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With paternal pride, a tearful Ec. Patr. Bartholomew blesses youth



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew once again visited St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church & National Shrine, where he offered an audience and blessing to young adults as part of the 2025 Archdiocesan District Young Adult League (YAL) Conference.



The Ecumenical Patriarch gave the youth encouragement and guidance, expressing that “It is still possible to ... stand with integrity as a spiritual path.” “You are much more than the future of our Church,” he stressed, “you are also the now.”

His All-Holiness also offered an impromptu address in Greek, visibly moved to tears and telling the youth, “We are proud of you.”



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America preceded these remarks, sharing with the Ecumenical Patriarch the YAL members' joy at greeting His All-Holiness.

"They are here to receive your blessing, your wisdom, and to bask in the loving flow of your paternal and Patriarchal presence," he said. "We are so honored and happy that you are with us again."



The Ecumenical Patriarch was also addressed by Konstantinos Ouranitsas, YAL Conference 2025 Chair, and Fr. Barnabas Powell, parish priest at Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene Greek Orthodox Church in Cumming, GA. Fr. Barnabas spoke about the recent influx of U.S. converts to Orthodoxy, and the need for continued spiritual revival.

Photos by Orthodox Observer/Brittainy Newman

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