20/10/2021

Remarks for the Festschrift Ceremony for His Eminence Demetrios, Former Archbishop



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America
Remarks for the Festschrift Ceremony for
His Eminence Demetrios, Former Archbishop
Hellenic College and Holy Cross
Brookline, Massachusetts

Your Eminence Archbishop Demetrios,

Your Eminence Metropolitan Savas,

Your Graces, Bishop Joachim and Bishop Athenagoras,

Esteemed President of our School, Mr. George Cantonis,

Dear Members of the Faculty – both past and present,

Beloved Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am delighted to be with you today, as the Festschrift in honor of Archbishop Demetrios can finally be presented to him in this formal and celebratory way. The delays necessitated by the pandemic further put off this happy occasion, which can now be observed with the dignity and joy that it deserves.

Another word for a Festschrift comes from the Latin – liber amicorum, a book of friends. And here today we are among so many friends of the Archbishop, that I hope you feel, Your Eminence, the love, appreciation and respect that your former colleagues and students have for you.

The tradition of the Festschrift has a history that dates back to the early Twentieth Century. It was, and remains, a way to honor an academic personage while they are yet in this world, and to enjoy the appreciation of their peers and friends.

Over two years ago, I wrote these very words in my introductory letter to the volume:

“This Festschrift is representative of the character and impact of His Eminence’s leadership in the service of Christ and for the sake of the Gospel.”

It is my fervent hope that as this volume circulates around the country, and it is received by our Parishes, even those who never had a chance to meet Your Eminence will be granted a taste of the experience of your leadership and service, through the articles and remembrances contained in the volume that is presented to you this day.

Pericles spoke of the ἄγραφος μνήμη,[*] but with this Festschrift, Your Eminence, we have a recorded “memory of love and consolation,” as the Great and Holy Patriarch Photios says.[†] The pages of this volume will outlast us all, and abide for the generations to come.

Therefore, it is truly a distinct pleasure for me to address Your Eminence and this assembly today. I look forward to the presentations to come, and to the fellowship of this very special day. Γένοιτο!

[*] Epitaphios Logos.

[†] Bibliotheca, 545:18-19.

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