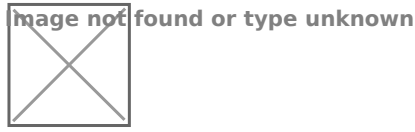


Archdiocesan Pilgrimage Taking Place



The Archdiocesan pilgrimages have provided an outstanding opportunity for the faithful of the Church to participate in spiritually edifying and didactic journeys to various venerable sites of the Orthodox Faith around the world. His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros organized these initiatives, which have already brought about several successful, very well attended and memorable trips to the Sacred Center of Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Cappadocia, as well as the Holy Land and Jerusalem.

The latest such pilgrimage is currently taking place with the blessing of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and at the loving invitation of His Beatitude Theodoros the 2nd Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa. It is a visit that came to fruition following the outstanding contributions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate towards the Apostolic Patriarchate of Alexandria and the phenomenal support of the Archdiocese for the strengthening of the ministries, the missions and the pastoral programs in Africa.

The Rev. Protopresbyter Nikiforos Fakinos was asked to accompany the pilgrimage to Egypt, awaiting the arrival of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros after the conclusion of the Annual Parade in New York City. The Parade of Greek Independence on 5th Avenue was crowned with exceptional success, despite the adverse weather conditions. The Archbishop expressed pride and elation for the enthusiastic participation of thousands of people who honor Greek Independence, including the Parishes, the cultural organizations and the various groups of the Omogeneia. This was the outcome of months of preparation, hard work and many contributions, manifested in the meetings of the Federation of Hellenic Societies and thanks to the benevolence of hundreds of contributors for the event.

After the conclusion of the Annual Parade, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, accompanied by the V. Rev. Archdeacon Dionysios, traveled to Egypt to join the pilgrims and visit the Apostolic Patriarchate of Alexandria. The first portion of the trip, in Cairo, was already a phenomenal experience.

On Sunday, April 30 His Eminence Nikodemos, Metropolitan of Memphis, presided

over the Divine Liturgy and in His sermon, expressed His appreciation to Archbishop Elpidophoros, the Archons of the Order of Saint Andrew and the faithful of the Holy Archdiocese of America for the continuous support to the Apostolic Patriarchate of Alexandria and for this pilgrimage to the Holy Metropolis, which serves the pastoral needs of the faithful in Cairo and the surrounding vicinity.

The pilgrims were afforded the exquisite blessing to venerate the sacred relics of Saint George, Saint Anthony and Saint Parthenios after the service. His Eminence Metropolitan Nicodemus gave gifts to all the pilgrims from our Archdiocese. The Abbot of the Monastery of Saint George, the V. Rev. Archimandrite Damaskenos guided them to the amazing sacred areas blessed by the Saint.

The day was highlighted by the veneration of the Sacred Well, where, according to Holy Tradition, the Theotokos and Joseph brought Jesus, during the exile in Egypt to evade Herod, and found protection from the vile attacks against the Holy Family. The Archdiocesan Trip to Egypt was marked by the visit to historical sites of the ancient Egyptian civilization. The group of over 50 pilgrims visited the pyramids, the Sphinx, and the Museum of ancient antiquities in Cairo.

The Archbishop will lead the pilgrimage to the river Nile, a major natural artery of delicate environmental, economic and geographic significance for Egypt. His Beatitude Theodoros the 2nd Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa has invited the Archbishop for the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy in the city of Alexandria this coming Sunday, May 7, and for the visit to the God-Trodden Sinai Mountain and the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine's for the feast of Mid-Pentecost. This pilgrimage is an exceptional opportunity to learn about these venerable sites, to appreciate the history of Egypt and to strengthen the ecclesiastical collaboration with the Apostolic Patriarchate of Alexandria.

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