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Archbishop Elpidophoros Performs Baptisms and Chrismations at Sts. Catherine & George Greek Orthodox Church in Astoria, NY

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On Saturday, September 21, 2024, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America received a group of catechumens into the Orthodox Church through Baptism and Chrismation at Sts. Catherine and George Greek Orthodox Church in Astoria, NY. This service is the first of its kind since the inception of the African-American Outreach Mission was officially launched in 2022 by Archbishop Elpidophoros.

The ten newly-illumined (seven by baptism and three by christmation) who have been catechized and prepared for the sacrament are composed of Black families that migrated from different African countries and all the Islands of the Caribbean, as well as those who were born in America. V. Rev. Archimandrite Chrysostom Onyekakeyah, Project Coordinator for Mission and Outreach Development at the Archdiocese encountered the newly illumined during his many outreach and visitation efforts during the year. They have all been interested in, and subsequently drawn by, the beauty of the Orthodox Christian ancient worship, and sound teaching, and they have a keen interest to grow their faith within Orthodoxy.

After the service, His Eminence addressed the newly-illumined, stressing that his “beloved newly Baptized brothers and sisters” should “rest assured in God’s love for you in this moment of His amazing grace.” He emphasized that illumination has joined them to the Church family, and that “the confession of the Faith that [they] made today is renewed in every Divine Liturgy and is essential to our ongoing witness to the love of God for each human being and the totality of His creation.”

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