25/01/2022

Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Greetings at the Archdiocesan District Choir Federation Vasilopita



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

What a joy it is for me to be with you today, so as to share in this annual Vasilopita with you, and to encourage you in your ministry of music to our Holy Church. I would like to thank Fr. John Vlahos, your spiritual advisor, Mrs. Anna Dounelis, the outgoing President of the District Choir Federation, and Mr. Costas Tsourakis, the new incoming President, for the gracious invitation to attend this joyous gathering. I wholeheartedly commend their invaluable service to the Church, and I cannot stress enough the importance of your collective ministry and mission.

I always feel that my place is with you. Our Holy Orthodox Church is the preeminent Christian Church of worship, of adoration, and of lifting the human voice in praise to our Creator. And you are the workers of the vineyard, who concentrate your talents and time to produce the integral elements of music that beautify our liturgical life – a life that has seen its challenges over the last two years.

This New Year of 2022 has begun with equal measures of hope and uncertainty, because our parishes still face the challenge of navigating the pandemic. We are hopeful, but we must remain vigilant as well.

As you all know, this year is the centenary of our Church as the premier Eparchy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. And the centennial celebration will take place right here in New York City during the National Clergy-Laity Congress in July. Therefore, I will be looking to the local Federation to work together with the National Forum of Church Musicians, so that the elements of music at the Congress will reflect the great traditions that have emerged here in America.

The Oath of Office, which is offered today, is offered in the light of the cutting of the Vasilopita – which is an act of hope and faith. All of you are part of the commitment to beauty and glory in the Church, and I thank you for your steadfast commitment and unwavering dedication.

My dear brother and sisters in Christ:

Let us embrace the New Year of 2022 with positive minds and hearts filled with hope.

May the Lord grant unto all of us a very happy, healthy and spiritually prosperous new year, as we give thanks to the Almighty for the blessing of our Sacred Archdiocese’s centennial, and another year of the Lord’s favor.

Amen.

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