03/11/2026

Addresss of His Eminence Archibshop Apostolos of Canada



On the Occasion of the Annual Fundraising Luncheon in Support of the Patriarchal Orthodox Theological Academy
Montreal, November 1, 2026

“The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

Your Grace,
Your Excellencies,
Reverend and Very Reverend Fathers,
Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,
Esteemed Benefactors and Supporters of our Academy,
Devoted Ladies of the National and Parish Philoptochos Societies,
Beloved Young People,

My dearly beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with profound spiritual joy and a deep sense of Archpastoral responsibility that I address you on this significant occasion, as we gather in support of one of the most essential spiritual and educational institutions of our Holy Archdiocese: the Patriarchal Orthodox Theological Academy.

The mission of our Academy extends far beyond the conventional boundaries of academic education. It constitutes a sacred ecclesiastical responsibility: the cultivation of theological knowledge, the formation of priestly character, and the preparation of future spiritual shepherds who will faithfully proclaim the Gospel and minister to the people of God.

At this point, I feel a particular obligation to express my profound respect, sincere gratitude, and fraternal affection for His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios, former Archbishop of Canada, to whom belongs the exclusive distinction of having conceived, founded, and established our Patriarchal Orthodox Theological Academy.

This Academy is his personal achievement, the fruit of his ecclesiastical wisdom, spiritual foresight, and enduring pastoral concern for the future of Orthodox Christianity in Canada.

Guided by the wisdom that has distinguished his episcopal ministry, and recognizing that the continuity of the Church depends upon the theological education and spiritual formation of her future shepherds, Archbishop Sotirios envisioned and brought into existence an institution of lasting ecclesiastical significance.

His achievement constitutes a precious spiritual legacy for our Holy Archdiocese, one which we have the sacred responsibility to preserve, strengthen, and further develop, with profound respect for its founder and a clear understanding of our obligations toward future generations.

Our Academy is the spiritual nursery of our local Church, from which we aspire to cultivate future generations of clergy who will preserve and transmit the apostolic faith throughout Canada.

As an institution bearing the distinguished designation of Patriarchal, our Academy also embodies our spiritual and canonical communion with the Holy and Great Church of Christ in Constantinople and our filial devotion to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.
My beloved brothers and sisters,

The Orthodox Church is not merely a religious organization or an institution devoted to charitable and cultural activities. She is the Body of Christ, the living continuation of the apostolic community, established and manifested through the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

From the Holy Apostles to the present day, the Church has faithfully preserved the apostolic faith, the sacred Tradition, and the unbroken succession of her bishops.
Within Orthodox ecclesiology, the Bishop, as successor to the Apostles, is the visible center of Eucharistic unity within the local Church, the canonical shepherd of the faithful, and the guardian of the apostolic faith.

The Archbishop, in the fullness of his episcopal ministry, bears the responsibility of preserving ecclesiastical unity, safeguarding Orthodox doctrine, ordaining worthy candidates to the sacred ministry, and guiding the spiritual and pastoral life of the Archdiocese.

The Presbyter, through the grace of Holy Ordination and in canonical communion with his Bishop, serves the Holy Altar, celebrates the Divine Mysteries, proclaims the Gospel, and exercises pastoral care over the faithful entrusted to his ministry.

The sacred priesthood is neither a profession nor a position of worldly distinction. It is a Holy Mystery, a divine calling, and a lifelong ministry of sacrificial love.
The priest is called to become a living witness of Christ, a spiritual father, a teacher of the faith, and a servant of the Eucharistic community.

For this reason, theological education cannot be limited to intellectual achievement or academic qualifications. It must cultivate holiness of life, humility, prayer, liturgical consciousness, pastoral discernment, and fidelity to the sacred Tradition of the Orthodox Church.

The future of Orthodoxy in Canada is inseparably connected with the theological education and spiritual formation of those who will be entrusted with the sacred priesthood.

My beloved children in the Lord,

Our young people occupy a special place in my heart and in my Archpastoral vision.

They are not merely the future of our Church. They are its living present, its hope, its vitality, and the promise of its continuing witness in Canadian society.

We have a sacred responsibility to provide our children and young adults with an environment in which they may encounter Christ, deepen their Orthodox identity, cultivate their spiritual gifts, and discern their personal vocation within the life of the Church.

It is therefore with particular joy that I announce today a new initiative which I have established for our Holy Archdiocese, to be undertaken in collaboration with the National Philoptochos Society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada, under the name WALK WITH CHRIST.

Beginning in 2027, this new Archpastoral initiative will seek to provide scholarships and financial assistance to qualified young men who desire to pursue theological studies at our Patriarchal Orthodox Theological Academy in preparation for the sacred priesthood.

Our aspiration is clear: no young man who sincerely discerns a calling to serve Christ and His Holy Church should be prevented from pursuing theological education solely because of financial hardship.

Through the collaboration of the Archdiocese, our National Philoptochos Society, our parishes, and our generous benefactors, we seek to establish a sustainable framework of financial assistance, spiritual encouragement, and vocational support for future candidates for the priesthood.

This initiative is not simply a scholarship program. It is an expression of our collective commitment to the continuity of apostolic ministry and to the spiritual future of our Holy Archdiocese.

We must encourage our young people to consider the sacred priesthood, to recognize the dignity and responsibility of this divine calling, and to respond with faith, courage, and humility.

Our Academy must remain a place where theological knowledge is united with spiritual formation, where academic excellence is accompanied by ecclesiastical discipline, and where future priests are prepared to serve the Church with integrity,

wisdom, and sacrificial love.

I therefore invite our faithful, our Archons, our benefactors, and especially the members of our Philoptochos Societies to embrace and actively support Walk with Christ.

Together, we can provide meaningful opportunities for future generations of Orthodox clergy to emerge from within our own communities and serve the people of God throughout Canada.

On this occasion, I wish to express my profound appreciation to His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Patara, Director of our Academy, and to the distinguished members of its faculty.

I extend particular gratitude to our devoted clergymen who generously offer their theological knowledge, academic expertise, and valuable time without financial remuneration. Their voluntary service is an exemplary manifestation of ecclesiastical stewardship, intellectual generosity, and sacrificial commitment to the formation of future clergy.

I likewise express my sincere appreciation to Father Nikodimos Kodogiorgakis and all the Reverend Clergy who worked with dedication, enthusiasm, and an exemplary spirit of cooperation, together with the devoted ladies of our parish communities, in preparing and organizing this year’s fundraising luncheon.

I extend particularly heartfelt gratitude to Reverend Father Charalambos Tzintis of the Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Montreal for his invaluable collaboration, personal dedication, and meaningful contribution to the successful organization of today’s gathering. His generous assistance, together with the collective efforts of our clergy and parish volunteers, exemplifies the spirit of ecclesiastical unity, mutual respect, and shared service that should characterize the life of our Holy Archdiocese.

The remarkable success of today’s gathering, with approximately 600 guests in attendance, is a powerful testimony to the generosity, unity, and ecclesiastical commitment of our faithful.

My heartfelt appreciation is also extended to the Byzantine Choir, whose beautiful and prayerful rendition of sacred hymns enriched the spiritual character of this occasion.
I wish to recognize especially the young people who represented their respective parishes at today’s gathering. Their presence is a source of genuine

encouragement and a visible reminder that our youth are the living present and enduring future of our Church.

I express my profound gratitude to our distinguished benefactor and generous supporter, the Honorable Archon Protonotarios of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Mr. Nikolaos Tsatas, who graciously provided both the luncheon and the Palace venue for this significant event.

His generosity reflects a noble spirit of Christian philanthropy and a deep commitment to the educational and spiritual mission of our Holy Archdiocese.
I am also especially grateful for the presence of His Grace Bishop Alexandros of the Patriarchate of Antioch, whose participation honors our gathering and reflects the bonds of fraternal communion and spiritual solidarity that unite the Orthodox Churches throughout the world.

I warmly acknowledge the distinguished diplomatic and consular representatives who have joined us, especially Ambassador Dimitrios Dimopoulos and the Consul General of Greece, Mr. Karalekas, for their gracious presence and continued support of our Greek Orthodox community.

To the distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, I extend my sincere appreciation and invite you to become steadfast, active, and generous supporters of our Patriarchal Academy. Your devotion to the Mother Church and your commitment to Orthodox Christian witness are of particular significance to our common ecclesiastical mission.

I also gratefully acknowledge the presence of Abbess Thekla of the Holy Monastery of Panagia Parigoritissa, whose prayerful ministry and spiritual witness enrich the life of our local Church.

My sincere thanks are extended to the Parish Council President and members, the National and Parish Philoptochos Societies, our dedicated volunteers, and all who contributed to the successful organization of today’s gathering.

My beloved brothers and sisters,

Supporting our Patriarchal Orthodox Theological Academy is not merely an act of financial generosity. It is an expression of ecclesiastical stewardship, participation in the apostolic mission of the Church, and a meaningful investment in the spiritual future of Orthodox Christianity in Canada.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us:

“For we are God’s fellow workers.” (1 Corinthians 3:9)

We are called to become collaborators in the work of God, united in faith, responsibility, and sacrificial love.
I encourage each of you to continue supporting our Academy, our Philoptochos Societies, our youth ministries, our catechetical programs, our Greek schools, and the spiritual and philanthropic initiatives of our Holy Archdiocese.

Above all, I invite you to support our new Walk with Christ scholarship initiative, through which we hope to encourage and assist young men who aspire to dedicate their

lives to the sacred priesthood.

In concluding, I recall the words of the Psalmist:
“Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.” (Psalm 127:1)

May Almighty God bless our collective efforts, strengthen our Patriarchal Orthodox Theological Academy, inspire worthy vocations to the sacred priesthood, and abundantly reward all those whose generosity and devotion sustain its holy mission.

May the Most Holy Theotokos intercede for our Holy Archdiocese, our Academy, our families, and our beloved children.

With profound gratitude and paternal love, I thank each of you for your presence, your generosity, and your unwavering commitment to Christ and His Holy Church.

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Press Office
Archim. Evdokimos Mathioudakis
November 2, 2026

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada