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Archbishop Elpidophoros Visits Kimisis Parish Poughkeepsie, NY



NEW YORK – His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America made his first archpastoral visit to Kimisis Tis Theotokou in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he was warmly received by the congregants participating in the Divine Liturgy with all the preventive rules due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

At the entrance to the nave the Archbishop was welcomed by officials of the Parish Council, while a big sign read “Kimisis Tis Theotokou Welcomes Archbishop Elpidophoros.”

The Archbishop in his homily said among other things that “I am delighted to be with the Kimisis community of Poughkeepsie this morning, and experience your faith and your devotion as we continue to reopen our churches. We do so still exercising great caution and abundant concern for the well-being of our faithful.”

He continued: “with all of the threats to our health, our economy, our way of life, our faith has been sorely tested. There are some for whom faith cannot stand up to reason and science, while there are others for whom faith seems almost like an

automatic process that requires no thinking at all.”



The Archbishop added that “in between both extremes, we find one of the greatest examples of faith in the New Testament: the Roman Centurion of Capernaum. Here was a member of the occupying army that was hated by the Jewish populace. Here was a leader – a centurion – not only of soldiers but of the community which he controlled. And yet he went to Jesus, to the rabbi about whom he had heard so many stories. He calls Him `Κύριος’ but we should not think that this Roman acknowledged Jesus as the Lord. More than likely, it should be translated as “Sir,” which was a token of high respect, especially from a Roman officer to a Jewish rabbi.”

“The centurion,” said the Archbishop, “asks the Lord for his servant; he does not ask for himself. This is a sign of the condition of his spiritual heart. His concern is for another more than for himself. We can all learn a lesson from this Roman in these days of the pandemic. Are we thinking only of ourselves and our comfortable zones of belief? Or can we think about the benefit of others, whether they are dear to us or not?”

The Archbishop then said, “when our Lord Jesus Christ responds, `I will come and heal him,’ what an incredible sight this must have been to the crowd that was standing there. Here was an oppressor beseeching the help of the oppressed! Yet our Lord did not hesitate, for he knew the heart of this oppressor, and that despite

his warlike demeanor there was a quality of mercy in the Centurion’s soul.

But this remarkable Roman will not have it. He will not accept the Lord Jesus into his home. He protests, not out of prejudice against the Jews, but out of knowledge and humility. He says: `Sir, I am not sufficient that you should enter under my roof…But only say the word, and my servant will be healed.”

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