18/11/2025

The Ecumenical Patriarch at the Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Valinou



On Sunday, 16 November 2025, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew presided at the Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Valinou, where a holy spring dedicated to Saint Menas the Great Martyr is located.

Those who joined him in prayer included His Grace Bishop Adrianos of Halicarnassus, Supervisor of the District of Phanar–Golden Horn; Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; Byron Nicolaides, Founder and President of the PeopleCert Group and Great Benefactor of the church, along with his family; community leaders; and faithful from Constantinople and abroad.

Deacon Evlogios Tsatsas, Codifier of the Holy and Sacred Synod, preached the homily.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Ecumenical Patriarch expressed his satisfaction toward Bishop Adrianos of Halicarnassus, the Ecclesiastical Committee under the presidency of Symeon Soltaridis, and the Philoptochos Association for their work in

the community. He also mentioned the event held at the church the previous afternoon, titled “Reviving the Acoustics of Hagia Sophia.”

The Patriarch congratulated the organiser, Mr. Byron Nicolaides, “not only for his generosity, which has been evident in many ways, but also for his inspiration in collaborating with Stanford University, an internationally renowned institution, and distinguished practitioners of our ancestral chant tradition to create the musical feast that we enjoyed yesterday, which will be enjoyed by all future pilgrims and visitors to this community.”

The Ecumenical Patriarch emphasised that the primary purpose of his visit to the community was to encounter the congregation face-to-face and to give thanks to the Holy Name of God. “This is why we have come near to you today: to ‘look at one another,’ communicate as members of the one Body of Christ, and tell you that we love you with all the strength of our paternal heart,” he stated. He also mentioned the forthcoming celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

“The general joy of our communication today is heightened by the fact of the imminent official arrival in the Queen of Cities of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV of Rome, together with the Most Blessed brother Patriarchs of the Ancient Thrones of the East, for the historic occasion of the joint celebration of the anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, as well as, in the Phanar, the feast of Saint Andrew the First-Called, founder of the Church of Constantinople. The fraternal relations and love that we Christians have for one another show that we are all disciples of Christ: ‘By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another’ (John 13:35).

All these things, like the theological dialogues of our Churches, are fruits of the ecumenical outreach of Patriarch Athenagoras, whose work we continue with whatever strength we have. Today, we believe that we can no longer live in isolation, in self-sufficiency or self-satisfaction, but that we need one another. We bear a collective responsibility for a common Christian witness to the modern world, for whose peace we pray daily and to which we proclaim love as the highest ideal. How can we be convincing and credible if we are not at peace with one another and if we do not love one another?”

The Ecumenical Patriarch received warm words from the Bishop Adrianos of Halicarnassus, the President of the Ecclesiastical Committee, and the President of the Philoptochos Society.






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