

# Turkish Extremists Target Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

Athens, February 2007

**E**cumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople has become the number one target for Turkish nationalists, reports *Kathimerini* newspaper, quoting one of the U.S. strategic centers. The same information is furnished by *Milliyet* Turkish newspaper in an article titled "Patriarchs under threat of death." *Yerkir* online, a union of non-governmental organizations from Armenia and Karabakh, reports Istanbul's Armenian Patriarch Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan's life is also in danger.

According to *Kathimerini*, western diplomats who carefully watch current events in Turkey are intensely concerned about the security for Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and also for the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Mesrob II Mutafyan. According to their assessments, the Turkish military authority which controls the nation's government behind the scenes and is known as the "deep state," is operating beyond control. "These people, most of whom are retired officers from the army and the security forces, have in their mind a paranoid image of Turkey being partitioned. They believe *see page 3* ♦



His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI greeted the faithful from the balcony of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on the feast day of St. Andrew Nov. 30. D. Panagos Photo.

## Archons Witness Historic Meeting of Patriarch & Pope

By Sophia S. Huling

**N**early 200 Archons and other pilgrims from the U.S. witnessed history during their most recent pilgrimage to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, when His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew welcomed His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on the occasion of the feast day of St. Andrew, founder of the church in Constantinople. The three-day visit in November 2006 marked the current pope's first to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as well as the first one by a sitting pontiff since Pope John Paul II in 1979. *see page 8* ♦

## Archon Leaders Meet to Discuss Religious Freedom Strategy with Undersecretary of State Burns

Washington, D.C., February 2007

**R**eligious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and America's strategic agenda to secure it were discussed in a meeting with Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns on Feb. 21. He is the third-ranking official in the U.S. State Department. These matters were discussed with Archon National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, Archon and dean of the Greek-American community Andrew A. Athens, Archon *see page 13* ♦

Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns, third from right, met with Archons (from left) Mike and Andy Manatos, Andrew A. Athens, National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, and Rev. Alexander Karloutsos. Courtesy Photo.





# Wilson responds to Archon protest

*U.S. Ambassador to Turkey calls harassment “regrettable”*

by Sophia S. Huling

U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Ross Wilson sent his “personal regrets” in a Feb. 23 reply to Archon National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis’ letter of Dec. 19, which vehemently protested the harassment of American pilgrims at the Ecumenical Patriarchate during the Pope’s visit last November.

Nearly 200 U.S. citizens traveled to Istanbul, Turkey to witness the historic meeting between Pope Benedict XVI and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. The event coincided with the Nov. 30 celebration of the feast day of St. Andrew the Apostle, which Wilson himself observed by attending services at the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Dr. Limberakis’ letter stated that “on the celebration of the services by the Pope and the Ecumenical Patriarch on Nov. 29 and 30, Turkish authorities forced the Archons and other faithful Orthodox Christians to turn in their passports in order to be allowed into the services.” He also mentioned that “once inside the Church, Turkish police physically blocked and bullied worshippers from receiving Holy Communion. The clergy had to plead and argue with the authorities to allow the faithful to move towards the Altar and the Chalice.”

He further described how Turkish authorities tried to close down the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s press office, threatened to confiscate the press passes they had prepared to give to registered journalists, and remotely tampered with the computer and communications systems in the press room.

“These examples provide yet more evidence of the oppression that the Ecumenical Patriarchate suffers at the hands of the Turkish government,” Dr. Limberakis wrote.

The letter was sent via e-mail and regular mail to Wilson, with a copy to President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, and Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns.

Wilson apologized for his delayed reply “on behalf of the U.S. government,” which was sent via fax to the Archon office and to Dr. Limberakis. He said he regretted the “difficulties” the pilgrims faced, and that the U.S. administration’s views, although he did not specify what they were, “have been conveyed to appropriate Turkish authorities.”

Wilson pointed to the security measures for the protection of the Pope, the Ecumenical Patriarch, and the pilgrims as causing inconvenience to “Turks and foreign visitors alike. “Nevertheless, the difficulties the Archons experienced during the events at the Ecumenical Patriarchate were regrettable,” he added.

Wilson stated the U.S. supports the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, works closely to improve its relations with the Turkish government, and reports on the issues in the State Department’s Annual Report on International Religious Freedom.

“We consistently urge the Turkish government to allow the Ecumenical Patriarchate to operate freely, including by re-opening Halki Seminary and protecting Patriarchate property from spurious and unjust claims,” wrote Wilson.



Pilgrims bound for the Doxology service at the Ecumenical Patriarchate Nov. 29 were stopped at a police barricade six blocks from the Patriarchal gates, where they were forced to surrender their passports at a table, right, in exchange for a Turkish ID card. National Council member Stephen Cherpelis, is wearing the pilgrim card as well as the Turkish ID. Dr. Spiro Macris Photo.



A second police checkpoint was set up about 25 yards from the gates of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, where pilgrims were frisked before they entered for the Doxology. Dr. Spiro Macris Photo.



Pilgrims, including many elderly, were forced to walk two miles in the freezing cold to reach their buses after the Doxology service, when Turkish police forbade the buses to pick them up. Dr. Spiro Macris Photo.

## Ecumenical Patriarch's Life Threatened... *from page 1*



His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. N. Manginas Photo.

they are functioning under revolutionary conditions and that they are constantly justified in giving orders for assassinations,” commented a U.S. analyst. “It is clear that there is a plan to assassinate the representatives of various minorities.”

Already in recent weeks, Turkish security forces have received much disquieting information regarding a possible assassination attempt against the Armenian Patriarch, who outraged nationalist circles with his new year’s speech in which he dared to refer to the genocide of the Armenians, traditionally a taboo subject in Turkey.

The Turkish services have taken additional security measures for the Armenian religious leader. Western sources who are well informed on Turkish events consider that, despite all this, the number one target for the nationalist circles is the Ecu-

menical Patriarch and the Phanar, the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s administrative center. “The hatred these circles harbor for the Patriarchate runs very deep; indeed it is exacerbated by the importance the White House attributes to the Phanar, as also the European governments do,” commented a western diplomat. “They are perfectly well aware that an action against the Phanar would create enormous problems for Turkey’s international relations and possibly even for their aim.”

Washington has on occasions, through informal channels, conveyed to Ankara its concerns over

security for the world leader of Christian Orthodoxy and has asked that additional measures be taken for his protection. U.S. officials who carefully study events in Turkey expressed the opinion that the security forces are exceptionally infiltrated by the “long arm” of the deep state, as was evident by the murder of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink. “The foot-dragging by the intelligence gathering services in the Istanbul police and also — even more so — the photo of policemen with the murderer amongst them as a hero, show that there are obscure links,” stress western officials, who expressed their certainty that the Erdogan administration has lost control.

The same officials pointed out, “When we talk of a threat against the Patriarch, we are not referring to the Gray Wolves and their constant, loud demonstrations against him. We are talking of paramili-

tary nuclei which cunningly use young people as assassins. This is what happened with Dink, the same with the Catholic priest Andoro in Trebizond. In order for anyone to reach from the young assassin to the head, one must pass through three or four links, which are careful to eliminate any of their traces. These are hard core, well organized gangs, covered up by high ranking officers in the security services,” *Kathimerini* reports.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is the world leader of Orthodox Christians. His authority and prestige derives from the times of the Eastern Roman Empire, whose capital was Constantinople, or New Rome. The city was founded by St. Constantine the Great, the first Roman Emperor to allow Christian worship, which until then had been persecuted by the Roman state authorities. Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan is one of the three major Armenian patriarchs.

The Greek and Armenian Patriarchs were once the leaders of Turkey’s thriving and populous Greek and Armenian communities. But their numbers diminished to near extinction as a result of a deliberate Ottoman and Turkish state policy to wipe out Christian minorities. It has thus been estimated that in the years marking the collapse of the Ottoman empire and the emergence of the Turkish state, more than 3.5 million Armenian, Greek and Assyrian Christians were massacred by the regimes of the Young Turks and of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) in what has been called the Christian Holocaust and seen as the predecessor to the Jewish Holocaust.

To this day Turkey denies the genocide of its Christian minorities, despite calls from the European Union and the governments of France and Greece that the recognition of the Armenian and Greek genocides is an indispensable moral condition for Turkey’s eventual accession to the EU club.

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**Forum Against Genocide Network**



# Skeadas Appointed Archdiocesan District Regional Commander

By Sophia S. Huling

**T**he Order of St. Andrew's newest Regional Commander has hit the ground running in his charge to energize his fellow Archons.

Peter Skeadas, Archon *Hieromonimon*, was appointed Regional Commander of the Order's Archdiocesan District in October 2006 for a one-year term, and he has already planned

two regional events: a luncheon meeting

and panel discussion for the Archons of the district on March 24, and a March 16 public lecture by Dr. George Demacopoulos, professor of historical theology at Fordham University, to address the crisis facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Orthodox Christians in Turkey. The Archdiocesan district encompasses all of New York City, the northern and eastern suburbs in New York State, and western Connecticut.

Skeadas and his Greek-born wife, Aphrodite, made their first pilgrimage to the Ecumenical Patriarchate last November, coinciding with the historic visit of Pope Benedict XVI. His account of the experience was published in the January/February 2007 issue of "The Logos," the newsletter of his parish, the Church of Our Saviour in Rye, N.Y.

*"I want to do the best job I can."*

"The entire experience strengthened our Greek Orthodox faith," he wrote. "It is challenging to articulate the depth of my feelings, especially when my eyes fell on the Ecumenical Patriarchate, world headquarters of Orthodoxy. I finally began to understand that I was not the tourist, nor that wondering and wandering university student of yesteryear, not even that slightly prejudiced grandson of immigrants. That visit to the Patriarchal Compound ... clarified my pilgrimage. I was present and on duty for the preservation of our faith."

But he was disappointed to find that relatively few Archons from the Archdiocesan district, the largest in the country, made the journey to Istanbul.

"There were more Archons from Arkansas on the pilgrimage than there were from New York," he noted. "I've been charged to produce some enthusiasm among the members of our district. Apparently the New Yorkers need a bit of a wake-up call."

The luncheon meeting for the district Archons will also include a panel discussion on religious freedom, the Order's core mission. Panelists will include His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis, and Religious Freedom Committee Chairman John Catsimatidis.



D. Panagos Photo.

"The Archons of the Archdiocesan district have tremendous resources, they have talents, they have knowledge, they have associations," said Skeadas. "This is New York City, it's a tremendously rich area in terms of resources, intelligence – and yet we have more Archons coming from the Midwest to help the cause."

Skeadas hopes the panel will stimulate an open and frank discussion on social, religious, and political issues to highlight the crisis facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate and encourage Archons to bring it to the attention of the press, legislators, and even friends, neighbors, and coworkers.

"We want these people to respond to our call and spread our concerns to the outside world. To do that they have to understand the cause, and to understand it they have to come," he said.

As for the Demacopoulos lecture, Skeadas met the professor during the pilgrimage and invited him to speak when he learned that in 2004, he had written the letter to the Vatican which set in motion the return of the relics of Sts. John Chrysostom and Gregory the Theologian to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The lecture, which will follow the 7 p.m. service of Salutations to the Virgin Mary, will address the Patriarchate's struggle for religious freedom in Turkey as well as the Papal visit of last November and its significance to Orthodox-Roman Catholic relations.

"A lot of it will center on the potential for reunion between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches," said Demacopoulos of his lecture.

Skeadas, a native of Harlem in New York City who was invested as a Archon in 2004, earned a mechanical engineering degree but has spent most of his career in restaurant work and real estate development. He and his wife live in Connecticut.

"I'm a good soldier," he said with a smile, reflecting on his work for the Order. "I want to do the best job I can."



## Archdiocesan District to Hold Luncheon Meeting and Panel Discussion



His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios with Archons John Catsimatidis and James Speros. D. Panagos Photo.

**A**rchons of the Archdiocesan District will hold a Meeting and Luncheon at the Boat House in Central Park in New York City beginning at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 24.

As Defenders of the the Faith, they will also participate in a panel discussion on religious freedom, the core mission of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Exarch of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, will grace the event with his presence. His Eminence will also address the attending Archons.

Mr. John Catsimatidis, Chairman of the Religious Freedom Committee, will open the session with a brief overview. National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis will provide some enlightening remarks. With the impact of the most recent Archon pilgrimage to Constantinople imprinted in their minds and hearts, this gathering in New York will prove timely and assist in developing important strategies to achieve their collective goal: the defense of the Mother Church.

Noteworthy guests to field questions pertaining to social, religious and political issues will be in attendance. Open and frank discussion will be encouraged.

The lunch will be hosted by John Catsimatidis, Regional Commander Peter Skeadas, and Boat House owner Dean Poll.

Entrance to the restaurant, which is located in Central Park in Manhattan, is via Fifth Avenue at 72nd Street.

## National Archon Lenten Retreat March 9-10

**T**he Fourth Annual National Archon Lenten Retreat was held March 9 and 10 at the headquarters of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States at South Bound Brook, N.J.

National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis and Spirituality Committee Chairman James Speros are urging Archons to attend the event, which will be designed to foster fellowship and prayer among the brotherhood and re-energize their spiritual commitment to live a Christ-centered life.

Back by popular demand, this year's retreat master was His Grace Bishop Savas (Zembillas) of Troas, Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Those who attended the Lenten retreat three years ago at the Saint Basil Academy will recall that Bishop Savas led the Archons in one of the organization's more uplifting and memorable retreats.

The retreat was on Friday, March 9 at 6 p.m. with services at the St. Andrew Memorial Church followed by a Lenten Fellowship Dinner at the Ukrainian Cultural Center. Saturday, March 10 began in the Church at 8:30 a.m. with Divine Liturgy, followed by a light breakfast and the first session of the retreat. The day ended with Great Vespers at the St. Andrew Memorial Church at 6 p.m.

## LECTURE

*Friday, March 16*

*The Greek Orthodox Church of Our Saviour*

**F**ollowing the 7 p.m. Salutations to the Blessed Virgin, Dr. George Demacopoulos, Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology at Fordham University, addressed the current plight of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Orthodox Christians who remain in Turkey. He also spoke on the significance of the Papal visit for Orthodox and Roman Catholic relations. In addition, he highlighted the special events that took place during their visit to the Patriarchate in November 2006.



Prof. Antonios Trakatellis addressed the Archons at a dinner honoring his contributions to public service. D. Panagos Photo.

# Prof. Trakatellis, *Megas Hartophylax*, Vice-President of European Parliament, Honored for His Extraordinary Service

In a tribute dinner held at the Carlyle Hotel January 4, Professor Antonios Trakatellis, MD, PhD, was recognized by the Order of St. Andrew and His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios for his notable contributions through medicine and public service.

Prof. Trakatellis, the Vice President of the European Parliament and brother of His Eminence, also holds the title Archon *Megas Hartophylax* and is the head of the Greek delegation in the European legislative body. He is the author of more than 120 scientific papers, has written 10 books on biochemistry and is a special advisor for environmental issues for Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis addressed the attendees, which included the National Council and several regional commanders.

“The priceless service Prof. Trakatellis has committed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate through his action, through his contacts and through his liaison with the Archons facilitating their multiple meetings at the European Union, have been invaluable,” said Dr. Limberakis.

Trakatellis, who spoke in both Greek and English, began by thanking his brother and the Archons for planning the dinner, calling it “an exceptional honor.”

“I think my wife, Tania, would agree that tonight’s event is one of the most memorable for the both of us,” said Trakatellis. “Our visit here and to Washington will be remembered as one of the most beautiful moments of our lives.”

He conveyed his wholehearted support regarding the advertisements that were placed in December in the *New York Times*, the *New York Post* and the *International Herald Tribune* concerning religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He also remarked on the re-opening of the School of Halki and Turkey joining the European Union.

His Eminence reiterated the importance of the Archons’ mission for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. “We have to increase our activity with more

sophistication, more wisdom — we have to outdo what people are doing against the Patriarchate,” he said. “The Archons became one of the most beloved entities for the Patriarch. He says ‘Archons’ and his face lights up.”

A plaque, presented by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Dr. Limberakis and Vice Commander Nicholas J. Bouras, emphasized Trakatellis’ “inestimable support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate” and his “distinguished contribution to his fellow man through medicine and public service.”

To conclude the evening, His Eminence cut and distributed the *Vasilopita* (St. Basil’s bread) celebrating the new year.



Dr. Limberakis praised the work of Prof. Antonios Trakatellis at the dinner in his honor. Next to him is the professor’s wife, Tania. D. Panagos Photo.



His Eminence prepared to cut the *Vasilopita* to the delight of his brother and sister-in-law, standing behind him, and the Archons. D. Panagos Photo.



# Archons Host Tribute Dinner for Commissioner Kyprianou

New York, N.Y., March 2007. By Athanasia T. Diamantis.

The Order of Saint Andrew feted European Commissioner Markos Kyprianou at a tribute dinner held at the Carlyle Hotel on March 5, for his widely-known health accomplishments and constant support for the Order's Religious Freedom initiative on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarch, blessed the gathering and offered inspiring remarks to the distinguished guests present. They included Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations Adamantios Vassilakis and his wife, Permanent Ambassador of Cyprus to the U.N. Andreas D. Mavroyiannis, Consul General of Greece Catherine Boura, and Consul General of Cyprus Martha Mavrommatis.

The youngest son of former Cyprus President Spyros Kyprianou, Commissioner Markos Kyprianou has been the European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection since May 2004, and coordinator for the European Union Platform on diet, physical activity and health. He is also an active Cypriot politician and has held positions such as Municipal Councilor for the City of Nicosia and Chairman of the House of Representatives for the Nicosia District.

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis thanked the Commissioner for "welcoming the Archons in Brussels and for his stalwart support of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the religious rights of the Mother Church of Constantinople."

Commissioner Kyprianou began by thanking "His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and the Archons for planning and arranging the distinguished dinner" in his honor and for their "unswerving commitment to the Orthodox Church and the worldwide Hellenic Community." He promised to do whatever he "can at anytime to further the human and religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and to support His All Holiness" with whom he had "an audience in November, just before the visit of



Cypriot-American community leaders, from l.: Philip Christopher, Nikos Mouyiaris, Consul General Martha Mavrommatis, Archon Andreas D. Comodromos (far right) and Ambassador Andreas D. Mavroyiannis (seated at right), honored Marcos Kyprianou (holding plaque) along with Archbishop Demetrios, Dr. Limberakis and Ambassador Adamantios Vassilakis (seated at left). A Diamantis Photo.

Pope Benedict XVI." He further emphasized it is "imperative that the Archons continue to come to Brussels to raise the Religious Freedom issue with the policy makers in Europe that can make a difference for the future of the Greek Orthodox Church in Istanbul."

The Archbishop, who had recently returned from a visit to the Phanar, brought the paternal greetings of His All Holiness to the Archons and thanked the National Council for their "leadership and service to the Archdiocese of America and to the Throne of Saint Andrew."

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis presented a commemorative plaque which noted Commissioner Kyprianou's "inestimable support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and in recognition of his distinguished contribution to his fellow man through public service."

Leading members of the Cypriot-American community Philip Christopher, Andreas D. Comodromos, Peter Kakoyiannis, Panayiotis Papanicolaou, and Nikos Mouyiaris attended the dinner to join the Archons in honoring their fellow Cypriot.

Concluding the evening, Archon John Catsimatidis, Chairman of the Religious Freedom Committee, presented His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and Dr. Limberakis with a framed copy of the religious freedom advertisement that appeared in the New York Times with the historic picture of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedict XVI in Istanbul during the Pope's visit last November.

Vice Commander and host of the dinner Nicholas J. Bouras was unable to attend the meeting, but sent the Commissioner his thanks and congratulated him on his outstanding commitment to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Religious Freedom effort.



Archon John Catsimatidis (right), presented Archbishop Demetrios and Dr. Limberakis with a framed copy of the *New York Times* religious freedom advertisement, held by Archon Alexander Pritsos. A Diamantis Photo.



Flanked by their hierarchs, His All Holiness and His Holiness processed from the chapel of St. George after the Doxology service Nov. 29. N. Manginas Photo.



His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarchate Bartholomew, celebrated the Divine Liturgy on the feast day of St. Andrew the Apostle on Nov. 30 in the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George. His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, right, made a historic visit accompanied by cardinals from the Vatican. N. Manginas Photo.



Archons served as ushers during the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy Nov. 30 with the Pope. Standing from left are John Halecky, Harry Cavalaris, Nicholas Furriss, and Fanis Economidis. D. Panagos Photo.

### Archon Witness... from page 1 ▶

Dr. Anthony Limberakis, National Commander of the Order of St. Andrew, called the event “an historic event of great religious importance for the world over. It was viewed everywhere as a step towards reconciliation between the two ancient and apostolic Christian churches.”

The highlight of the pilgrimage was the encounter with His All Holiness and with the Pope during the celebration of St. Andrew’s feast day, beginning on the evening of Nov. 29 for a Doxology service, and culminating in the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy the next morning.

Citing security concerns, Turkish police bore down hard on the American pilgrims and all those who attended the events. They blocked the buses from approaching the Patriarchal compound, confiscated attendees’ passports before they entered the Patriarchal gates, frisked and searched them, and forbade them to wear the official pilgrim identification cards which the Order of St. Andrew had furnished, even while they were within the Ecumenical Patriarchate grounds. They even impeded them from receiving Holy Communion.

Police stopped the buses six blocks away from the Ecumenical Patriarchate when they brought the pilgrims to the welcome service on Nov. 29. Even more significantly, however, they forced the faithful to walk more than two miles to reach their buses after the service, claiming they had to secure the compound and could not permit vehicles nearby until the Pope left the grounds. The group, which included many elderly, waited for a while in the cold night until they decided to walk, hoping to meet the buses on the road.

“We were told we could wait until security cleared, or we could start walking. Well, it was cold, and we were just standing out there in the middle of the road,” said Dr. Spiro Macris, a member of the National Council. “The entire way to the buses, every half-block there were pairs of policemen on either side of the street. And it was frightening. Most of these folks were considerably older than [me].”



Archon Harry Cavalaris, North Carolina Regional Commander, received Holy Communion from His All Holiness at the Divine Liturgy Nov. 30. N. Manginas Photo.





As is customary, the Order hosted a dinner that evening in honor of U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Ross Wilson, to whom they presented a plaque and a specially embossed Bible. The Consul General of the U.S. to Istanbul, Deborah Jones, also attended. The evening closed with the singing of “God Bless America,” a tradition of the Archons whenever they honor a U.S. ambassador abroad.

The Patriarchal Divine Liturgy on Nov. 30 was marked by impressive grandeur, as the chapel swelled with congregants and clergy of both east and west. The Pope sat in a small wooden throne across from the Patriarchal throne, following the liturgy in a service book. At appointed times during the service, he and the Patriarch exchanged the kiss of peace and the Pope read the Lord’s Prayer aloud in Greek.

As the congregation spilled out of the chapel and into the courtyard after liturgy, immense banners of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and of the Vatican flourished from a balcony above them. Moments later the pontiff and the Patriarch appeared on the balcony, their hands clasped together above their heads as they waved to the cheering crowd.

That evening, His All Holiness hosted his traditional reception for the feast day of St. Andrew at the Hilton Hotel, which Ambassador Wilson also attended.

The following day, some pilgrims accompanied the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew when he paid a reciprocal visit to the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Istanbul’s Beyoglu district and was welcomed by Pope Benedict. Dr. Macris and other Archons noted the remarkable lack of security precautions there, compared with what they had encountered the previous two days at the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The pilgrimage came to a close the evening of Dec. 1 with the Order’s banquet in honor of the Ecumenical Patriarch, attended by dignitaries as well as many Turkish business people, journalists, and members of Parliament. Toastmaster Dr. Macris observed Wilson spoke “in glowing terms of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Patriarchate and all that they stood for.”



His All Holiness and His Eminence greeted Dr. Anthony Limberakis and his parents, Fr. John and Mrs. Limberakis, at the Patriarchal reception Nov. 30. At right stood Washington, D.C. Regional Commander Andrew Manatos. N. Manginas Photo.



At his reception Nov. 30, His All Holiness was flanked by Dr. Anthony Limberakis, left, and John Papamichalakis, President of the Archons in Greece. N. Manginas Photo.



Under the overwhelming presence of Turkish police, Archon Nicholas Furrus greeted Pope Benedict XVI upon his arrival at the Ecumenical Patriarchate. N. Manginas Photo.



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew gave the blessing at the banquet hosted by the Archons in his honor on Dec. 1. To his right stood His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios. Also at the table were National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Ross Wilson, and Metropolitan John of Pergamo. D. Panagos Photo.



*Theofanis V. Economidis* ARCHON EKDIKOS

**I**t was an unexpected surprise for me when I was asked to perform the duties of usher for the Divine Liturgy, along with a few other Archons, during the Papal visit. The humiliation by the Turkish authorities who forced us to walk for almost two miles in the cold rain, who asked us to surrender our American passports, and who did not allow us to wear our badge that was depicting the photos of the Pope and Patriarch because they did not accept the words “Ecumenical Patriarchate” on it was not enough to break our spirit and our determination to be witnesses of history in the making. As Pope Benedict XVI and our Patriarch were entering the Chapel of St. George and they were passing by me, I could not help but let my mind travel through the centuries back to the glorious days of Byzantium. I allowed myself for a moment to imagine that I was in the middle of Hagia Sophia, overwhelmed by its splendor and magnificence. And as the bells of St. George were ringing, I thought they were sounding the arrival for the first time of Emperor Justinian to the church he built 1500 years ago. Even though these sweet memories lasted just a few seconds, the real scene was as memorable as ever. For this lifetime experience I humbly express my gratitude to our beloved Patriarch, our Archbishop and esteemed National Commander Dr. Limberakis. D. Panagos Photo.



ORDER OF  
SAINT ANDREW  
THE APOSTLE  
ARCHONS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

*Defenders of the Faith*

*John Halecky, Jr.* ARCHON EKDIKOS

**T**he most unforgettable impact of the Pilgrimage for me was during the Great Litany of the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy when the deacon proclaimed the third petition, “For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.” I looked at the Ecumenical Patriarch standing at the altar and Pope of Rome seated at an adjacent place of honor in the presence of the Holy Relics of St. John Chrysostom, whose Divine Liturgy was being celebrated and thought, “Did he write that petition for this day?” I’ve relived that moment at every Divine Liturgy I’ve attended since and probably always will. D. Panagos Photo.



*Dr. Spiro J. Macris* ARCHON HIEROMNIMON

**I**t was marvelous, an incredible experience to see a line of cardinals walk in, in their bright red cassocks followed by a line of Orthodox in black. It was ceremonial and wondrous, a splendid, colorful religious event. I was there in 1979 when Pope John Paul II attended a Doxology with Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios, and there probably were not 50 people in the whole church then. I’m not sure there were any members of the press there in 1979. The contrast was startling, amazing — and positive! Courtesy Photo.



*Michael F. Parlamis* **ARCHON NOMOPHYLAX**

**I** view what I witnessed as a first-hand chance for the Pope of Rome to reconnect with the Roman Catholic Church's own roots — New Rome (Constantinople). New Rome kept Christianity alive for long periods of time as Rome itself was rendered unable to function, as invasions of Goths, Huns, Vandals and others reduced the Italian peninsula to an occupied war zone. Pope Benedict XVI knows this history well, and it was my sense that the Pope, rather than merely visiting a fellow clergyman, was visiting home. Today, New Rome is the church in trouble, not Old Rome. Subject to a continued assault from the Turkish state, the Ecumenical Patriarchate needs all the support it can receive, including the support from the church of Rome. *N. Manginas Photo.*



*Peter Skeadas* **ARCHON HIEROMNIMON**

**W**e were part of a group of Americans supporting the principle of religious freedom, specifically advocating the right of Greek Orthodoxy to exist and flourish where it has historically, spanning 17 centuries in Constantinople (Istanbul)... I witnessed the exchange of the kiss of peace between the Pope and the Ecumenical Patriarch. I observed the impressive Greek recitation of the Lord's Prayer by the Pope. Perhaps my most moving moment came when I received the sacrament of Holy Communion from Patriarch Bartholomew.

*N. Manginas Photo.*



*Christopher Stratakis, Esq.* **ARCHON NOTARIOS**

**A**s I was going up to receive Holy Communion from the Ecumenical Patriarch, I bowed as I passed the Pope and he bowed back at me in a very gentle and loving way. I've got to say that the whole service was awe-inspiring and certainly very historic. As I was telling other people, we will probably never witness this again in our life time, that is, the Pope coming into the Patriarchal compound in Turkey in a gesture of reconciliation and in an effort to unite the two churches. *D. Panagos Photo.*



*Dr. Stephen J. Yallourakis* **ARCHON AKTOUARIOS**

**T**he Pope and the Ecumenical Patriarch have a deep love and respect for each other. To whatever extent the Pope can, he will try to restore the Ecumenical Patriarchate to its former position. The suppression of religious freedom ... it's something we can't begin to comprehend in this country. But whatever they do to [His All Holiness], it doesn't make it any less true who he is and what he is. We're doing everything we can to support the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The one thing that's disappointing to me is that we didn't have the support of our own government. The U.S. Ambassador's speech was lukewarm – it did not really support religious freedom. *N. Manginas Photo.*





# Historic Gathering of San Francisco Archons



His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis, and Archons from five states attended the first-ever gathering of Archons of the San Francisco Metropolis. Courtesy Photo.

The Archons from the San Francisco Metropolis held their first-ever regional event last November, when they gathered at the famed Fairmont Hotel of San Francisco for a special evening of fellowship under the guidance of His Eminence, the local Metropolitan Gerasimos.

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios was an invited guest, as well as Archon National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis, who made a special presentation describing the challenges facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul, Turkey. Archon *Ekdikos* and Regional Commander Fanis Economidis led the organizing committee including Archons Kenneth Frangadakis, John Gigounas, Christ Kamages, Anthony Saris, Gary Vrionis, and Dr. James Kallins. Economidis also served as master of ceremonies.

About 120 people attended the reception and dinner presentation, including 30 Archons and their spouses from California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. The local priests with their *presvyteres* (wives), community leaders, the Consuls General of Greece and Cyprus, Greek media representatives, and several young professionals were among the invited guests. The cost of the event was underwritten by a number of Archons.

“It is a fact that while all of us have been witnessing the slow asphyxiation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate by the state of Turkey, many of our Archons have stayed in the sidelines,” said Economidis. “We sincerely feel that this inactivity on the part of many of our Archons is due to lack of awareness rather than lack of interest. When we discussed this issue with our National Commander Dr. Limberakis, we set as a goal for him to address three main points: what are the responsibilities of each Archon toward the Mother Church; what are the problems facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and what actions we as Archons must take to help in this struggle. Dr. Limberakis, who traveled all the way to San Francisco [from Philadelphia] made a very impressive and informative presentation and for this we are indeed very grateful to him.”

Also at the event, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos announced that the Sunday closest to the feast day of St. Andrew the Apostle will be declared by the Metropolis of San Francisco Archons Day. In this way all the faithful of the Metropolis will have an opportunity to learn more about the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its history, its glory and its importance in the future of our Church in America.

“We also express our most profound appreciation and humble thanks to His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, who graced us all with his presence and his remarks,” said Economidis.



National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis described the struggles of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey. Courtesy Photo.



## 73 Senators Sign Religious Freedom Letter

Nearly three-quarters of the U.S. Senator have signed a letter to President George W. Bush urging him to raise the religious freedom crisis facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate higher on the American agenda. Of 100 U.S. senators, 73 have signed the letter, placing the issue among only five in 2006 that received such strong U.S. support.

In spring 2006, the Order of St. Andrew asked the firm of Washington, D.C. Regional Commander Andrew Manatos to coordinate, primarily on a pro-bono basis, the nation-wide effort for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This effort is aimed at making the President, key administration officials, senators, members of Congress, and all Orthodox church communities across the country aware of the threat to the Ecumenical Patriarchate's survival because of Turkish government policies. Through the grass-roots campaign, thousands of Orthodox Christians have written their senators and have arranged face-to-face meetings to present the issue.

Manatos is undertaking a similar effort in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2007. At the conclusion of this effort, the plight of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will have gone from an unknown crisis to a subject of significant American concern.

Archon regional commanders are also leading campaigns in their regions to contact their local state representatives and proposing resolutions be passed in the state legislature supporting religious human rights in Turkey. Last May, New Jersey became the first state to adopt such a resolution, followed almost immediately by neighboring Pennsylvania.

Thomas Yearout, regional commander of the Atlanta Metropolis, has appointed Archon Stephen Georgeson of Georgia to coordinate the effort in that region. According to Georgeson, a resolution based upon the Pennsylvania resolution is being drafted and will soon be presented to the Georgia state legislature.

"We are a dynamic organization, that is, we do not pause but we continue to work in pursuit of our goals," stated Dr. Nicholas Loutsson, chairman of the Archon Regional Commander Liaison Committee.

## European Court Orders Turkey to Return Property

ANKARA

In a landmark ruling in January, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ordered Turkey to return property confiscated from an ethnic Greek school foundation, the *Megali tou Genous Scholi* (Great School of the Nation). The Strasbourg-based court directed Turkey to return the property or pay more than \$1 million in compensation for infringing the foundation's property rights. Failure to comply with the ruling within the three-month period will result in interest being imposed on the sum of the indemnity for every day thereafter. The property had been seized in 1974.

The ruling followed a complaint filed by the *Megali tou Genous Scholi*, which operates a Greek high school in Istanbul, against a Turkish government decision that it did not have the legal standing to own property.

The foundation's board stressed it was imperative to maintain its right and ability to manage its assets without government interference.

The decision coincides with increased pressure from Brussels on European Union candidate Turkey to improve the rights of its religious and ethnic minorities. "I will bring this issue to the cabinet.

We will re-evaluate the situation and decide what to do in line with the ECHR ruling," Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Ali Sahin was quoted as saying.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's center-right government approved a foundations bill late last year in a bid to deflect EU criticism of its rights record. But President Ahmet Necdet Sezer vetoed the bill.

This was the first ruling by the ECHR condemning Turkey on matters concerning public benefit and charitable foundations of religious minorities in that country.

Board members and legal experts also noted that whatever deficiencies exist in new legislation being prepared by the Turkish government may now be remedied through legal channels.

Up until now, the administrations of such foundations avoided seeking recourse to the ECHR, but instead placed their hopes for vindication in pressure being applied by European governments on the Turkish government and Ankara's attempts to harmonize with the Union's requirements.

**Material from Reuters and Athens News Agency was included in this report.**

### Archon Leaders Meet... from page 1

Regional Commander Andrew Manatos, who along with Archon Mike Manatos also coordinates local efforts for the crisis facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and Archon Spiritual Adviser Rev. Alexander Karloutsos.

During the meeting, the Undersecretary was also briefed about the discriminatory treatment of the Order of Saint Andrew in Turkey during the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the Ecumenical Patriarchate Nov. 29 - Dec. 1, 2006. As a follow-up to that meeting, and as part of the ongoing effort for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, members of this group also met with other key State Department officials involved in

the planning and day-to-day American efforts on this subject.

Undersecretary Burns and the Archons agreed on the extraordinary degree of the crisis facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate and on the importance of this crisis to America. They agreed on the importance of America supporting Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, one of the world's preeminent spiritual leaders and peacemakers. In addition, there was agreement on the course of action that can be most productive and the importance of the Order keeping in close touch with European Union leaders and American officials handling this matter.



# Gounardes Elected NYS Dental Association President



D. Panagos Photo.

Steven Gounardes, Archon *Hieromon*, has recently been elected President of the New York State Dental Association (NYSDA), an association which represents more than 13,000 of the state's dentists.

Dr. Gounardes, who practices general dentistry in Brooklyn, N.Y., has been

an active participant in organized dentistry. He is past president of the Second District Dental Society, a component of NYSDA representing Brooklyn and Staten Island. He has served on the NYSDA Board of Governors and its Executive Committee and as a delegate to the American Dental Association.

In the coming year, he intends to focus on expanding communication between the organization, its leadership and its local dental societies. During his presidency, the association will introduce legislation proposing an increase in continuing education hours required for dental licensure in New York state.

A native of Queens, N.Y., Dr. Gounardes has served on the

Board of Trustees of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. since 1981. He has also been a member of the Board of Trustees of Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Mass. and a member of the Archdiocesan Council. Since 1997, he has served as president of St. Basil Academy in Garrison, N.Y., a residential school for children in need run by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

In recognition of his many years of devoted service to the church, Archbishop Spyridon invested Dr. Gounardes into the Order of St. Andrew in 1997.

Dr. Gounardes serves as assistant director of the Department of Dentistry and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center in Brooklyn, a facility of New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation.

A graduate of Brooklyn College and of the New York University College of Dentistry, Dr. Gounardes is a member of the American College of Dentists, the International College of Dentists, the Pierre Fauchard Academy, the Hellenic Dental Society and Bay Ridge Dental Society.

Dr. Gounardes and his wife, Dianne, have three children: Andrew, Patricia, and Gregory.

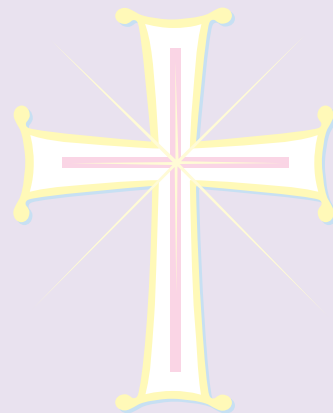
(Material from *Greek News* was used in this report.)



His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI light candles together in the narthex before entering the chapel of St. George for a Doxology service on Nov. 29, the eve of the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle. N. Manginas Photo.

## IN MEMORIAM

OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS GO TO THE FAMILY & FRIENDS OF OUR BELOVED MEMBERS.



**Constantine Pappas**

*Archon Architekton*

12/08/06

New City, New York

**MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL**



# Ekonomou Studies Eastern Influence on Rome

By Sophia S. Huling

A new book by Legal Committee member Dr. Andrew J. Ekonomou explores the little-known phenomenon that eastern, Greek-speaking influences greatly impacted Rome and the Papacy during the Middle Ages, centuries before the Great Schism.

*Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes*, newly published by Lexington Books, examines the scope and extent to which the East influenced Rome and the Papacy following Byzantine Emperor Justinian's reconquest of Italy in the middle of the sixth century through the collapse of the Byzantine exarchate of Ravenna in 752.

The book is the edited version of Ekonomou's doctoral dissertation for his PhD in medieval history from Emory University in Atlanta, Ga. With a concentration in Byzantine history and Ekonomou's knowledge of Greek and Latin, his adviser recommended he focus on something cross-cultural, he said.

"It was an area that had not been explored, and needed to be," he said, adding that 12 of the 13 Roman popes from 650 to 752 were Greek-speakers from the eastern part of the Roman Empire. "No one knows this. There is this large number of ecclesiastics who enter the Roman church, who are driven there, and who bring with them their culture."

That influence was displayed in liturgical practices (a growth in ornate rituals based on the traditions of the Byzantine imperial court), in feast days that had not been celebrated before (such as the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on Sept. 14), in the growth of monastic institutions, in the expansion of popular devotions to the Virgin Mary, even in service books. Part of the baptismal service in *Ordo Romanus XI*, a service book in common use during the period, includes a section where the priest asks whether the Creed is to be recited in Latin or Greek.

"This tells you that there are enough Greek speakers that require that language to understand what's going on," said Ekonomou. "There were at least four monasteries in Rome during the seventh century that were purely Greek-speaking."

Ekonomou said Pope Benedict XVI understands, and has publicly affirmed, how crucial the Byzantine influence has been on Rome. He said the Pope's recent visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate makes the book's topic particularly timely.

"Pope Benedict has a tremendous sensitivity and knowledge

of the Greek east on the west," he said. "I thought this is a good time for this book to come out. It shows how the Pope is correctly assessing the influence of Byzantium on Rome and the Papacy."

In his review of the book, Alex Alexakis, a professor at the University of Ioannina in Greece, noted that it addressed "a serious lack of any work on the influence of the east on Rome and the Papacy during the period of the middle of the sixth century to the fall of the last Byzantine political force in Italy," said Ekonomou.



*"It shows how the Pope is correctly assessing the influence of Byzantium on Rome and the Papacy."*

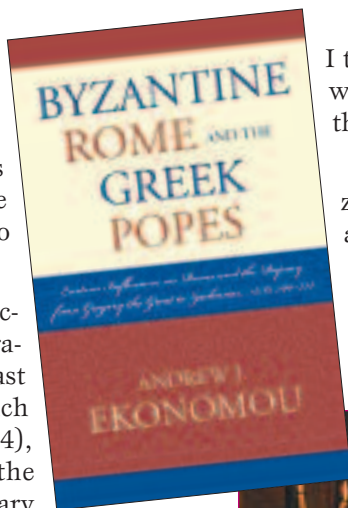
Although the subject is historical, Ekonomou said he worked to make the book readable.

"Good history is good literature, and it has to be written in that style.

I think for most people in the Orthodox community who have a basic idea of Byzantine history, it won't be that tough going."

*Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes* lists on Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble for about \$70, or is available through Lexington Books at a 15 percent discount.

Ekonomou, a visiting professor of Byzantine history and literature at Emory, is also a practicing attorney in Atlanta where he lives with his wife, Georgia, a violinist and music teacher.



During His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate Nov. 30, he kissed the gospel book held by His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. N. Manginas Photo.



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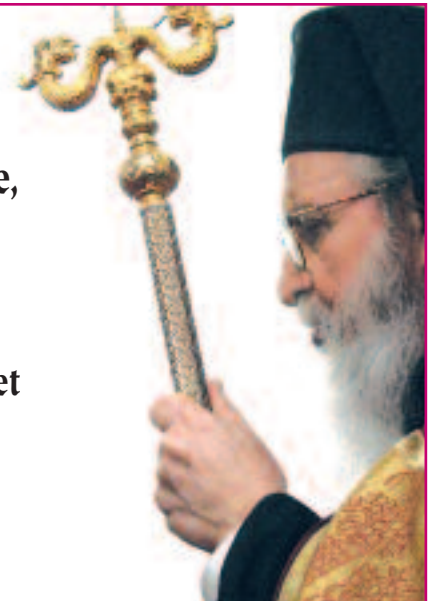
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## 2007 ATHENAGORAS HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

His Eminence  
Archbishop Demetrios of America,  
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will receive the  
2007 Athenagoras Human Rights Award,  
to be presented  
at the Order of St. Andrew's Grand Banquet  
at the New York Hilton  
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Save the Date!



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THE ARCHON is published quarterly by the Order of Saint Andrew Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Members are encouraged to submit material pertaining to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Orthodoxy. All material should be typed, signed with name, address and phone number. The editor reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication. Send to: [archons@goarch.org](mailto:archons@goarch.org) or to THE ARCHON, 8 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10021. © 2004