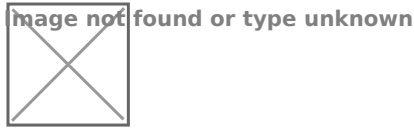


## **Homily by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America On the Second Sunday of Lent Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**



Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

Having just returned from the Sacred Center of our Faith, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, I come to you today filled with enthusiasm and hope for our Church – both in the world and in this country. Although there are many difficulties and sad events around the world, such as:

- 1) The ongoing war against Ukraine, which has now cost over a staggering 300,000 lives from both the invaded and the invader;
- 2) The unspeakable destruction in Türkiye and Syria, with the loss of over 50,000 of our fellow human beings;
- 3) And the tragedy of the Greek railway accident, which has shaken the country and the Diaspora with the senseless loss of promise and life;

Despite these saddening events, there is also reason to hope. Because we have seen enormous outpourings of love, support and prayer in all these tragedies – without regard to ethnicity or religion. Simply, because fellow human beings are suffering, and we want to alleviate that suffering. This is the best of our spiritual tradition, which we celebrate today in Saint Gregory Palamas.

Last week, on the First Sunday of the Fast, we observed the triumph of Orthodoxy, the Restoration of the Holy Icons, which was first celebrated on Sunday, March 11th, in the year 843.

And what was the triumph? The truth that God became a human being. That He entered fully into our humanity in every way – except sin – so much so, that you could paint a picture of Him. In the Incarnation, the Creator manifested that creation is “very good,” as it says in the Book of Genesis.\* God entered our experience and made it possible for us to enter into His.

This Second Sunday of Lent is another triumph of Orthodoxy, because Saint Gregory Palamas – a great monastic and great Archbishop of Thessaloniki. Amen.

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