

## **Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy celebrated throughout Christian Orthodox world**



The Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy was celebrated on Sunday, March 17, in Orthodox cathedrals and parishes the world over. A celebratory liturgy, held on the first Sunday of Great Lent, commemorates the final restoration, in 843 A.D. by the Empress and later St. Theodora, of icons for use in ecclesiastical services and the private devotional life of Orthodox Christians.

Byzantine Emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717–741 A.D.) first banned the use of icons in the Eastern Roman Empire and subsequently commanded their destruction in 730 A.D. The Iconoclasts' (opponents) argument was that the veneration of icons deviated towards idolatry.

This inter-Orthodox religious dispute caused a bitter division in the ninth century A.D. between opponents and proponents of icons, including severe persecution.

However, the position of the iconodules (proponents of the use of icons) eventually prevailed, with the Sunday of Orthodoxy annually commemorating the event amid Holy and Great – a reminder to the faithful that a lifelong spiritual struggle must

combine true faith in order to be effective.



## **In Athens**

Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos II, officiated at the Sunday of Orthodoxy liturgy at the Athens Metropolitan Cathedral, along with several hierarchs of the Church of Greece's permanent Holy Synod.



*Ἰσπανοὶ Ἀρχιεπίσκοποι καὶ ἱερεὶς ἀπὸ τὴν ἑκκλησίαν τοῦ Δ.ο.Ἀ. ὁ Ἰσπανοὶς Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος*

Greek President of the Republic Prokopis Pavlopoulos represented the Greek state, with representatives of the country's armed forces and law enforcement also in attendance.





### **Vatopedi Monastery on Mt. Athos**

The celebratory liturgy of Sunday of Orthodoxy was held at the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi according to centuries-old ecclesiastical traditions, with the Metropolitan of Prikonissos, His Eminence Joseph, officiating.

His Eminence Joseph arrived on the semi-autonomous Orthodox monastic community of Mt. Athos this week.

During the divine liturgy, two ordinations of Orthodox priests were conducted.



## **Ecumenical Patriarchate**

Finally, the Sunday of Orthodoxy was celebrated in Byzantine splendor at the Most Venerable Patriarchal Church of St. Georgios (George) on Sunday, with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople-New Rome, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, officiating.

During the divine liturgy Demetrios Nikiforos, a doctoral candidate of canon law at the University of Cardiff, was ordained as an Orthodox priest by the Ecumenical Patriarch, taking the name Aetios.