

New Year's Day at the Ecumenical Patriarchate



“We strive and pray for peace and justice, firmly believing in the possibility of a world free from war and violence. We advocate for sincere dialogue as the most effective means of problem resolution,” said His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in his speech for the beginning of the New Year following the Divine Liturgy, over which he officiated on New Year’s Day morning at the Venerable Patriarchal Church of Saint George in the Phanar.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was accompanied by His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon, His Eminence Metropolitan Meliton of Philadelphia, His Eminence Metropolitan Eirinaios of Myriophytos and Peristasis, His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Myra, His Eminence Metropolitan Theoliptos of Iconium, His Eminence Metropolitan Ioakeim of Bursa, and His Eminence Metropolitan Theodoros of Seleucia. The Divine Liturgy was officiated by Archimandrite Grigorios, and at its conclusion, the Patriarch elevated him to the position of the Grand Protosyncellus of the Holy Great Church of Christ.

“We have ardently advocated through the Christian witness in the modern world,

countering trends that undermine the dignity of the human person. Humanity is still faced with constant and recurring problems, but there are many unprecedented developments as a result of the exponential advancements in science and technology. There is the mass displacement of populations due to climate change, occasional cultural clashes, the erosion and devaluation of values, and numerous other global challenges the Church cannot ignore or remain passive towards. The encounter of the Church with the modern world is an opportunity for the former to express its faith and to highlight its philanthropic character in action.

Throughout the past year, our primary focus has been the pursuit of peace and our commitment to fostering reconciliation. As the devastating war in Ukraine persists, the last three months brought the additional distress of a violent conflict in the Middle East, with its painful repercussions. We strive and pray for peace and justice, firmly believing in the possibility of a world free from war and violence. We advocate for sincere dialogue as the most effective means of problem resolution.



“In this spirit, we worked for the promotion of inter-Christian dialogues and the Orthodox presence in the Ecumenical Movement. We had face-to-face meetings with Pope Francis of Rome, participated as a speaker in ecumenical conferences and inter-religious meetings. We spoke at the events in Geneva on the completion of seventy-five years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights under the United Nations and since the establishment of the World Council of Churches”.

At another point in his speech, His All-Holiness, in the presence of Hierarchs and Archons of the Ecumenical Throne, the Ambassador His Excellency Mr. Konstantinos Koutras, Consul General of Greece in Constantinople, the Consul of Ukraine, His Excellency Mr. Maksim Vdovychenko, local faithful Greek Contributors and believers from Constantinople and overseas, emphasized:

“When Aristotle defined a human being as a “rational animal”, he names the tension that exists in human existence between the biological state and the dimension of “reason”, understanding, and the language of communication. But there is another dimension: the reason for existence, the purpose and meaning of life. Human beings cannot live without direction and perspective, they cannot bear the “existential void”. The view that the progress of science and the rise of the standard of living will eliminate man’s desire for meaning and eternal life, underestimates the depth of man’s spirituality, which is expressed in a unique way by the words of Christ: “Man shall not live by bread alone” (Matthew 4:4). Faith in Christ is the redemptive answer to our ultimate questions.

With these thoughts and feelings and with an unwavering belief that the life of each of us and the course of humanity is directed by the God of love, saying goodbye to 2023, we thank the Lord who establishes all times and seasons with this same authority, and look forward to a blessed 2024.



Therefore imploring the Word of God who condescended to the human race, that

he rest the souls of our ever-remembered Predecessors, of all those who ministered to the Great Church and to her children who are resting in the Lord's Kingdom and lie here and in the rest of the world, we call upon on high for all of you, through the intercessions of our Holy Father Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia, to have a healthy and fruitful new year, to love one another and for the peace of the Lord, "which transcends all understanding" (Phil. 4, 7)".

Previously, His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon addressed the Synod of the Throne, and then Archbishop of Constantinople extended his wishes on behalf of the Holy Father Christ and the Greek Faithful of















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