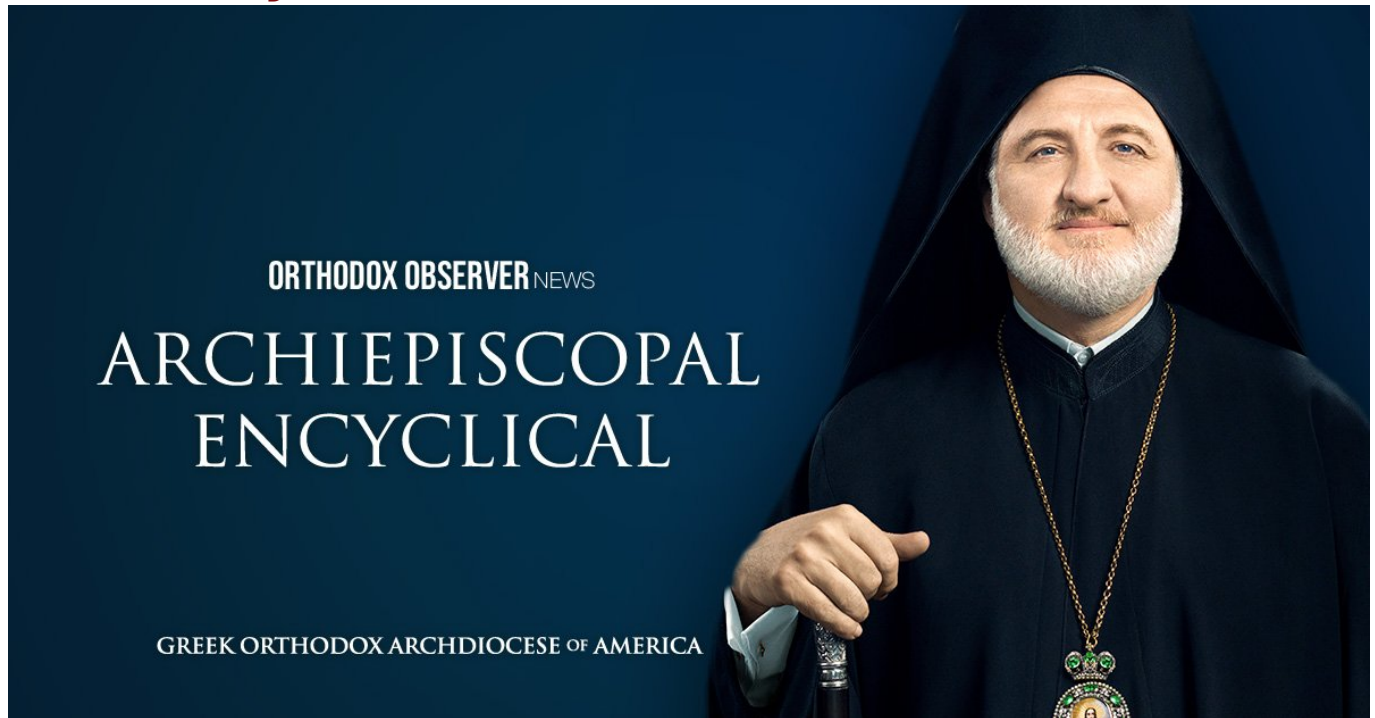


Archiepiscopal Encyclical: The Commemoration of OXI Day



Prot. No. 187/2020

October 28, 2020

The Commemoration of OXI Day

Τὴν Σκέπην σου, Παρθένε, οἱ πιστοὶ μεγαλύνομεν.... (Ἀπολυτίκιον τῇ 28ῃ Ὀκτωβρίου, Τῶν Νικητηρίων)

Your Protection, O Virgin, do we the faithful magnify.... (Apolytikion for October 28th, the Feast of Victory)

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, we celebrate the eightieth anniversary of our magnificent Feast of Victory – τὰ Νικητήρια of the Theotokos, who on October 28, 1940, came to the aid of

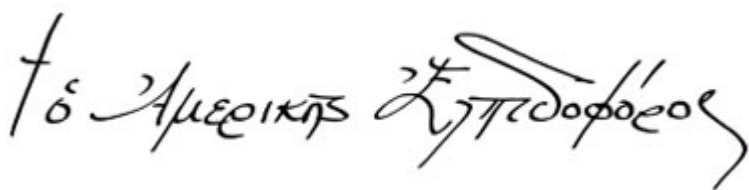
Greece and her noble people. We honor those Greeks who, as the Lord enjoined in His commandment, 'let their "yes" be "yes," and their "no" be "no"' (Matthew 5:37). On this day, the Greek People said a resounding "Yes" to freedom, to conscience, and to justice; even as they roared OXI to the forces of fascism, tyranny, and hatred.

Eighty years later, there are a diminishing few who remember in real time this heroic hour that cost Greece so dearly, and who lived through the days that followed: the suffering, the struggle, and the oppression that were wreaked on the Birthplace of Democracy. But all of us – and not only us but the entire world – have been blessed with the legacy of the sacrifices of full measure that adorn the mountain passes, the fields of honor, and the island bastions of freedom.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said: "When the entire world had lost all hope, the Greek people dared...." Indeed, they did! They dared to stand up against the monstrous waves of cruelty unleashed upon Europe. They dared to hope against hope in the Holy Protection of the Virgin whose colors blaze on the banner of the Nation. They dared to say "No" to evil, and risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, as once did other lovers of liberty.

My beloved Christians, let us honor their sacrifice with our prayers for their eternal memory, their everlasting rest, and our commitment to ever remain under the Protection of the Holy Virgin. May we always exercise and defend in righteousness and true piety, the duties and responsibilities of Democracy with decency, dignity, and in defiance of those who would attempt to seize our freedom.

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,

A handwritten signature in Greek script, reading '† Ἀμερικῆς Ἐπισκοπός' († Archbishop of America). The signature is written in a fluid, cursive style with dark ink.

† ELPIDOPHOROS Archbishop of America

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