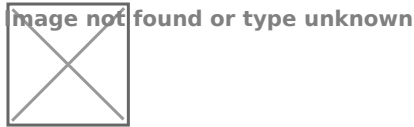


08/02/2023

## **Remarks at the Prayer Service for Ukraine with the Governor George Pataki Center, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church & National Shrine**



Dear Friend, Governor Pataki,

Beloved Brother in Christ, Metropolitan Antony,

Honorable Consul General of Ukraine in New York, Oleksii Holubov

Brave and Stalwart Soldiers of Ukraine,

Dear Friends

Today, we welcome both old friends and new ones to the completed Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine. Governor Pataki, in the darkest times after 9/11, you stood with our Church and you continued to be our strongest supporter for the rebuilding of Saint Nicholas. As you stand today within this Shrine, please know how deeply you are and will always be appreciated for your sense of what was just and right.

Metropolitan Antony, you have led the Ukrainian Church of America for a decade now, but you have been with the cause of Ukraine your whole life. I thank you for your presence here today, and express to you my gratitude for your service both to Ukraine and to the Mother Church of Constantinople.

What can I say of these soldiers, and of all those risking their lives to keep Ukraine free?

As we approach the dark anniversary of Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, we stand here at the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine, a heartbreaking reminder of the horrific acts of terror inflicted upon innocent people. This was the only sacred house of worship destroyed during the 9/11 attack, resulting in the tragic loss of countless lives.

Therefore, it is appropriate that we are here today, and we are truly humbled to be

joined by this delegation of Ukrainian soldiers who have not only experienced the injustice of this aggression firsthand, but who continue to resist it. Their courage has inspired support from around the world, including the Governor George Pataki Center, which has raised funds to support displaced families and refugees from Ukraine since the very beginning.

Together, as Orthodox Christians and as Americans, we pray for peace. But peace cannot be achieved as long as there is no justice. Our prayers are for peace with justice, so that this senseless onslaught in Ukraine stops once and for all.

This is our prayer, and we shall not relent in calling upon God and every human being willing to listen, to bring victory for the sovereign Nation of Ukraine over this unjust and inhuman violence.

Sláva Ukrayíni!

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