14/03/2022

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America Homily at the First Salutations to the Theotokos



My beloved faithful,

It is with much joy that I join all of you here tonight, as we draw near to the conclusion of the first week of Holy and Great Lent. As in years past, we will continue our annual tradition of fellowship following this Service of the First Salutations to the Theotokos with a Lenten dinner in the newly renovated Chiotes Family Cathedral Hall — together with a very special guest, of course. But before we depart the sanctuary, I would like to call your attention to the following line from the First Stanza of the Akathist, which we chanted to our Panagia this evening:

Χαῖρε, τῶν δακρύων τῆς Εὔας ἡ λύτρωσις.

Hail, You who are the Redemption of the tears of Eve.

But what exactly are these tears that our Panagia has redeemed? They are none other than the tears of a mother – a mother who lived to see her one son murder her other, when Cain slew his brother, Abel.

And in current times – right now, in fact – when we see the barbaric invasion of Ukraine carried out by the forces of a tyrannical dictator, we behold once again brother murdering brother and sister killing sister.

Thus, is there any other possible response that a mother could give other than tears?

I think not.

Let us remember that both Ukraine and Russia were the children of the Mother



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