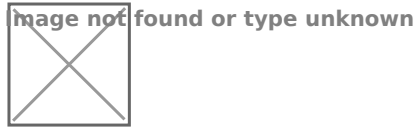


Ecumenical Patriarch: “The Church of Greece is bone and flesh of the Mother Church of Constantinople”



The first Patriarchal Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Pyrgos, Greece.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew presided over the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy in the presence of Metropolitan Athanasios II of Ilia and Oleni.

It is noteworthy that the Ecumenical Patriarch visited the capital of Elis, Pyrgos, 20 years ago before when he was heading to Zakynthos. Thus, this is considered his first official visit to the prefecture of Elis, Greece.

According to patrisnews.com, the Metropolitans and the Bishops accompanying the Ecumenical Patriarch to Elis attended the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy.

The Ecumenical Patriarch in his homily stressed once again the historical importance of the region of Elis and its metropolis, expressing his gratitude for the invitation. He accepted to participate in a series of events in Greece.

In addition, in his homily, the Ecumenical Patriarch said: “The Holy Church of Greece is literally like bone and flesh of the Mother Church of Constantinople. The godly children of the Church of Greece, therefore, the Metropolis of Ilia and Oleni, are parts of the same body, live the same life (as we do), and have the same hope (with us)!”

“Just two days ago we celebrated the feast of Indiction, that is, the new ecclesiastical year, which we wish you to be creative, peaceful, healthy and blessed by the Lord,” he added.

Also, he made special reference to the natural environment and in particular to the devastating wildfires that affected Greece this year.

“The great sin of our time is hubris!” he underlined and pointed out: “By ‘hubris’ I mean in the ancient Greek philosophical sense of the word, for which Heraclitus the

Ephesian said that 'it is more important to stop being arrogant (hubris) than to put out a fire'. Thus, it is more imperative to stop being arrogant and get rid of hubris than to put out any fire because obviously hubris is more dangerous and destructive than any fire! We experienced this in 2007 with the devastating wildfires!

Hubris is the result of egocentrism, vanity, and voracious greed -which the Apostle Paul unequivocally calls idolatry! Also, we tend to have a naive absolute trust in human powers and knowledge, while we put aside the Lord and His will. I repeat: Hubris makes human beings in a funny and at the same time in a sad way self-sufficient and gives them the destructive feeling that they do not need God! Human beings think they know everything, they use their judgment, they criticise others and make decisions in the absence of God, Who took all human nature in Himself, in order to save them!"

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew: We love the place that God gave us and sacrifices of our ancestors

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was declared an Honorary Citizen of the Municipality of Pyrgos together with the Greek President of the Hellenic Republic, Ms. Katerina Sakellaropoulou.

As the Greek President pointed out during her reply to the mayor, Mr. Panagiotis Antonakopoulos, "democracy is not a given, but it is a continuous claim, and we all owe honour to those who, in difficult times, fought so that we can enjoy its benefits today."

"We love the place that God gave us and the sacrifices of our ancestors and we must honourably do what is necessary for the decency, stability, security, progress, cultural growth, honour, glory and splendour of our country," said Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, in his response to the mayor of Pyrgos, Mr. Panagiotis Antonakopoulos, during the ceremony.

Ecumenical Patriarch to join conference on protection of environment today
In the presence of the Ecumenical Patriarch, a conference on "The common environmental conditions in the natural and urban environment in Elis and Macedonia" will be held today at the Conference Centre of the Regional Unit of Elis.

More photos: Nikos Papachristou / Ecumenical Patriarchate











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