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Archbishop Elpidophoros presides over liturgy at the Cathedral of Saint John the Forerunner in Brooklyn



On Sunday, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of Saint John the Forerunner in Brooklyn, New York, commemorating the 70th birthday of Rev. Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne Oleksandr Belya.



Archbishop Elpidophoros presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of Saint John the Forerunner in Brooklyn, New York. Photo by Orthodox Observer/Dimitrios Panagos

Concelebrating with His Eminence were His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzus, His Grace Bishop Nektarios of Diokleia, Archimandrite Alexander Belya, Vicar of the Slavic Orthodox Vicariate of America, Bishop-elect of Nicopolis; Protopresbyter Olexander Belya, rector of the cathedral; as well as Protopresbyters Borys Babeshko, Ivan Voloshchuk, Igor Tarasov, Vasyl Deiak, Rostislav Zadorozhnyy, Petr Prakaptsou, Maksim Pliskou; Archimandrite Tikhon Gaifudinov; the guest of the celebration, Father Anatoly; Archdeacon Dionysios Papiris; and Protodeacon Volodymyr Oliynyk.



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Following the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Elpidophoros awarded Fr. Oleksandr the Medal of Saint Paul, the highest honor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The Medal of Saint Paul is awarded to individuals who demonstrate exemplary leadership and dedication at the local parish level or the national stage.

“You see, we are here at the Divine Liturgy, the icon of the Wedding Banquet of the Son of God. We are all invited guests. Unlike the characters in the Parable who did not want to attend, we have made a conscious choice to be present and to participate,” Archbishop Elpidophoros said. “The truth is, we do not understand with complete realization all of our motivations. And there are many! But somehow, our presence within the Church is always enough to commence the spiritual path.”

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