02/09/2024

Speech On the Ordination to the Priesthood of Very Reverend Second-in-Rank Deacon Mr. Kallinikos Chasapis



Beloved Very Reverend!

On the day on which one year ends for the Church and within a few hours a new year will begin, this day was chosen for you by His All Holiness our Master and Holiest Father, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, our spiritual Father, for you to enter the holy of holies of the altar, and in this most sacred Patriarchal Church, which embodies the holy of holies of the entire Genos and, dare I say the world Orthodoxy.

One end, one beginning. For you, this means the end of your ministry in the Patriarchal Court, where you rapidly reached the high rank of the Second of Patriarchal Deacons. Essentially, of course, it is simply the completion of the first stage of your ministry within our Ecumenical Patriarchate since from today, the Indiction Day, the first day of the Ecclesiastical year, a new chapter opens in your life and your ministry, as you are going to serve our most sacred Patriarchate from a different position, serving the flock in the Diaspora of the Mother Church in the United States of America.

You served the Mother Church in its headquarters, here in Constantinople, with

love and devotion to the institution and His All Holiness our Patriarch, and you were distinguished for your enthusiasm, perception, and awareness.

The time has come for you to turn over a new leaf and become a soldier of Christ, serving his flock in America. As you experienced from your short time serving in America, the people of God in America are people faithful to the Greek Orthodox traditions, our Orthodoxy, and family values, with great love and respect for our Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Patriarch.

They are people characterized by spontaneity in human relationships, generosity in their feelings, and charity, always supporting the Church. People are successful in their professional, artistic, scientific, academic, political, or business occupations. In whatever generation of immigrants they belong, regardless of their knowledge of the Greek language, their awareness of their Hellenic roots has not diminished. They demonstrate the same emotion and passion for our issues as our compatriots worldwide. They know what it means to start their life from scratch and with hard work and effort to achieve the best and the highest, and all this in a genuinely free and democratic country like America, which knows how to reward indiscriminately those who deserve it and claim it through legitimate and legal means. They are the ones who realized the so-called American dream.

Dear Kallinikos, that is the chosen flock you are called to serve. You are called to give your whole self, your best self. You are called to bring with you what you have learned and been taught at the Sacred Center of the Orthodoxy, being a student of the most ideal church elder and teacher that a cleric could have in his priesthood path: His All Holiness our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. That superior light of the Phanar is what our people in America thirst and hunger for.

The light of the Phanar, which consists of the freedom of spirit, the dialogue with any neighbor, the loyalty to the teaching of the fathers of the Church, the testimony of the Orthodox faith, the ecumenical of the faith, and our Hellenic identity, the modesty of the patriarchal liturgical rite and the byzantine music.

We want you to bring and offer to the States and our people what you have learned and were taught in the Courtyard of the Mother Church.

And then, you would have accomplished the American dream. Because for the clergy, the American dream is neither the glory coming by the people, nor the luxurious life, nor the pleasures of this world, but the faithful and steadfast ministry, the diligent service of the people of God, the transference of the spirit and all the spiritual treasures of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the flock of the Holy

Archdiocese of America.

I remind you of today's gospel reading, which you read for the last time today as a deacon, saying goodbye to the Patriarchal Pulpit, and I invite you to get it differently as if it would be written just for you.

We see Martha distracted by a lot of work, caring and worrying about a lot, while Mary has chosen the good portion and sits at the feet of Jesus and listens to his words, as the Gospel says. The Church invites you today to be gratified with what you have learned so far by choosing the good portion, sitting at the feet of the teacher of Ecumenical Orthodoxy, our Patriarch, and contributing to the ministries of the Holy Archdiocese of America, a "distraction" for our ministries, care and worry about all these beautiful things happened in the States, so that with your hard work in the demanding American society, you may be succeeded in the ministry of the Diaspora together with the other clergy, your brothers and fellow ministers, although you are very young.

And know that, according to the promise of the Lord, the good portion of your ministry in the Phanar will not be taken away from you. This eternal light in your heart and soul will always be with you in your ecclesiastical ministry and will warm, illuminate, and guide you.

Finally, I want to personally thank His All Holiness and express my gratitude to Him for sending His beloved son to America despite the uncountable needs at the Sacred Center here in the Phanar, as well as for the honor and canonical permission to ordain him to a priest, in this Most Sacred Patriarchal church.

His sacrifice is like that of Abraham, who the Lord richly rewarded for his obedience and readiness to sacrifice his son for the sake of God's will. And I want to assure Him that this sacrifice to strengthen the ecclesiastical ministry in the States will bear fruit a hundredfold for the sake of the beloved nurse of all of us, the Mother Church of Constantinople, to whom we all owe everything.

Amen.

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