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GOARCH REP SAYS ARCHBISHOP DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN RNC BECAUSE HE IS IN TURKEY, THOUGH HE WAS ALREADY IN TURKEY DURING DNC



After Archbishop Elpidophoros, the head of the Patriarchate of Constantinople's Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, offered a benediction during the Democratic National Convention last month, many began to wonder if he would also offer a prayer during the Republican National Convention, as his predecessor, Archbishop Demetrios, had appeared at both conventions in 2016.

It was a long-standing tradition for the GOARCH Archbishop to appear at the RNC, tracing back to Archbishop Iakovos. Moreover, many interpreted Abp. Elpidophoros' words: "We pray that You would shine the light of Your countenance upon ... Vice President Joe Biden for the highest office in the land," as an endorsement of the Democratic candidate, which made his subsequent absence from the RNC all the more noticeable.

Yesterday, Archdiocesan spokesman Fr. Evagoras Konstantinidis told anamniseis.net that the Archbishop was indeed invited to offer a prayer and speak at the RNC, held from August 23 to 27, but he was unable to participate because he is on a visit to the Patriarchate in Istanbul until September 5, reports.

However, Abp. Elpidophoros was already in Turkey when his prayer was broadcast as part of the DNC.

The Archbishop departed for Istanbul after celebrating the feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos at the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons on August 15, and the DNC was held from August 17 to 20. His prayer was broadcast on the third night, August 19.

As anamniseis writes, it was widely expected that Abp. Elpidophoros would participate in the RNC at least through a recorded message, and Fr. Evagoras' statement does not explain why he could not have recorded a prayer for the RNC as he did for the DNC.

The Archbishop also caused strong reactions when he participated in a march of the leftist Black Lives Matter movement in memory of Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old EMT who was killed when police mistakenly raided her home in March.

Recall that Abp. Elpidophoros recently met with both President Trump and Vice President Pence at the White House in July. He also met with them a year prior.

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