29/10/2026

Encyclical of His Eminence Archbishop Apostolos of Canada On the National Anniversary of October 28, 1940



To His Grace the Bishop, the Reverend Clergy, the Monastic Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods, the Esteemed Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Parish Councils of our Greek Orthodox Churches and Communities, the Principals and Educators of our Greek Day and Afternoon Schools, our Beloved Students and Youth, and all the Christ-loving Faithful of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada.

Beloved Fathers and Brethren in Christ,

My Dearly Beloved Spiritual Children,

With profound national pride, historical gratitude, and spiritual reverence, we commemorate the anniversary of October 28, 1940, a defining moment in modern Greek history, when the Hellenic nation demonstrated extraordinary courage and unwavering devotion to the universal ideals of freedom, justice, and human dignity. The historic “OXI” (NO) transcended the boundaries of a political or military

decision. It constituted a collective expression of moral consciousness and historical responsibility, affirming that freedom is not merely a political entitlement, but a fundamental prerequisite for human existence and the spiritual fulfillment of the human person.

Holy Scripture proclaims: “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17).

This apostolic teaching invests the concept of freedom with profound theological significance, associating it with truth, moral responsibility, and the dignity of the human person in Christ. Spiritual freedom, while distinct from national independence, nevertheless provides an enduring source of moral inspiration for the defense of human dignity and the preservation of fundamental human values.

The Orthodox Church, as the spiritual nurturer and guardian of the Hellenic people throughout the centuries, has remained steadfast amid their historical trials and tribulations, cultivating faith, hope, and perseverance. Through prayer, sacrificial ministry, and her uninterrupted witness to the Gospel, the Church has continually affirmed that authentic human strength is rooted in trust in God and expressed through selfless love for one’s fellow human beings.

The anniversary of October 28 is therefore not simply an occasion to commemorate a glorious historical past. It is equally an invitation to thoughtful reflection and renewed responsibility. The preservation of our national memory requires education, historical self-awareness, and the deliberate transmission of our spiritual and cultural inheritance to succeeding generations.

With particular paternal affection, I address the students of the Greek Day and Afternoon Schools throughout our Holy Archdiocese, together with their dedicated educators and parents, who faithfully undertake the noble responsibility of preserving and transmitting Hellenic education.

The Greek language is far more than an instrument of communication. It is a living repository of historical memory, philosophical inquiry, theological expression, and cultural identity. It is the language in which the New Testament was written and through which much of the theological wisdom of the Holy Fathers was articulated and transmitted to the Christian world.

The biblical exhortation, “And you shall tell your son” (Exodus 13:8), underscores the enduring responsibility of each generation to communicate its historical and spiritual inheritance to those who follow.

This sacred obligation assumes particular significance for Hellenism in the Diaspora, where the preservation of our language, Orthodox faith, and cultural traditions constitutes both an affirmation of historical continuity and a meaningful contribution to contemporary society.

As Greek Orthodox Christians in Canada, we are called to preserve our historical

and spiritual identity with conscientious dedication, while remaining active, responsible, and constructive members of Canadian society. Our gratitude toward this welcoming nation finds authentic expression in our respect for its democratic institutions, our commitment to social cohesion, and our willingness to contribute to the common good.

My Beloved Spiritual Children, on this solemn national anniversary, we pay reverent tribute to the heroes and fallen defenders of 1940, whose courage, self-sacrifice, and devotion transformed freedom into a precious historical inheritance and an enduring moral responsibility.

May their memory inspire us to cultivate a society founded upon peace, justice, solidarity, and respect for the inherent dignity of every human person. As the Apostle Paul reminds us: “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; […] through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).

It is my heartfelt prayer that our All-Merciful God, through the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos, may continue to bless Greece, Cyprus, Canada, and Hellenism throughout the world, granting to all the gifts of peace, unity, spiritual advancement, and unwavering commitment to the enduring values of faith and freedom.

Zeito!! The anniversary of October 28, 1940!

God bless Greece and Hellenism throughout the world!

With paternal love and heartfelt prayers,
+APOSTOLOS
Archbishop of Canada

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada