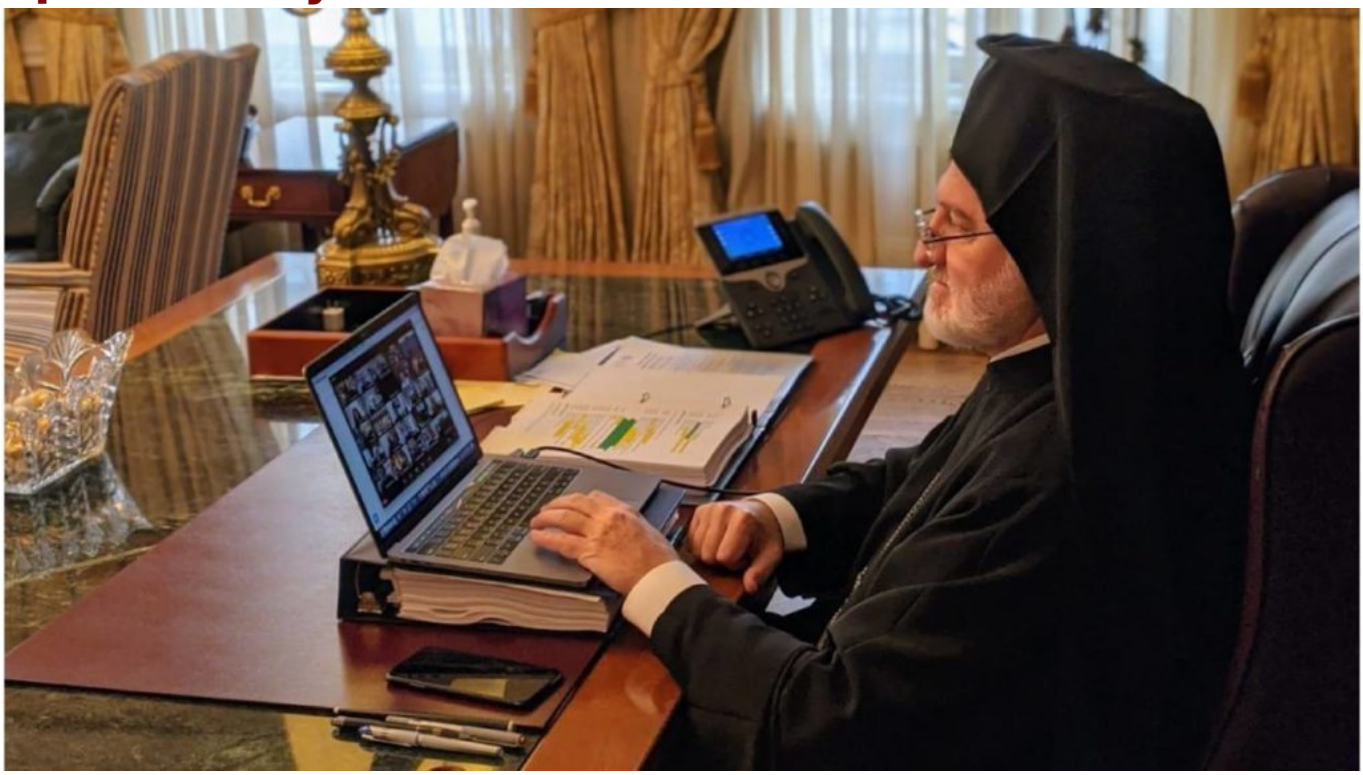
17/09/2021

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America convened a regular meeting of the Holy Eparchial Synod



NEW YORK – On Thursday, September 16, 2021, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America convened a regular meeting of the Holy Eparchial Synod via video conference, in order to deliberate on significant matters that affect the Archdiocese of America.

At the beginning of the meeting, the synodical hierarchs with joy were informed of today's communique of our Mother Church, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, that His All-Holiness will indeed make his previously arranged visit to America, without postponement.

Discussing the topic of the vaccination of the faithful, the hierarchs unanimously affirmed that the Church not only permits vaccinations against diseases (e.g. polio, smallpox), but that She encourages Her Faithful, after medical tests and approbations, to be vaccinated with the approved vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

In addition, although some may be exempt from the vaccination for clear medical

reasons, there is no exemption in the Orthodox Church for Her faithful from any vaccination for religious reasons, including the coronavirus vaccine. For this reason, letters of exemption for the vaccination against the coronavirus for religious purposes issued by priests of the Archdiocese of America have no validity, and furthermore, no clergy are to issue such religious exemption letters for any reason.

The Holy Eparchial Synod urges the faithful to pay heed to competent medical authorities, and to avoid the false narratives utterly unfounded in science and perpetrated on the Church by those who have succumbed to the disinformation and conspiracy theories that are widely available on social media sites.

The Synod also re-affirmed that the following two petitions continue to be included in “The Litany of Peace” of the Divine Liturgy and the other sacred services:

“For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and necessity, and from the peril of the coronavirus against us, let us pray to the Lord.”

“For our brethren, those who lead the fight against the coronavirus, the doctors, the medical workers and the scientists, let us pray to the Lord.”

Finally, the Holy Synod with gratitude was informed that the Sacred Archdiocese was appointed as beneficiary of the late Suzanne Mados, who provided in her will a generous donation for the Greek Orthodox Schools of the Archdiocese as well as to the St. Michael’s Home for the Aged. It was decided that an Archepiscopal memorial service for the repose of her soul will be conducted by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America during the Divine Liturgy on Saturday, September 18, at the Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior in Corona, New York.

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