

## **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew: Hope for reopening of Theological School of Halki has not faded**



On Monday, 9 June 2025, the Feast of the Holy Spirit, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew expressed his heartfelt hope that the completion of renovation works at the Halki Theological School would coincide with the long-awaited reopening of the seminary and the return of students to its renewed facilities.

Speaking in the ceremonial hall of the historic theological institution, housed within the Monastery of the Holy Trinity on the island of Halki, the Patriarch stressed the deep spiritual significance of the day and the enduring presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church.

“Pentecost marks the descent of the Holy Spirit, who remains within the Church as its life-giving soul,” said Patriarch Bartholomew. “From the smallest blessing to the consecration of a bishop, all things in the Church are done through the Holy Spirit,

who guides us in all truth and reveals to us the mysteries of God. The work of the Spirit continues unceasingly in the Church—as an eternal day.”

Drawing on this theology of Pentecost, the Patriarch affirmed that the Holy Spirit continues to speak to the Church today, just as He did to the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse. Addressing the faithful around the world, he offered a message of encouragement and perseverance: “Be steadfast, immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew also warmly welcomed members of the “Halki Alumni and Friends Association,” who were visiting their alma mater on pilgrimage. Reflecting personally on his own time as a student at the seminary, he recalled with emotion the dreams and aspirations he held during his formative years, and his later return as assistant dean and professor of Canon Law.

“Many of those dreams were not fulfilled,” he said candidly, referring to the closure of the school in 1971. “Yet our hope in Christ has not waned. This is evident in the major renovations underway—thanks to the generous support of Mr. Athanasios Martinos, Archon and Grand Benefactor of the Ecumenical Patriarchate—as well as in recent positive developments regarding the school’s potential reopening.”

The Patriarch concluded his address by conveying his deep gratitude to the Monastery’s board and its abbot, His Grace Bishop Kassianos of Aravissos, praising their tireless and loving service to the Mother Church and their unwavering dedication to the Theological School.

With both prayer and determination, the Ecumenical Patriarchate continues to envision a future in which the Halki Seminary once again forms a new generation of Orthodox theologians and clergy—within the very halls that shaped so many past spiritual leaders of the Church.

Photographs: Nikos Papachristou

























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