

15/01/2024

## **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew attended festive event of the Greek Diaspora Associations**



On Saturday afternoon, 13 January 2024, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew attended the festive event of the Greek Diaspora Associations, at the Cultural Centre of the Greek Diaspora, based at the Galata Urban School, during which he blessed the traditional Vasilopita.

In his homily, he congratulated the President of the Association for the Support of Greek Community Foundations, Mr. Georgios Papaliaris, all those who contributed to the organisation of the event and expressed his joy for the unity and solidarity of the representatives of the Greek Diaspora Foundations, and for the presence of teachers, parents and guardians, alumni, students, as well as the representatives of Paidopolis Camp of Protis Island and the Youth Shelter and the Educational and Cultural Association of Imbros.

“Together, with faith and hope, we must walk towards the future, confident that it is worth fighting vigorously to save a wonderful legacy of life and freedom, with the aroma, beauty and truth represented by the combination of the best traditions of Greek antiquity and Christianity in our identity. All this is experienced and represented by the Church of Constantinople, the spiritual nurturer of the Greek

Nation, the noble and suffering and everlasting living nation, that for many centuries testifies to the Gospel with an invaluable contribution to the spiritual culture of humanity.



Education and school were the iron arms of our Church throughout the course of the Greek Nation. Our schools are symbols and carriers of a great spiritual tradition, of the entire culture of Hellenism, which flourished, was tested, reconstructed and continues its course towards a future, where they await, along with her own special problems, and all the shocking changes, heralded by modern technological developments, led by artificial intelligence, which radically changes the already changed cultural and educational landscape. The school must be saved as a place of education and humanisation, living and cultivating vital values. In the school of the future there must be room for the development of the child's soul, unless we consider that Neil Postman's prediction, made in 1982, is definitively verified, about the "disappearance of childhood", due to the so-called "visual revolution" and the "digital new order" that dominates the world in the last decades".

In continuing His address, His All-Holiness emphasises:

"The new cultural situation and the economic and dizzying technological developments directly affect and change our lives rapidly and radically, requiring constant adjustments and resistance. As it is said, every step forward is not

necessarily progress. Clearly there is real progress in many aspects of life, which of course has its price. Technology, the “new and almighty goddess”, as characterised by the Late Metropolitan John of Pergamon, which “today holds the key to all areas of life”, shows together both its bright and dark face. Destructive nuclear weapons, terrifying war machines, the chaos of information, the absolute dominance of the logic of numbers, are a part of the dark side of technological progress. We bless the true progress of knowledge and technology, which serves life and prosperity and not havoc, death and the shrinking of human existence.



The words of a modern thinker apply at this point: “Our problems are not technical and do not come from a lack of information. The fact that families are falling apart, crime is increasing, children are dying of hunger, that education is being subordinated to the economy, or that a ‘clash of cultures’ is threatened, is not due to a lack of information and is not addressed by IT.”

In the future, despite the wonders of science and technology, humanity will not be self-evident and will always require personal struggle and commitment. Man will continue to seek meaning in life, to feel existential shock in front of the mystery of God, to listen to the voice of heaven, to be attracted by beauty, to contemplate the truth and the depth of things, to wish to minister spiritual values.”

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was then addressed by Archon Grand Referendarios of the Great Church of Christ, Mr. Ioannis Demirtzoglou, while

short greetings were addressed also by Presbyter Chrysanthos Georgiou, President of the Educational and Cultural Association of Imbros, and Ms. Agni Nikolaidou, President of the Ioakeim Alumni Association.

His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Apostolos of Derkoi and His Eminence Ambassador e, Greek



















Photographs: Nikos Papachristou / Ecumenical Patriarchate

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