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H.E. Archbishop Sotirios of Canada issues his Encyclical on the occasion of the Anniversary of March 25, 1821



His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada has issued his Encyclical on the occasion of the Anniversary of March 25, 1821. Read the full text below:

Greek Revolution 1821

Why We Fought and How We Won

AN ENCYCLICAL ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF MARCH 25, 1821

Archbishop Sotirios

We rose up and fought “for the holy faith of Christ and for the freedom of our homeland.” For the honour of the family. Because “everything was covered by menace and crushed by slavery.” Because we had enough of hearing our children say, “I tell you mother I can no longer work for the Turk. I can’t anymore, I can no longer do it, my heart grows weary.” “Better to have an hour of living free than forty years of slavery and imprisonment.” Man without faith is a tree without roots. Without a homeland and freedom, he cannot even be considered a man. Freedom and rationality set him apart from unreasoning animals. His freedom is also respected by God who gave it to him. Without the honor of the family, man is himself without honour. No one respects him. No one appreciates him. He finds it difficult to respect and to love himself.We were victorious because we had these ideals. We were victorious, because we had Kolokotronis and everyone else who was like Kolokotronis. We had Metropolitan Germanos III of Old Patras. We had Papaflessas. We had all the other heroes. We had the Society of Friends (Filiki Eteria). We had Saint Patriarch Gregory V, who was heavily slandered. He did not flee, but accepted the noose around his neck for the sake of the Christian nation and the homeland.We were victorious because Kolokotronis affirmed to us and we believed that “God has signed for the freedom of Greece and He does not take His signature back.” We were victorious because we believed in the poet’s exhortation: “Strike away, great lords of war! Let no one forget the rope, children of the Patriarch.” We were victorious, because with our faith in ourselves, in our homeland, in our freedom and in God, we also received help from God.Now, here in Canada, we celebrate and commemorate the Greek Revolution of 1821. The freedom of our homeland Greece. The honor of our family. And we celebrate all of these things by enjoying the prosperity and freedom of our new homeland, Canada.But we must carefully reflect. Do we have deep faith in the true God, the One and Only God, Jesus Christ? Do we live out this faith in our daily lives? Do we have freedom in our souls? Do we respect the freedom of those around us? Do we maintain our families with honor? Do we take care of our family so that it continues to thrive well into the future? Do we work to ensure that

our children share the same ideals? If yes, then we can worthily celebrate the Revolution of 1821. We are deservedly enjoying our freedom. We are rightfully receiving all the blessings of God.“Go forth, sons of Greeks,” as the lyrical poem exclaimed in antiquity. Go forth all children of Greeks. Go forth Orthodox Christians. Go forth Greek Canadians. Celebrate our national freedom with faith in God. With Church services. With doxologies. Honoring the family. Honoring the Greek name. Honoring our origins. Honoring our Orthodox faith. Perpetuating the Greek Orthodox heritage. Passing it on to our children and to future generations.Long Live the 25th of March 1821. Long Live Greece. Long Live Canada. Long Live Freedom.