

03/01/2024

New Year Message 2024 - H.E. Metropolitan Ambrosios



Dearest Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

By the grace and philanthropy of God, we have been given once more the opportunity to celebrate the coming of the New Year 2024. During this year, our Korean Orthodox Church commemorates the 124th anniversary of its presence in Korean society. Moreover, we celebrate the 20th year since establishing the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea and the Exarchate of Japan (2004-2024).

Firstly, this historic event is an occasion for infinite thanksgiving to God for everything that His Providence has bestowed upon us during the past twenty years. Secondly, our thanks are extended to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and especially to our His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, because, thanks to His tireless pastoral care for the Far East, he elevated the Exarchate of Korea, which was under the jurisdiction of New Zealand, to the Metropolis of Korea and

Exarchate of Japan.

However, this 20th anniversary must become an occasion for systematic work for the further spreading of the Orthodox witness to people of goodwill in Korea as well as in Japan.

For this reason, by the decision of the Metropolitan Council, we have declared 2024 a year of more intensive evangelization of the people. Because the preaching of the Gospel is not a choice, but a command of our risen Lord to His disciples and to each one of us: "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mk. 16:15). The apostle Paul considers the preaching of the Gospel as a necessity: "If I preach the gospel, this is not a reason for me to boast, but it is imposed on me as a necessity. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16). In addition, St. Paul emphatically exhorts his disciple Timothy to: "Preach the word of God with perseverance, in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2).

These are just a few of the numerous biblical references on this subject, which totally convince us that, all of us who believe in Christ, clergy and laity alike, must work with divine zeal to spread the Gospel of Christ to our fellow human beings. Let us, therefore, start from our own families, our neighbors, our friends, as well as our associates, to preach our Orthodox faith, not only by our example but also by our word.

Let us hope that during the New Year 2024, we may become God's proper instruments, so that more people may get to know the true God and become members of His unbuilt Church on earth.

On behalf of our clergy and lay assistants in the Lord, I wish to all of you a joyous, blessed, and spiritually fruitful New Year for you and your loved ones. And may the peace of God reside within our hearts, to have peace among ourselves. Only in this way, our world will be free of wars.

As always, with much love and honor in the Lord,

+ Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea and Exarch of Japan

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