

09/11/2023

Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Toronto Theological Academy



The Patriarchal Theological Orthodox Academy of Toronto has operated successfully for 25 years. It has a four-year university program of Theological Studies and is affiliated with St. Paul's University in Ottawa. Its bachelor's degree is recognised by all theological schools and universities.

Fifty-nine students have graduated from the Theological Academy. Thirty-four of them have been ordained and serve the communities in Canada. The Holy Archdiocese of Canada has 78 communities, 16 of which are missionary (meaning they have no permanent priest and are instead being served by priests who live close by).

On Sunday, 5 November 2023, the communities and Philoptochos chapters of the greater Montreal area, under the guidance of the Priests, organised a luncheon at the Palace Convention Centre, with great success. The luncheon was donated by Nicholas Tsatas, Archon Protonotarios of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and owner of the Palace Convention Centre. Fr. Nicolas Papageorgiou was the Chairman of the

Organising Committee, Fr. Charalambos Tzintis was Vice Chairman, and Frs. Christian Socosan and Spyridon Voutos were committee members. Fr. Voutos was also the Master of Ceremonies at this event. Six hundred and fifty people attended. Archon Protonotarios Tsatas donated the dinner and we thank him wholeheartedly. It must be noted that Archon Tsatas offers this dinner for the Theological Academy every year free of charge.

Official guests from City Hall, the provincial and federal governments, as well as the Greek Consulate, included: M. Deros, City Councillor of Parc Extension, A. Revelakis, City Councillor of Chomedey, A. Dib, City Councillor of St. Martin, A. Koutrakis, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism, and Katerina Varvarigou, Consul General of Montreal.

Also, Gerontissa Thekla with twelve 12 sisters from the Monastery of Panagia the Comforter were at the dinner. The Monastery is being built with fundraising efforts going very well. Approximately \$2,000,000 have already been raised. The Holy Archdiocese of Canada will give \$1,000,000 for this purpose.

Speakers were Dr. Orestis Tsoukas, a member of the Board of Directors and son of the President of the HCGM, Dr. Georgios Tsoukas, who could not attend due to illness, Zoe Veroutis, President of the Archdiocesan Philoptochos Council of Canada and Consul General Katerina Varvarigou. His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios spoke at the end about the Theological Academy. He conveyed to all the love and blessings of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and pointedly said that the Ecumenical Patriarch spoke this summer at Imvros, where Archbishop Sotirios was, with the greatest words for the extraordinary success of the Theological Academy of Toronto.

Archbishop Sotirios announced that there is already an Endowment Fund for the Theological Academy which has accumulated \$10,000,000, but it requires \$5,000,000 more. This way the Academy can be self-sufficient and be able to keep operating in the future with no financial problems. Of course, this is possible, because the Priests, who have at least a Master's degree and are assigned to churches in Toronto and the surrounding area, as Archbishop Sotirios said, teach entirely free of charge.

Throughout the dinner, there was excellent music of religious and patriotic songs, offered by B. Galatis to the organising committee. Galatis offers his musical skills free of charge at all the events of the Theological Academy in Montreal.

Everyone was very happy and especially the Organising Committee and Archbishop

Sotirios. Net income from the fundraising event and the album will surpass \$60,000.

Archbishop Sotirios thanked the guests, the donors, the organisers, Archon Tsatas, and especially the Professors of the Theological Academy and gave glory to God for the great blessing that is their Theological Academy.



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