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Archbishop of America Elpidophoros announces initial donations of 350,000 USD for rebuilding of Balukli hospital



The Archbishop of America, His Eminence Elpidophoros, on Tuesday announced an initial and immediately available donation of 350,000 USD for repair and restoration works at the Balikli hospital and home for the aged in Constantinople.

The historic hospital, which first operated at the site in the late 18th century, was severely damaged by a fire last Thursday, with television footage showing the Zeytinburnu district facility’s wooden roof and top storey destroyed.

The primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America made the announcement after he was received at the Phanar district see by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I.

The initial donation is comprised of 100,000 USD donated by the Archdiocese of America; 100,000 USD by the Leadership 100 Fund; 100,000 USD by the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle and 50,000 USD by the National Council of the Philoptohos Society, the national women's auxiliary and philanthropic arm of the Archdiocese of America. According to the Archbishop, more donations are expected.

The foundation that owns and operates the facility was created by the Ecumenical Patriarchate to serve the ancient Greek Orthodox community of the imperial city, founded by Constantine the Great.

"Today, with particular joy, I briefed His All Holiness (Bartholomew) that our Omogeneia has immediately met the challenge to rebuild this historic hospital building, and for the relief of our brothers in the city…" His Eminence said.

Elpidophoros, himself a native of Constantinople, arrived there earlier on Tuesday at the head of a large delegation of Orthodox pilgrims from the United States, and as part of centennial celebrations for the establishment of the Archdiocese of America.