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Remarks, Invocation & Benediction for “An Evening with Maria Callas



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros
Remarks, Invocation & Benediction for ‘An Evening with Maria Callas’
Teatro Grattacielo Opera Company
October 17, 2024
The University Club
New York, New York

Invocation:

Let us pray to the Lord:

O Heavenly King – You are our Ζωῆς Χορηγός – the leader of our Choir and the provider of every blessing;

Through inspired music and song You call our hearts to open to the reality of Your beauty and Your glory.

Grant unto the Spiritual Father of us all, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, health, protection, length of days, and the joy of his paternal love for

all the world.

Keep the Foundation that bears his name in safety and prosperity, blessing all its members and their families with every heavenly benediction.

Grant us gratitude for the blessings of life, even as we ask that You bless the performance and the nourishment prepared for us:

For You are the wellspring of every blessing and gracious gift, and to You do we ascribe glory: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Remarks:

My Dear Friends:

What a glorious evening we have before us. There is something truly magical about the musical performance that we are going to witness this evening. La Divina, as she was known, left an imprint upon the world – and not only the world of music – that is as indelible as it is beautiful.

Maria Callas understood her art and its lasting resonance, for she said:

“An opera begins long before the curtain goes up and ends long after it has come down. It starts in my imagination, it becomes my life, and it stays part of my life long after I’ve left the opera house.”

Many heartfelt thanks go to Stefanos Koroneos, Artistic and General Director of Teatro Grattacielo, and all the wonderful performers gathered this evening, who will give us a taste of her observation following our dinner.

I also want to express our collective gratitude to all the underwriters of this evening; your generosity is deeply appreciated.

Such events as this are vital to the fellowship of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, which is building a community of like-minded souls committed to the future of our Mother Church. It is no surprise to anyone that this initiative came forth under the aegis of the Archons of the Ecumenical Throne, whose sole mission is the welfare of the Phanar.

The Great Church of Christ is needed – perhaps now more than ever – by our global Orthodox Church, and indeed, the world at-large.

Orthodoxy can be consumed by nationalistic priorities, because in many ways, we

are still emerging in the lands of our origins, from the consequences of centuries of occupation by the Ottoman Empire. And with the continuing ἀδελφοκτονία in sovereign Ukraine, (where Orthodox slaughter fellow Orthodox and the Patriarch of Moscow supports Putin's war), to have a transnational and purely spiritual leader like His All-Holiness Bartholomew is precisely the blessing we need in this moment of history.

The Foundation is emerging as a powerful partner to the Mother Church, enabling Her and equipping Her with much needed resources. The Foundation provides a responsible and accountable methodology for supplying the Church of Constantinople and giving Her the tools She needs to maintain the canonical and spiritual order of the worldwide Church.

Whether it be in ecumenical or interfaith endeavors, or in environmental leadership, or in the often complex intra-Orthodox scene, through the Foundation, we can ensure a proper and suitable economic basis for the Mother Church to exercise Her appropriate role among all the Local, Autocephalous Churches.

Therefore, I congratulate you for this evening's gathering, and for sharing the good news of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation with all those interested, because in the end, the whole world benefits from Her leadership and the moral compass of His All-Holiness.

Let us enjoy the evening and go forth from this place strengthened in our commitment, fortified in our devotion, and resplendent in our dedication to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and Her magnificent Chief Shepherd, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

Πολλά τά Ἔτη Του!

Benediction:

Let us pray to the Lord:

O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – praised by sun and moon, and by every star in the Heavens,

We give You thanks for the inspiring music and exquisite voices that have brought us together as one family in Christ.

Bless all those whose endeavors brought this wonderful gathering.

Bless all the participants and guide their movements in the world; keep them in the

flow of Your Divine Love.

And as we depart from this place, keep us in Your light.

Always having Your face shining upon us;
Lifting up Your countenance upon us, and giving us peace;

That we may ever praise and glorify You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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