29/07/2024

Olympic Games should be the starting point for ending wars”



During a feast day service at the Church of Saint Paraskevi in Pikridi (Haşköy), His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew delivered a heartfelt homily expressing his gratitude to God and Saint Paraskevi, the Protector of the Community.

The Patriarch emphasised the importance of preserving the rich tradition and piety inspired by the pilgrimage sites and Churches of Constantinople. He lauded the contributions of the founders of these sacred places, who have left a lasting spiritual legacy for future generations.

In his homily, Patriarch Bartholomew highlighted the strength of Saint Paraskevi, who, through the grace of God, overcame tyrants and serves as a reminder that Christians must fight with zeal and faith.

Marking the official opening of the Olympic Games in Paris, the Ecumenical

Patriarch underscored the significance of the Olympic truce and expressed his fervent hope for an end to wars and the establishment of peace, particularly in Ukraine and the Middle East. “Let’s join voices with Pope Francis in support of the Olympic Truce,” he stressed.

He extended a warm greeting to all attendees, particularly honouring Archon Exarch Panagiotis Tsakos and the pilgrims. The Patriarch conveyed the profound love of the Mother Church of Constantinople for her spiritual children worldwide.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew expressed personal gratitude and that of the Mother Church to the Honourable Archon for his unwavering devotion and support to the Ecumenical Throne and its institutions. He also commended him for his significant initiatives in the business and shipping sectors, which have strengthened relations between Greece and Turkey.



In addition, the Ecumenical Patriarch addressed the Consul General, the faithful, and Hierarchs, highlighting the significance of the Saint Paraskevi Church as a “spiritual clinic” for the Romanian-speaking community in Istanbul for the past 20 years. He praised Fr. Sergiu Vlad for his dedication as a priest and spiritual father. The Patriarch emphasised the community’s valuable role within the Archdiocese of Constantinople and its unique privilege of being under the direct canonical jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

The Patriarch acknowledged the community’s veneration for Saint Paraskevi and Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, noting their historical contributions to the church. He affirmed the respect for the community’s customs and traditions, expressing love for the Church of Romania and the importance of maintaining ties with their homeland. The Patriarch looked forward to participating in the centennial celebrations of the Romanian Church’s elevation to Patriarchal dignity and emphasised the fraternal relations between the two Churches.

His All-Holiness concluded by invoking Saint Paraskevi’s healing powers, wishing for the community’s continued growth and flourishing under the Mother Church’s protection, ending with a celebratory “Χρόνια πολλά!” (Many years!).

Read Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew’s homily below:
Your Eminence Metropolitan Stephanos of Kallioupolis and Madytos, Hierarchical Vicar of the Tataoula District,
Your Eminence Metropolitan Athanasios of Achaia,
Esteemed Consul General,
Reverend Fathers,
Esteemed Archons, who are represented by Captain Panagiotis Tsakos
Beloved children in the Lord,

Today we chanted, “O most majestic One, we have discovered your temple to be a spiritual clinic wherein all the faithful resoundingly honor you, O famed and venerable martyr Paraskevi.” Truly this Church of Saint Paraskevi has been since 2004, already 20 years, a spiritual home, where our faithful from the Romanian-speaking community here in the Queen of Cities can freely exercise their liturgical and pastoral duties in their own language, as a tangible expression of the unceasing care and unwavering love of the Mother Church of Constantinople. Fr. Sergiu Vlad is for them the best priest and spiritual father.

Your community is a precious part of the Most Holy Archdiocese of Constantinople and you have the unique privilege to be under the direct canonical jurisdiction of

the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Archbishop of this City of Constantine. Knowing your great veneration for Saint Paraskevi, as well as for Constantin Brâncoveanu, the Prince of Wallachia, who contributed immensely, like, much later, Archon Panagiotis Tsakos, to the restoration of this Church back in 1692, and whose martyric death, along with his sons, on August 15th, 1714, led to their canonization as local Saints of the Church of Romania, made easy our decision about which was the most suitable Church for the Romanian-speaking community here in the City of Cities.

We respect your customs and traditions! The Mother Church of Constantinople has no intention to cut you off from your ties with your homeland, Romania, where many of your family members and other relatives may live. On the contrary, we love our daughter Church of Romania and we eagerly anticipate to personally participate in the official celebrations in Bucharest next year for the centennial of the elevation by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Autocephalous Church of Romania to the Patriarchal dignity. We honor our beloved brother His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, the wise pastor and erudite scholar, whom we recently congratulated on the occasion of his seventy-three (73) years of life this past Monday. We cherish our fraternal relations with His Beatitude and we earnestly desire the relations between our two Churches to be always guided by the spirit of truth and love, as well as by the inalienable fundamental principles of our canonical tradition.

St. Paraskevi is commonly called upon as a healer, one who restores the eyesight of the blind or those with sight related illnesses. May she therefore continue to give sight in darkness, and clearness where perhaps the world begins to blur. May this community ever flourish and grow within the protecting wings of the Mother Church! Χρόνια πολλά!













vema.com.au