

First Pastoral Visit of Archbishop Apostolos of Canada to the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Cathedral



On Sunday, September 27, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Apostolos of Canada made his first pastoral visit following his enthronement to the historic Annunciation of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Toronto, where he presided over the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy.

His Eminence was joined in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by the Cathedral clergy, Fr. Panagiotis and Fr. Dimitrios, together with Deacon Spyridon. The Cathedral was filled with faithful, including many young families and children, who gathered to welcome their new Archbishop and receive his blessing.

In his homily, His Eminence reflected upon the day's Gospel reading concerning the miraculous catch of fish and the calling of the first disciples. He emphasized the immediate trust and obedience shown by Simon Peter and the other disciples, who, at the word of Christ, once again cast their nets into the deep and subsequently left everything behind to follow Him.

His Eminence reminded the faithful that Christ remains the centre of the life of the

Orthodox Christian and the Head of the Church.

“It is very important to have trust in the Church, because the Church gives us what we need: Christ,” His Eminence said.

Reflecting upon the rapidly changing world and the development of modern technology, Archbishop Apostolos also referred to artificial intelligence, noting that although technology can provide information and assist people in many areas of life, it cannot replace the sacramental life of the Church.

“AI can tell us about Christ, but it cannot give us Christ. AI can tell us what Baptism is, but the priest will baptize us.”

His Eminence emphasized that the Church is the place in which the faithful encounter Christ personally through prayer, worship, and participation in the Holy Sacraments, and especially through the Holy Eucharist.

“The centre of everything is Christ. He is the Head of the Church, and He leads the Church through the Saints and, of course, through the prayers of the Holy Theotokos.”

A Message of Hope for the Young

Archbishop Apostolos expressed particular joy at seeing the many young people, young families, and children present in the Cathedral.

His Eminence thanked parents for bringing their children to church, even when doing so requires sacrifice and effort, and emphasized the importance of raising the younger generation within the sacramental and communal life of the Church.

“Without babies, there is no future,” His Eminence remarked, thanking the young parents for bringing their children to receive Holy Communion.

He described the presence of young people in the Cathedral as a hopeful sign for the future and encouraged families to remain strong in their Orthodox Faith and united with Christ and His Church.

His Eminence further invited the faithful to work together for the younger generation, for the children, the Greek schools, and the Sunday Schools, emphasizing that the spiritual life of the Church offers a foundation from which everyone can benefit.

The Protection of the Theotokos

Following the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence addressed the congregation once again and spoke with particular emotion about his first visit to the historic Cathedral and his personal devotion to the Theotokos.

He expressed his gratitude to God and to the Panagia for granting him the opportunity, following his enthronement, to visit the Cathedral dedicated to her Annunciation.

“The Panagia is not only my Mother, but the Mother of the whole world. She is the Mother of Christians, the Mother of the clergy; she is the Mother of us all,” His Eminence said.

Archbishop Apostolos also spoke about the presence of the Theotokos throughout his own ecclesiastical life, recalling that he was ordained at the Cathedral of the Annunciation on the island of Rhodes and became a monk at a monastery dedicated to the Panagia.

“Wherever I go, I find the Panagia before me,” His Eminence remarked.

He expressed his joy that the Cathedral in Toronto is dedicated to the Theotokos and prayed that she would continue to protect the Cathedral community, its families, and the entire Church in Canada.

A Warm Welcome from the Cathedral Community

His Eminence thanked the clergy, altar servers, chanters, Parish Council, Sunday School teachers, children, and faithful for the warm and respectful welcome extended to him.

He expressed particular satisfaction with the order and reverence he witnessed during the Divine Liturgy and congratulated the clergy and faithful for preserving the proper order and traditions of the Church.

Fr. Panagiotis, speaking on behalf of the Cathedral community, formally welcomed His Eminence to the historic Cathedral, which this year celebrates 65 years of ministry.

He noted the particular significance of the occasion, as the Cathedral was honoured to receive the new Archbishop on his first parish visitation following his enthronement.

The children of the Sunday School then offered His Eminence a special handmade welcome bearing the words, “Archbishop Apostolos, Welcome to Canada and to our

Church,” signed by the children themselves.

Deeply moved by their gesture, His Eminence gathered the children around him and said:

“This is the most beautiful welcoming since I arrived last Wednesday to Canada. God bless our children.”

The children joyfully responded with the traditional acclamation, “Axios!”

On behalf of the Cathedral community, Fr. Panagiotis also presented His Eminence with an epigonation depicting St. Andrew the First-Called Apostle, which had been obtained in Patras.

His Eminence received the gift with gratitude and spoke of his particular reverence for St. Andrew the First-Called.

Looking Ahead to the First Ordination

Before concluding, Archbishop Apostolos invited the faithful to return to the Cathedral on Thursday, October 1, the Feast of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos, for the ordination of seminarian Christos Bourolis to the Holy Diaconate.

His Eminence noted that this will be his first ordination as Archbishop of Canada and shared that, when he asked Christos in which church he wished to be ordained, the seminarian requested that his ordination take place at the Cathedral of the Panagia.

His Eminence encouraged the faithful to attend and support the young seminarian with their presence, love, respect, and prayers as he enters the ordained ministry of the Church.

Concluding his first pastoral visit to the Cathedral, Archbishop Apostolos thanked the faithful for their love and welcome and offered his paternal prayers for their families and children.

He encouraged them to remain strong in their Faith, united with the Church, with Christ, and with the Theotokos, assuring them that these remain the essential foundations of Orthodox Christian life.

“Christ is what we all need. Everything else is secondary.”

The historic first visit concluded in an atmosphere of joy and thanksgiving, marked

especially by the presence of the Cathedral's children and young families and by the shared hope for the continued spiritual life and ministry of the community under the protection of the Most Holy Theotokos.

The President of the Hellenic Community, Paraskevie Skoutakis, warmly welcomed His Eminence Archbishop Apostolos of Canada and emphasized that the Community will stand firmly by his side and support his significant pastoral and institutional ministry. She further expressed the Community's readiness to support every constructive initiative and endeavor undertaken by His Eminence toward the fulfillment of his vision, as he assumes the important responsibilities of his new and distinguished position as Shepherd of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada.

[Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada](#)