30/03/2020

Pandemic likely to cancel scheduled trip by Ecumenical Patriarch to the United States



A scheduled visit by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, to the United States in May now appears unlikely to take place, in the face of the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, and especially the surge in infections in the New York City area.



Speaking during a virtual town hall meeting with Metropolitans of the Eparchial Synod, bishops, and more than 325 clerics, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, expressed reservations about the possibility of such a visit taking place.

His Eminence convened the teleconference in order to discuss the magnitude of the pandemic, while taking questions from the clergy.

The Archbishop briefed the hiearchs and clergymen on a discussion he had with US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, identifying two areas in which the Church can especially assist the wider community of each parish, namely, to organize support around the families of doctors, nurses and health care workers who now have to spend time away from their homes, and to extend support to provide meals and nutrition to children experiencing scarcity.

Elpidophoros also noted that the Archdiocese was still not in a position to know whether Holy and Great Easter will be celebrated with the participation of the faithful.