

Archbishop Elpidophoros Remarks at the Flag Raising Ceremony - Bowling Green



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Distinguished Representatives of our Local Government,
Honorable Representatives of the Nations of Greece and Cyprus,
Noble Officers and Soldiers of the Τάγμα Εὐζώνων,
Honorable Members of the Federation of Hellenic Societies of the Greater New York,
Sisters and Brothers – Hellenes and Philhellenes alike,

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! [and in response: Ἀληθῶς Ἀνέστη!]

Christ is Risen! [and in response: Truly He is Risen!]

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! [and in response: Ἀληθῶς Ἀνέστη!]

We have just marched with the Presidential Φρουρά from the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine, in order to gather here at Bowling Green, and raise the emblem of Greek Independence. We gave abundant thanks and praised God in our Doxology at Saint Nicholas, which stands – reborn – an image of the Renaissance of Greece that we mark in that most famous of years, 1821. Now, we have come to this place where, every year, the honor to raise our National Standard is afforded to our community, thanks to efforts of the Federation of Hellenic Societies of the Greater New York, and we thank them for their dedication to this occasion.

Raising the Blue and White Ensign of Greece and Cyprus reminds all of us that the struggle to defend freedom is never complete. We raise it with pride and exultation, for we know that it represents the blood and toil of our ancestors.

As Greeks and as Philhellenes, we express our thanks to the Evzones for their

presence and participation. We embrace these noble warriors for liberty, and we thank them for honoring this event with their dignity, with their pomp and circumstance, and with their glory. For their glory is the same that has shone forth from the Hellenic mind and spirit throughout the millennia.

Their appearance today recalls the Immortal Heroes of 1821; for they are manifestations of the same pride, the same courage, and the same heroism that the Greek Revolutionaries embodied. We celebrate those freedom-fighters with this flag-raising here at Bowling Green, ever mindful of our duty to always remember, and to teach, the deep meaning of March 25th. As we pay worthy tribute to the Flag of the Hellenic Republic in honor of Greek Independence Day, we commend our aspirations of freedom and human dignity to the world, mindful of our Ukrainian Brethren who are yet fighting for the freedom and sovereignty of their land.

The Blue and White: the purity and humanity of the Mother of God – the brilliance and beauty of the Hellenic Lands – we see all these and more in the flag of the Nation. May we ever proudly wave this flag with love and devotion, with loyalty and a keen sense of our duty.

We will never forget March 25th, for it is our National Birthday, or perhaps more accurately, “Re-Birthday.” It is the day that resides in every day of the year, when we choose to remember our heritage and our history.

Whether at this ceremony, or in the Parade that we will proudly march in on Sunday, we will always remind the world around us and the younger generations of the sacrifices of the Immortal Heroes of 1821. Liberty is the most precious ideal, and it is nowhere better represented than by this Flag and the Noble Sons of Greece who attend the flag today, and who honor us with their dignity and respect.

May we ever be worthy of the blessings of liberty, and manifest deep gratitude and appreciation for our homeland of Greece, which is so proudly represented here today by the elite Evzones.

May God bless you all!

Ζήτω τὸ Ἑλληνικὸ Ἔθνος!

Ζήτω τὸ Εἰκοσιένα!

Photos: GOARCH/Dimitrios Panagos

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