

17/06/2025

Archbishop Elpidophoros Archpastoral Exhortation to the Metropolis of Denver Clergy Laity Assembly and Philoptochos Convention



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America Archpastoral Exhortation to the
Metropolis of Denver Clergy Laity Assembly and Philoptochos Convention
June 16, 2025

Saint Catherine Greek Orthodox Church
Greenwood, Colorado

Your Eminence, Metropolitan Constantine of Denver, Beloved Brother in Christ,

Protopresbyter Lou Christopoulos, Chancellor of the Metropolis,

Protopresbyter George Gartelos, President of Clergy Syndesmos,

Archon Depoutatos Damon Diamantaras, Vice Chair of the Metropolitan Council

Archon Aktouarios Dr. Gregory Papadeas, Regional Archon Commander

Helena Papadopoulos Johnson, President of the Metropolis Philoptochos,

Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers,

Esteemed Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,

Honored Members of Leadership 100,

Dear Sisters of the Metropolis Philoptochos,

Church Music Federation Members,

YAL and GOYA Representatives,

Esteemed Delegates to the Clergy Laity Assembly,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am delighted that I could be present for at least a portion of this Clergy Laity Assembly of the Holy Metropolis of Denver, the first one that your beloved Archpastor, His Eminence Metropolitan Constantine, is presiding over as your Ruling Hierarchy.

In the past five days, I have had the privilege to attend the Clergy Laity Assembly of the Metropolis of Atlanta, and a Thyranoxia in the Metropolis of Chicago – the Saint Iakovos Church in Valparaiso, Indiana. Now, I am with you in the Denver Metropolis for your Clergy Laity Assembly, to encourage you in the work and mission of the Church.

In my capacity as Archbishop, I have extraordinary opportunities to visit our communities in every corner of our wonderful Nation. These visits – often centered around liturgical milestones in the parishes (as this past weekend at Saint Iakovos) – give me a generous experience of the faith and the works of our Orthodox Christian Brethren around the country.

Today, what I want to share with all of you is something eminently simple, but exceedingly profound. And that is this: we are one family in Christ. Whether you are from this magnificent Metropolis that encompasses some of the most scenic landscapes in the United States, or are from the West or East Coasts, or are from the farmland or southern deltas, we are all related to one another through the grace of God. We call each other “brothers and sisters in Christ,” because that is the spiritual reality that God has called us to. Yet, in our daily experience, outside of our circles of families, friends, and parishes, we are more like distant cousins

who have yet to meet.

But I am here to tell you, this vast Family of Orthodox Christians – some born in Orthodox families, and others who have chosen to be adopted into our Church – this Family is united and this Family is connected in ways past our understanding. As the famous philosopher William James once said:

“We are like islands in the sea, separate on the surface but connected in the deep.”

The depths where we are connected are to be found in the spiritual and worshipful moments of our lives, “for the [Holy] Spirit fathoms all things, even the deepest recesses of God.” ¹ This connection in the Spirit is attested to by Saint Paul, who write to the Christians in Corinth:

“ ... we were all baptized by One Spirit into One Body, whether we were Jews or Greeks, slaves or free. And we were all made to drink of One Spirit.” ²

This shared imbibing of the Spirit is realized in every Eucharist, where – no matter where you are in place or time – you partake of the Same Body and Blood of the Lord as every other Orthodox. This common participation in the Holy Chalice is what makes of us one Family in Christ – Sisters and Brothers in the Lord. We share in the Divine Humanity of our Lord, the same way He shared in the Human nature of His Holy Mother, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

That is why events such as this – the Clergy Laity Assemblies – are so important. Because they bring the larger Family of Christ together to fulfill their vocation to be a Family.

Therefore, my dear friends, whether you feel more like distant cousins with other Christians around the country and around the world, or are the closest of siblings – know this: we are One Family in the Lord. And we are called to live as that Family, expressing our love for one another, being generous with our time and resources, and ultimately being protective of and concerned for their welfare.

This Metropolis is surely blessed, because the spiritual father of your particular Family is such a loving and distinguished Hierarch as His Eminence Metropolitan Constantine. He sets a beautiful example for you all to emulate.

May you always experience the love of your Christian Family, through the intercessions of our Holy Mother, whose Blesséd Nativity is honored at the Metropolis Chapel — to the honor and praise of the Most Holy Trinity, Whose life and light are the nourishment of our souls.

Amen!

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