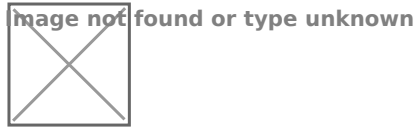


27/09/2023

Archbishop Elpidophoros Remarks at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral Centennial Gala Charlotte, NC



Your Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios, Dear Brother in the Lord,

Beloved Brothers, Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa and

Metropolitan Dimitrios of Xanthos,

Former Governor of North Carolina and former Mayor of Charlotte, Honorable Pat McCrory

Honorable Consul General of Greece, George Fostiropoulos,

Reverend Proïstamenos Jonathon Resmini and Reverend Clergy,

Parish Council President, John Mahairas,

Philoptochos President, Cathy Poulimenos,

Beloved Co-Chairs and Members of the Centennial Committee,

Esteemed Archons, Members of Leadership 100 & Philoptochos,

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

What an occasion this truly is! To be gathered as the Church one hundred years to the day for the anniversary of the Centenary of this remarkable Cathedral Community!

I look around this room and I see the Mother Church of Charlotte – which has given so much to the local, regional, and national Ekklesia – and I am moved in my heart and soul.

I am moved by the history of this place – by the stories of the πρωτοπόροι who came to these shores for a better life.

I am moved by the progress of this congregation, that has come so far through the decades, establishing a true spiritual center for the life of the Greek Orthodox Christians of Charlotte and beyond.

And I am moved by the prospects for your future, as the growing and evolving Church of Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest and the Captain of our Faith.

Your vision is clear and it is fixed upon the love of God, Who is worshipped in the Holy Trinity, and Who is resplendent in the Icon of the Φιλοξενία τοῦ Ἀβραάμ. You have incorporated into this image of communion and community the very visage of your magnificent Temple in a special commission to honor your Centennial. By doing so, you give a visible reminder for the generations to come of the courage, faith, and persistence of the forefathers and foremothers who came before, and bequeathed this great legacy to their spiritual, and indeed, familial inheritance.

Your growth these past one hundred years has not only been in terms of quantity – and thirty to twelve hundred is certainly a leap! But it is also the quality of your faith; your willingness to reach beyond the immediate circle of family, culture, and language that honors your founders. You are a confirmed participant and an important stakeholder in the wider community of Charlotte, and certainly within the God-protected Metropolis of Atlanta, and the Sacred Archdiocese of America.

All across the Nation, we have witnessed many centenaries being celebrated – by the Archdiocese itself and a plethora of parishes. The organizations of these Churches and their canonical regularization often came some years after the first Greek πρωτοπόροι arrived – in your case, around 1910.

But in the aftermath of the First World War and the Asia Minor Catastrophe, there was tremendous movement of populations and peoples. Greeks began pouring into America, and in 1922, our Mother Church – the Ecumenical Patriarchate – embraced the Diaspora in America, establishing the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, so that an orderly and canonical Church could be established.

The last one hundred years have truly been astonishing! So much growth and so

many spiritual harvests! But now ... we must look to the future.

Truly, a century is only a small percentage of our long history as the Church of Christ. Therefore, as the Prophet Isaiah says:

Ἔσται γὰρ ὁ νέος ἑκατὸν ἔτῳν...

For the young man shall be one hundred years old...*

You, my beloved Christians of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Charlotte – you are one hundred years young!

Your strength is just beginning to show. You have accomplished so much, but there is so much more to accomplish!

As you look to the future, and to the generations to come who will stand on the shoulders of the spiritual giants who came before you, I pray that the Holy Trinity will always guide your deliberations and your labors.

You are an example for all the world to see, and for the entire Archdiocese to behold.

May you rejoice in this anniversary and its blessings!

And may you always enjoy partaking of the fruits of abundant, plentiful harvests of faith, hope, and love:

Through the grace and love toward humankind of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Ἀμήν!

* Isaiah 65:20.

Photos: Helen McGinnis

goarch.org