

Archbishop Elpidophoros Visits Blue Point Parish, Elevates Fr. Dean Panagos to Protopresbyter



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America was warmly welcomed to St. John's Greek Orthodox Church in Blue Point, New York by Rev. Fr. Dean A. Panagos and the faithful, for the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday before the Nativity, Dec 22, 2024. It was a full day for the community as they held a Christmas Pageant, four Chrismations, an Artoklasia, a Forty Day Blessing, and prayers for two couples recently engaged.

During his Homily, His Eminence remarked,

“Today, we hear the annual recitation of the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ...today's readings remind us of the incredible human history that preceded the Birth of the Savior, a history of good, and of bad. The deeper meaning here, is that our salvation in Christ does not occur in a vacuum. There were concrete human beings who lived and died, and from whom the Lord was descended. Their stories are found in the Books that make up the Old Testament, but these are not sanitized versions of the human experience. They are filled with the same realities of life and death that persist in the modern world. They remind us of the authentic and true humanity of the Lord.”

Continuing, His Eminence related this geneology to the parishioners:

“Beloved Parishioners of Saint John’s: We are all part of God’s family – every single one of us – good and not so good. And outside the walls of this beautiful Church, we are part of the larger human family, those we know, and those we do not know, just like that great river of our individual ancestors, flowing through time. Therefore, let us not withhold our embrace and welcome from anyone. They are part of us, and we are part of them. When they fall short, let us be present to support them, and to help them. And when they succeed and advance, let us greet their good fortune with happiness and generosity.”

Following the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Elpidophoros elevated the Proistamenos Fr. Dean to the rank of Protopresbyter, the highest office for a married priest. Axios!

Photo: Dimitrios Panagos/Orthodox Observer.

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