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Feast Day of Three Hierarchs today; celebration of Greek letters, learning



The Church today commemorates the Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, & John Chrysostom. The common feast of the three great teachers was instituted just before the year 1100, during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Alexis I Comnenos. January 30 is also traditionally celebrated as the day of Greek letters.

The day was observed in Greece with schools open, as the feast of the Three Hierarchs was recently abolished as a school holiday in the country.

Instead, circulars issued by the education ministry allow for commemorative events in public schools to showcase the contributions of the Three Hierarchs to Greek letters and learning.

For the Diaspora around the world, however, the day is a reminder to preserve the Greek language for expatriates and to support Greek-language education, offered mostly by Orthodox parish schools and community centers.

It's widely acknowledged that most Greek-language schools and after-school classes outside Greece are organized and managed by Orthodox parishes and Archdioceses.

In his message for the day, the Archbishop of America, His Eminence Elpidophoros, noted that "…Today the Three Hierarchs shine like three suns in the sky, each illuminating the world with spiritual insight, moral values, and mystical teaching."

In a related development, on Saturday the Archbishop of America will present awards to pupils of Greek-language day schools and afternoon schools in the New York City area, who excelled in an examination of modern Greek last June.

The "Holy Three Hierarchs" awards will be presented at a ceremony in Manhattan's Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral.

> Today the Three Hierarchs shine like three suns in the sky, each illuminating the world with spiritual insight, moral values, and mystical teaching. What a marvel they are for all to see!
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> — Elpidophoros (@Elpidophoros) January 30, 2020

A similar initiative will take place on the other side of the world, in Australia, organized by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese on the island continent.

The Archbishop of Australia, His Eminence Makarios, stated during his enthronement last year that one of his priorities will be to reach out to Orthodox youth and to support the teaching of the Greek language. As such, His Eminence has toured numerous Greek-language schools over the past months, and reiterated the Archdiocese's volition to support the College of St. John in Preston.

