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Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew concludes Apostolic visit to US



The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew I, on Wednesday departed for the Phanar-district seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate after concluding his Apostolic tour of the eastern United States.

His All-Holiness' visit to America began in Washington D.C. on October 23, with the Ecumenical Patriarch holding substantive meetings with both US President Joe Biden and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, as well as Congressional leaders on Capitol Hill.

The Ecumenical Patriarch had the opportunity to raise the issues that concern the Mother Church, such as the still unresolved issue of the Theological School of Halki, which the Turkish state to prevent its reopening.

The Ecumenical Patriarch also addressed the entire Greek-American community and called for unity and support of Archbishop of America, His Eminence Elpidophoros.

The last stop of the Ecumenical Patriarch tour was New York City, where he opened the doors of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at “Ground Zero” in Manhattan on Thursday. The cathedral will officially open in April 2022.

As His All-Holiness emphasized, “today we experience a historic day for the Church and the Greek community in the United States, celebrating the opening of the holy temple and the national shrine of St. Nicholas… Congratulations and thanks to all those who contributed and worked hard to make this dream come true. To turn the works of darkness and fanaticism into works of light, love, hope, perspective. We believe in the Lord, who makes everything new, and bright. I invoke His grace and blessing to all of us who gathered in celebration and to the future pilgrims. Thank God for that.”

The small Greek Orthodox chapel of St. Nicholas was the only place of worship destroyed during the abominable 9/11 terrorist attacks that brought down the Twin Towers.