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Archbishop Elpidophoros of America Leads Interfaith Prayer Service for Türkiye and Syria at Georgetown University



Washington, DC — Today, Tuesday, February 14, 2023, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America led an Interfaith Prayer Service for Türkiye and Syria at Georgetown University. The service was an opportunity for religious and civic leaders to pray together, in solidarity with Türkiye and Syria and the diaspora communities here in the United States, for the peace and comfort of all impacted by the recent earthquake, as well as for the ongoing rescue and recovery efforts.

“This ruinous, cataclysmic event has brought us together in bonds of solidarity, which are intensified by the glimmers of hope that we see in the faces of those miracles still being pulled alive from the devastation,” said His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros in his Keynote Address. “When hands are frantically digging through rubble and debris to reach that one weak voice, and lift back to life the soul trapped underneath the appalling aftermath of these quakes, no one asks

which hand is Muslim or Christian, Jewish or even atheist. No one asks which nation or tribe. No one asks for motive or reason.” (Full Keynote Address)

The Archbishop was joined by Rabbi Richard Marker, the former Chair of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations; His Excellency Bishop Denis J. Madden of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Maryland; His Eminence (H.E.) Mor Dionysius John Kawak of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch; H.E. Archbishop Vicken Aykazian of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin); His Grace Bishop John of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America; Imam Nurullah Celebi and Dr. Bilal Kuspinar of the Diyanet Center of America; Mr. Jason Isaacson, the Chief Policy and Political Affairs Officer for the American Jewish Committee; Rev. Bishop Vashti Murphy-McKenzie, the Interim President and General Secretary of the National Council of Churches; and Mr. Dean Triantafillou, Executive Director and CEO of International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC).

Diplomatic leaders, including His Excellency Hasan Murat Mercan, Ambassador of Turkey to the US; Her Excellency Alexandra Papadopoulou, Ambassador of Greece to the US; His Excellency Viorel Ursu, Ambassador of Moldova to the US; Mrs. Maria Savvidou, Deputy Chief of Mission for the Embassy of Cyprus in the US; Mr. Yaroslav Brisiuck, Deputy Chief of Mission for the Embassy of Ukraine in the US; Mr. Arakel Semirjyan, Counselor at the Embassy of Armenia in the US; and Mr. Raad Elfawair, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Jordan in the US, among others, also attended.

The Prayer Service follows an announcement by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America last week establishing an Earthquake Relief Fund— in collaboration with International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)— to meet the immediate and long-term needs of those affected by the catastrophe. The 7.8-magnitude earthquake, which struck Türkiye and Syria in the early hours of February 6, 2023, has resulted in at least 36000 casualties—with numbers continuing to rise— and decimated infrastructure across the affected areas.

To donate to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Earthquake Relief Fund, please visit: <https://www.goarch.org/donate/earthquake-relief-fund>











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