

Encyclical on the Celebrations of Greek and Christian Letters



God willing, we are celebrating this year as well, the Feast of Greek and Christian Letters and we solemnly honour the Great Fathers who cultivated with zeal and enthusiasm the Christian Ideals, the echo of which continues in our days, particularly in, but not restricted to the Orthodox Christian world.

In particular, we honour those Holy Men, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, who, more than anyone else, worked during their lifetime for the dissemination of the Sacred Gospel of Salvation in Christ, of Justice and of the dignity of the human person and cultivated Holy Worship and prayer in both depth and loftiness, both that performed in public as well as in private. They were systematically concerned with Monasticism and its organisation and in their days cenobite monastic life in particular was established in both the East and the West, thanks to the rules of the Monastic Life, as composed by Basil the Great. All Three of these Great Fathers wrote Holy Liturgy which bear their names. Particularly well known are the Holy Liturgy of Basil the Great and of John Chrysostom, which have

been preserved in our time in the East and are used in the both the original text as well as in innumerable translations. They systematically promoted the delivery of sermons in the Churches and in Public Spaces and they have become exemplars throughout Christendom to this day. They introduced Ecclesiastical Music and Chant and Poetry into the Public Worship and made the Churches and Public Holy Worship a fundamental element of Education in Christian Tradition. They organised the local and Ecumenical Council rendering them existential elements of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Justifiably so, the Great Fathers of the Church, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, – and many others, – have catalytically contributed to the predominance of Christianity and its foundation and recognition as the Religion by Revelation, which was accepted in the conscience of the people of their era as well as of ours. Devout Society and the Church praying and Worshipping in Christ justifiably calls them “The three greatest beacons of the Three-Sunned Divinity have illumined all the world with the rays of doctrines divine and tru” (Apolytikion of the Feast).

We fatherly advise you to organise festive Celebrations for Greek and Christian Letters and read this letter from the Pulpit instead of a Sermon on Wednesday, 30 January 2019. The central Celebration for the Feast of Greek and Christian Letters will be held on Thursday, 31 January 2019 at 7p.m., in the Friends’ Room of the Hellenic Centre, 16-18 Paddington Street, London W14 5RJ, with the featured speaker being Dr Konstantinos G.A. Niarchos, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Athens who will speak on “The Timeless Great Message of the Three Hierarchs: Ethos – Virtue – Education – Ethics and Politics in Society”. We are looking forward to seeing you all at this central Celebration.

Wishing you all health and a blessed New Year 2019, I remain with warm wishes and blessing in the Lord and honour.

London, 30 January 2019

Archbishop Gregorios
of Thyateira and Great Britain