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# Archbishop Calls on Detroit to Extend Its Hand Nationally, Stresses Youth Retention



Detroit— “If we truly desire to hand over our traditions to the next generation, we must give them the fire, not the ashes,” Archbishop Elpidophoros of America advised Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit leadership in a reception with Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit this past weekend, inviting them expand the ingenuity and imagination they used to achieve local stability and prosperity beyond the boundaries of their metropolis, helping to address Orthodoxy in America’s most pressing issues and move the entire national Church forward.

For the Archbishop, the most urgent among these issues is youth retention. He explained that while our predecessors built a hardy national church infrastructure, it does not drive itself—it must be fueled and maintained. And a key demand of this fueling and maintenance is the formation of the next generation of leaders, training them spiritual and ethically. This necessitates embracing them and empowering them in the present. “How can the youth be the future of the church if they do not locate themselves in its present?” His Eminence challenged the room, adding,

“handing over the fire of our faith is a living experience.”

In his call to action, the Archbishop urged the Detroit leaders—who he commended for their perseverance through trial with creativity and resourcefulness— “bring forth your best thinking and your best ideas to the Clergy-Laity Congress this July. Help me build the foundation for the next one hundred years of our Church in America. Together, we have a future brighter than we can ever imagine.”

Archbishop Elpidophoros’ trip to Detroit began on Saturday April 9, 2022, and will continue through Wednesday April 13th. On Sunday he attended a Greek Independence Celebration, presiding over services at the Annunciation Cathedral before joining the Consul General of Greece in Chicago, Emmanuel Koubarakis, and AHEPA District Governor, Dimitris Papageorgiou, for the community’s parade. The visit is part of the Archbishop’s centennial commitment to celebrate the one hundredth year the Archdiocese with the United States of America’s devoted faithful, leading a series of pilgrimages and meeting them in local communities nationwide.

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