

Closely-watched Ecumenical Patriarchate Holy Synod this month expected to deal with vacancies in Archdioceses of America, Australia



The convening of a three-day session of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Holy Synod on Thursday, May 9, has emerged as particularly significant — after the repose of Archbishop of Australia Stylianos last month, the weekend resignation of the Elder Archbishop of America, His Eminence Demetrios, and developments at the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain.

According to the foreseen canonical procedure, the Ecumenical Patriarch submits a proposal for a new Archbishop to members of the Holy Synod, followed by deliberations between the latter. Finally, the Ecumenical Patriarch announces the result of a vote by members of the Holy Synod.

According to reports so far, possible candidates to succeed Archbishop Demetrios include the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Metropolitan of Bursa and Exarch of Bithynia, His Eminence Elpidophoros, as well as the Metropolitan of Sweden and All Scandinavia, His Eminence Cleopas; and the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Chicago, His Eminence Nathanael.

Metropolitan Elpidophoros is considered as a front-runner.

Speaking to parishioners on Sunday at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Resurrection in Brookville, New York, Archbishop Demetrios used a verse from Ecclesiastes to refer to his resignation, saying ...”To all things there is a time, and a season for every matter under heaven”.

The Elder Archbishop added that “...the time has come, after having served for 20 years in this truly exceptional Archdiocese under the great blessing of God of enjoying a long life. I am 92 years old...”

Demetrios submitted his resignation to the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, on Saturday during their meeting at the Phanar-district Patriarchate of Constantinople.