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Ontario Premier Doug Ford visits Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada



On Friday, February 28, 2020, His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios welcomed the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, to the Archdiocesan headquarters in Toronto.

Premier Ford arrived in the morning and was met by the Archbishop, Bishop-elect Alexander (Salmas) of Patara, Archon Evagelos Sotiropoulos, seminarians of the Patriarchal Toronto Orthodox Theological Academy (PTOTA), and staff of the Archdiocese. Archbishop Sotirios and Premier Ford, friends for many years, warmly greeted each other before commencing with the formal visit.

His Eminence provided a tour of the Archdiocesan headquarters to the Premier, beginning with the Chapel of Saint John the Theologian and PTOTA Library.

Afterwards, the Archbishop escorted the Premier and his delegation to the main offices of the Archdiocese. A short tour of the private living quarters of His Eminence, including the small chapel dedicated to the Life-Giving Font ensued,

before participants visited the Archbishop’s office, with its spectacular view of central Toronto, including the officially named Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Environmental Zone (a park of 250 acres).

A light breakfast was then served to all and the Archbishop and the Premier discussed many contemporary issues facing Ontario and Canada, society as a whole, as well as the large and vibrant Greek community in the Province. Among the topics discussed, His Eminence raised the issue of religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the importance of unity and compassion in society, together with the value and dignity of all life, including from conception to the ongoing policy debate regarding the expansion of euthanasia (assisted suicide).

The Archbishop and Premier also had a private meeting to discuss relevant issues, at which time His Eminence thanked the Premier and his team, particularly Finance Minister Rod Phillips and MPPs Effie Triantafilopoulos, Christina Mitas and Belinda Karahalios, for spearheading the initiative to officially proclaim March as Hellenic Heritage Month in Ontario.
Following the presentation of a small gift as a token of appreciation from the Archbishop to the Premier, both leaders exchanged parting pleasantries and committed to working together for the growth of the Province and betterment of all Ontarians.

— Source: Office of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada / gometropolis.org