

Staggering number of deceased being memorialized daily by Archbishop Elpidophoros of America



written by Gregory Pappas

Within a week of its launch, more than 100 names were submitted through [a special online portal](#) established by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Archbishop Elpidophoros of America had the vision and foresight to understand the need of the faithful to receive some kind of spiritual nourishment during this time—especially the families who had lost loved ones.

The Archbishop launched daily online memorials, or *mnymoseno*, back in early March. They were live-streamed to various social media channels. The first one was held in early April.

It was a familiar hymn to me after growing up in the Greek Orthodox Church and waiting every Sunday until the end of services to memorialize a dead parishioner.

Three years for some, 40 days for others. I also had experienced singing these hymns myself, during the many memorials we continue to hold for my departed

father and mother.

Μετὰ πνευμάτων δικαίων τετελειωμένων, τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ δούλου σου, Σῶτερ, ἀνάπαυσον, φυλάττων αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν μακαρίαν ζωὴν, τὴν παρὰ σοί, φιλόανθρωπε.

There's a part that always gets me. It's when the the priest asks for the repose of the departed servant, and he recites his/her name.

Κύριε, ἀνάπαυσον τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ κεκοιμημένου δούλου... Χρήστου... in the case of my father... or της δούλης Ιωάννας... my mother.

During the Archbishop's first online memorial service, I heard what sounded like an endless list of names. Dimitris, Yiorgos, Maria... the list went on. I went back and rewound the video. I was curious. Had this many people already died from within the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese?

There were more than 100 names.

Fast forward to the middle of May. The memorial services are still being held and Archbishop Elpidophoros is still live-streaming them and asking for names to be submitted.

As of today, May 13, 2020, the Archdiocese has received 720 names of deceased Greek Orthodox Christians whose families have asked to be memorialized.

I'm no statistician and I'd be curious to know from someone who keeps the registry at the Archdiocese or our various Metropolises throughout the nation. But 720 funerals in two month's time sounds like a staggering number for our community—for any community.

May their memories be eternal. And may these irrefutable statistics — and each and every name mentioned — serve as a reminder of how serious this pandemic is and go a long way in dispelling any conspiracy theories or myths that are circulating about the “seriousness” of this virus.

Note: The statistics for the deceased were provided by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The statistics are based on the number of names received from [the list that was created](#) for the Archbishop's daily memorial service. His memorial services are intended to benefit the health and healing of those infected with COVID-19 and are for those who have passed away. In addition to the deceased (720 as of May 13), there have been 1,221 names submitted for the prayer of health for those infected.

[Source](#)