

Patriarchal Vespers of the Indiction - Ecclesiastical New Year (Video)



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

On Sunday afternoon, 31 August 2025, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew presided at the Great Vespers for the Feast of the Indiction, at the All-Venerable Patriarchal Church of Saint George at the Phanar.

Present in prayer were Hierarchs of the Throne, clergy, Archons of the Great Church of Christ, as well as faithful from Constantinople and abroad.

Following the Dismissal of the Vespers, the Ecumenical Patriarch invested the Hon. Mr. Panagiotis Xenokostas, a dynamic entrepreneur in the shipbuilding industry, with the title of Archon Kastrinsios.

Addressing the new Archon, His All-Holiness emphasised, among other things:

"We rejoice that the circle of the Archons of the Throne is being enriched with a dynamic and creative figure of economic life, with an impressive career path from the Air Force to the business sector, very successfully both in Greece and in the United States of America. The culmination of your entrepreneurial activities in Greece is the reopening and development of the Neorion Shipyards in Syros and the Elefsis Shipyards. You have made a significant contribution to the reconstruction of the Greek shipbuilding sector and to highlighting its importance and contribution to broader social and economic development. We also consider noteworthy your initiative, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, to provide the younger generation with opportunities to become closely acquainted with the field of shipbuilding and its operation."



"It is certain that the way economic life is organised profoundly influences the whole course of human affairs. Sustainable economic development has inviolable conditions, which are linked with social justice and respect for the natural environment. The future does not belong to the so-called 'fundamentalism of the market'; on the contrary, it is certain that this constitutes an obstacle to the path toward a favourable future. The great challenges of our times cannot be effectively

addressed on the basis of pragmatic, technocratic, and economy-centred choices.”

“The Ecumenical Patriarchate, faithful to its sacred mission and always far removed from temporary and utilitarian perspectives, proclaims the necessity of reorienting the economy, with a twofold reference: on the one hand, to the principles of ‘sound enterprise’ and economic strategies, and on the other, to the respect of fundamental humanistic and spiritual values, such as solidarity and justice. Man is not merely a *homo oeconomicus* and a consumer unit, but possesses a spiritual nature and a lofty destiny. As Saint Gregory the Theologian writes, man is ‘woven of both, heavenly and earthly,’ and is a ‘creature destined for deification.’ There can be no social and ecological sustainability at the expense of spiritual and moral values. The violation of these principles always has very negative consequences for all aspects and dimensions of life.”

His All-Holiness then emphasised:

“The Most Reverend brother in Christ, Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, esteems and praises your kindness, modesty, and *philotimo*, your respect for the Church and its witness, your fidelity to the ancestral traditions, your intelligence, and your modern spirit. We are certain that, now honoured with the Archon title of Kastrinsios and as a member of the Brotherhood of Archons of the Great Church of Christ ‘Panagia Pammakaristos,’ you will broaden your creative endeavours, continue to ‘take the lead in good works,’ and prove worthy of your Patriarch’s trust.

In this spirit, we once again congratulate you on this high Office, and we crown with our Patriarchal blessing your esteemed wife, who rejoices with you from afar, and your beloved children, as well as the other members of your distinguished entourage, invoking upon all of you who are present and united in prayer, through the intercessions of Panagia Pammakaristos, the life-giving grace and boundless mercy of the God of wisdom and love. Axios!”

Immediately afterward, His All-Holiness attended and greeted the official event for the art exhibition jointly organised by the ecological foundation “Zero Waste” (Sıfır Atık Vakfı), under the patronage of the First Lady of Turkey, H.E. Mrs. Emine Erdoğan—and the Association for the Support of the Greek Community Foundations (SYRKI), at the Patriarchal Marasleio Urban School.



The event was honoured with the presence of the Governor of Istanbul, His Excellency Mr. Davut Gül, who also addressed the gathering. Speaking about the exhibition and the activities of the ecological foundation, which focus on eco-friendly waste management, was the Hon. Mr. Samed Ağırbaş, President of the Sıfır Atık Vakfı ("Zero Waste Foundation").

In attendance were Hierarchs of the Throne, representatives of other Christian denominations and of the Chief Rabbinate, politicians and officials of local government, figures from the arts and education, as well as members of the Greek community.

Earlier that same day, His All-Holiness joined in prayer during the Divine Liturgy celebrated at the Patriarchal Church, which was presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Trikki, Gardiki, and Pyli.

Photographs: Nikos Papachristou

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