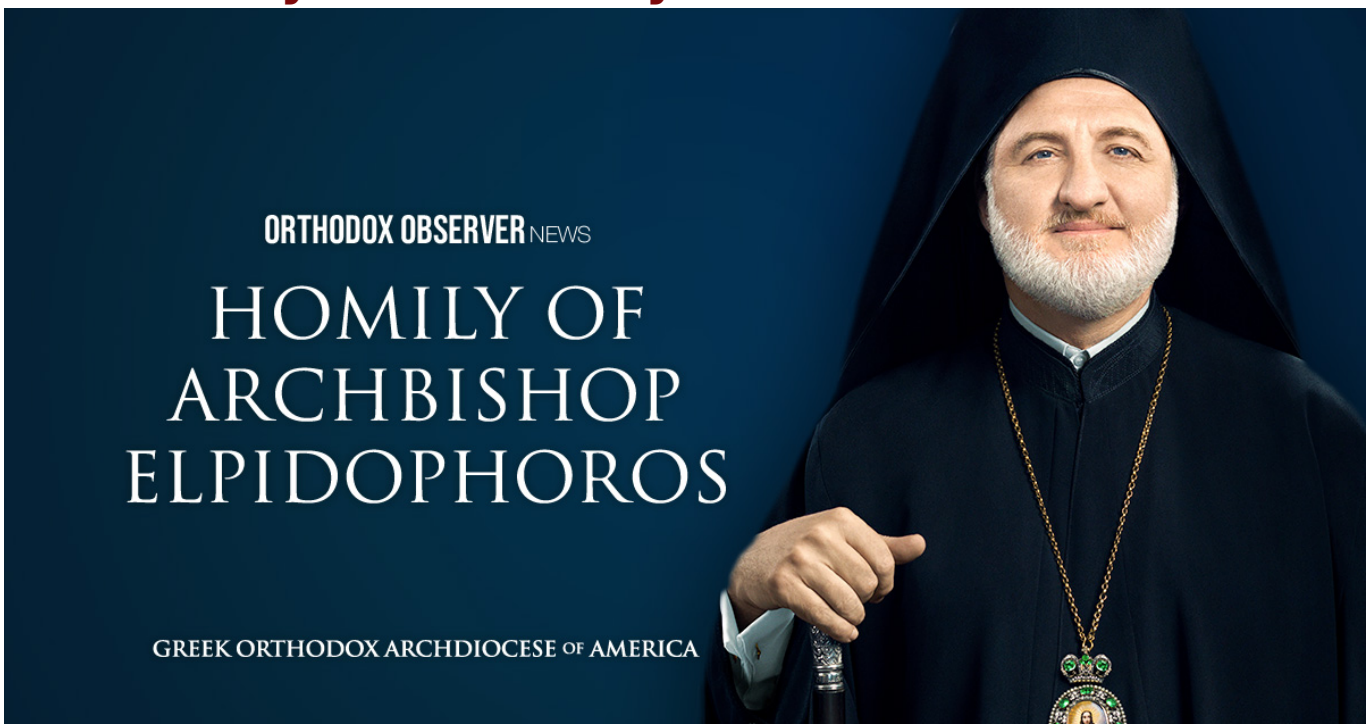
24/05/2021

# Archbishop Elpidophoros of America – Homily for the Sunday of the Paralytic




Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! [and in response: Ἀληθῶς Ἀνέστη!]

Christ is Risen! [and in response: Truly He is Risen!

I am verily delighted to be with this beloved community – especially when you are on the brink of opening a new expansion of your parish facilities. And what I love most about this is the sense of pride, progress and inclusion that this expansion represents.

Indeed, Holy Trinity is growing and embracing its calling to be the Body of Christ here in Wilmington. You set a marvelous example for the entire Metropolis of New Jersey, which I have the privilege to serve in a special way as Patriarchal Vicar.

Being with various constituencies of the Omogeneia and your supporters throughout this weekend has been particularly inspiring for me. From my visit to the Odyssey Charter School yesterday, to the beautiful offering of your young people to serve as Acolytes and Myrrh-bearers, the vibrancy and vitality of your Community here in Wilmington is revelatory.

Even through the time of the pandemic, Holy Trinity in Wilmington is not retreating! You are going forward to ensure that our faith and culture are promoted to an even greater degree than before the pandemic. You are a community that has learned to act – taking your example, of course, from the opposite perspective of the Paralytic that we read of in today's Gospel pericope.

As you may recall, the Paralytic was frozen in his tracks, and was waiting for someone else to help him. And when he responded to the Lord, he used that most famous excuse of:

Ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἔχω … I have no one…. [*]

In other words, I have no one to help me. I have no one to take pity on me. I have no one to be merciful to me. But this defeatist attitude is the exact opposite of what I find here in Wilmington.

Instead, you have made a conscious decision as a community to take responsibility for the health and prosperity of your parish. And this is truly commendable! For this kind of faith in the future enables you to have the successes that benefit everyone.

Afterward, the poor Paralytic went on to explain to the Lord Jesus why he could not be healed:

"Sir, I have no one to put me in the pool when the water moves. While I inch my way, someone else climbs in before me." [†]

The Greek says, Κύριε, but here, it does not mean "Lord." It is just a polite way of speaking, because even though the Paralytic has been waiting thirty-eight years for mercy, he still does not fully comprehend the meaning of the name of the pool he wishes to enter into: "Bethesda," which, in Hebrew, means "House of Mercy."

And then he finds himself talking to the Very Lord of Heaven and Earth Himself, Who is our "House of Mercy." For the Lord surrounds us with all of His compassion and all of His love.

Thus, even with all his frustration and disappointment, when the Lord says to him:

“Get up, pick up your cot, and walk,” [‡] he does exactly that.

And so, as I look around this precious community of Holy Trinity, I see that you are already arisen, and that you are walking forward into the future – a future full of strength of heart and soul. Your commitment is clear, and your direction is righteous.

I pray that you will always go forth from “strength to strength,” [§] and that the Lord will always bless you, your families and friends with every abundance of spiritual and bodily health and happiness.

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! [Ἀληθῶς Ἀνέστη!]

[*] John 5:7.

[†] Ibid.

[‡] John 5:8

[§] Psalm 83:7 (LXX).

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