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HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS VISITS HCHC TO BLESS THE STUDENTS AND NEW SEMESTER



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America honored Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology with his visit on the weekend of February 5-6 to bless the students and the entire community as the spring semester got underway.

His Eminence officiated at Great Vespers in Holy Cross Chapel on Saturday, the eve of the Feast of St. Photios the Great, describing it as “a gathering of joy and spiritual celebration.” He exhorted all to emulate St. Photios: “…Use your learning in service to Christ. Study with diligence and dedication and above all practice love—love in all that you do.”

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning, His Eminence surprised Rev. Dr. George Parsenios, Dean of Holy Cross, by elevating him to the rank of Economos, saying that “the Scholi is the heart of the Archdiocese and you are in

the center of our heart.” He also praised HCHC’s President, George M. Cantonis, for his leadership in unprecedented circumstances due to the pandemic. “I want to congratulate the President for giving the best example to all of us.”

After the Divine Liturgy, students, staff, and faculty proceeded to the Maliotis Cultural Center for the cutting of the Vasilopita, a longstanding tradition at HCHC, but the first since before the pandemic began, so an especially joyful occasion. In his remarks, His Eminence said:

“I can think of no better way to inaugurate the Spring Term of our precious Hellenic College and Holy Cross than with this Vasilopita. Who better to invoke at a place of learning and piety than St. Basil the Great? And on the Feast of St. Photios the Great, no less!

In the coincidence of days, I see an auspicious sign for this New Year of 2022—the Centenary of our sacred Archdiocese of America. Both of these great Saints were defenders of the Orthodox teaching on the Holy Spirit…And that is the mission of this institution. We are here to learn how to speak and to proclaim the Orthodox Faith with wisdom and authority. The wisdom we gain from the teachings of the Holy Fathers. The authority comes from within our convictions and from the blessing of the Church…

Therefore, my beloved friends, let us embrace the New Year of 2022 and accept the blessing of this Vasilopita with wisdom-seeking minds and hope-filled hearts. May our Gracious Lord grant unto this precious community of Hellenic College and Holy Cross a very happy, healthy, and spiritually prosperous New Year of 2022, as well as a blessed and joyous celebration of our Archdiocesan Centennial Year. Amen.”

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