

Sunday of Orthodoxy commemorated by faithful, clergy, Churches around the world



The faithful and clergy from around the world commemorated the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the first Sunday of Great Lent.

The dominant theme of this Sunday, since the year 843, has been the victory of the Holy Icons.

In that year, the iconoclastic controversy, which had raged on and off since the year 726, was finally laid to rest, with icons and their veneration restored on the first Sunday in Lent. Ever since, this Sunday has been commemorated as the “Triumph of Orthodoxy”; the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

This year’s commemoration of the Sunday of Orthodoxy was accompanied, however, by the very solemn and painful aftermath of a deadly rail accident in north-central Greece, with the official death toll as of Monday remaining at 57.

A three-day period of mourning was declared in the east Mediterranean country after the tragedy, on Tuesday night.

Trisagion memorial services held in all cathedrals around the country, with condolences arriving from Orthodox Primates of Churches outside Greece and world leaders.

Search and salvage efforts continued on Monday at the site of the tragic rail accident, just south of the Tempi Valley Gorge.

Patriarchal & Synodal Divine Liturgy at Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



At the See of the Mother Church, a Patriarchal and Synodal Divine Liturgy was held on Sunday at the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople's St. George Cathedral, with the participation of the visiting Archbishop of Nova Justiniana and All Cyprus, His Beatitude Georgios.

The Greek government was represented at the Sunday of Orthodoxy liturgy by the country's foreign minister, Nikos Dendias.

A memorial service followed for the victims of the Tempi rail collision, as well as the tens of thousands of victims of the earthquakes in southeast Turkey and northwest Syria.

Archbishop Ieronymos officiates at memorial service for rail tragedy's victims



Back in Greece, the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos, officiated at the Synodal Divine Liturgy for the Sunday of Orthodoxy and the following memorial service for Tempi train tragedy, held at the Athens Metropolitan Cathedral.

The service, as is customary, was attended by the nation's head of state, Greek President of the Republic, Katerina Sakellaropoulou, while the government was represented by PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

Several hierarchs of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece co-officiated at the service.

In addressing congregants, assembled hierarchs and faithful watching the service live on television, His Beatitude Ieronymos solemnly, and in an emotionally charged atmosphere, underlined that "...This year Holy Week came earlier... and there are no words to describe the human pain. And all of us, as the Virgin Mary who as a mother mourned Christ, we mourn for these children of ours...Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the train accident. We are living through a severe national calamity."

From neighboring Albania, the Archbishop of Durres, Tirana and All Albania, His Beatitude Anastasios, referred to what he called the gracious and wise decision by

the Albanian government to declare Sunday as a day of national mourning in the country for the rail tragedy in Greece.

His Beatitude said the Church of Albania shares the pain and grief from the calamity.