with honor and dignity, with courage and valor, with persistence and patience, so that we, their fellow citizens, might dwell in peace and prosperity. They are the ones who go forth to defend our lands and our way of life, and some do not return.

Therefore, O Merciful and Compassionate God, we commit to Your everlasting love all those whose service to God and country proved to require their last full measure.

Bestow upon their immortal souls blesséd repose in the mansions of the Saints, in the tabernacles of the Righteous, and in the bosom of Abraham. Strengthen their families and descendants to bear their untimely loss, and grant unto us all the sure and certain hope of the resurrection, through faith in Your Son, our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.

Unto all our Veterans and those in active service, grant your Divine protection, and keep their families and loved one under the shelter of Your Holy wings. Bless them as they go forth, and as they return. And keep them strong in faith in You and in one another.

Bless also those who have made this day to truly be a day of blessing and fellowship, and keep our hearts alert to the needs of those who gift us with their military service.

Bless and keep us.

Make Your Face shine upon us.

Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us and give us peace.

For you are the Source of all life and to You we ascribe the glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

Amen!”

‘Day of Gratitude’ represents a unique collaboration of over 20 veteran

organizations and local churches committed to strengthening their communities and expressing their heartfelt thanks for the sacrifices these brave heroes and their families have made to defend our freedoms, and show them how much they are respected, appreciated, and loved.

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