

27/10/2019

## **Encyclical of Archbishop Sotirios of Canada for OXI Day 2019**



To the Reverend Fathers,  
Honourable Presidents and  
Esteemed members of the Community Councils,  
Philoptochos Societies, Teachers, Students and  
Youth of our Communities,  
And the entire Plenitude of our  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada

### **First they answered “Yes,” then they said “NO”**

**ENCYCLICAL ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF OCTOBER 28,  
1940**

**By Archbishop Sotirios**

Our parents and brothers who took up arms in 1940 first answered ‘Yes,’ and then said ‘No.’ In fact, they said many ‘Yeses,’ but only one ‘No.’

Let us see what were the 'Yeses' our parents and brothers said, which then led them to say the powerful and resolute 'No' in 1940.

They did not say one 'Yes.' They said many times 'Yes'. They said 'Yes' to God. And they stayed true to this 'Yes.' They kept their Orthodox faith. Their faith gave them the strength and courage to say 'No' in 1940, and to proudly stand up in support of their homeland. But not only in support of their homeland, but also in defense of their faith in God, their family, and everything they considered to be holy and sacred.

They strongly believed in the triptych: Homeland. Orthodox faith. Family.

This is why they fought. For their family. For their children. For their sacred faith. For their homeland.

We live in Canada. According to all the studies, we live in the most prosperous country in the world. We have everything, and lack nothing. Do we appreciate all of this? Everyone should answer this himself, and for himself. We are all responsible and accountable to ourselves. But we are also accountable to God. To our family. To our future, and to our children's future.

We proudly commemorate the 'No' of 1940. We do so with celebrations, with doxologies, with memorial services, perhaps even with a parade. Just like when we first shouted 'No.'

But what about the 'Yeses'? Do we say 'Yes' to our Orthodox faith? Do we say 'Yes' to God? Do we say 'Yes' to the preservation of our Greek Orthodox values and beliefs? And if we do say 'Yes,' are we merely saying it by moving our lips? Or, are we saying it with our whole heart? Are we making every effort to apply our beliefs in our daily lives?

If we truly believe in the great 'No' of 1940, if we truly wish to celebrate the anniversary of October 28, 1940 with all our soul, then we must faithfully live out our Orthodox Christian faith in our daily lives. We must be Greeks and Canadians at the same time, without any reservation. We should apply our beliefs and values in our daily lives. Are we making sure that our children are following the example of our ancestors? This is the most basic thing of all.

Let us then, my beloved Christians, celebrate the glorious 'No' of 1940. Let us shout out 'No,' but first we must say 'Yes' to our Orthodox faith, 'Yes' to our Hellenic roots, 'Yes' to the pursuit of developing within our children an Orthodox

consciousness so they could embrace for themselves the Greek Orthodox values and ideals.

With fatherly love and blessings,

**ARCHBISHOP SOTIRIOS OF CANADA**

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- Source: [gometropolis.org](http://gometropolis.org)