



THE ARCHON

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2014
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Advocates of Religious Freedom for The Ecumenical Patriarchate

“HAGIA SOPHIA SHOULD NOT BECOME A MOSQUE”

Archbishop of Canterbury opposes Turkish movement to erase the Greatest Symbol of Christian Heritage in the Islamic World



THE 2ND ARCHON INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

35 world-renowned speakers gather in Berlin to focus on religious equality rights affecting minorities in Turkey

“ Fundamental rights like religious freedom... do not come from the generosity of this or that state... religious freedom comes from none other than God, and we should defend it vigorously, everywhere, in every society.”

Mustafa Akyol

🇹🇷 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Author, Journalist and Political Commentator



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'For what we leave behind is not engraved in stone, but what is woven in the lives of others.'

—PERICLES

6 REMEMBERING NICHOLAS J. BOURAS

With great sadness, our National Vice Commander, fell asleep in the Lord on December 22, 2013. May his memory be eternal



DEPARTED ARCHONS: May their memory be eternal!

Nicholas J. Bouras
Archon Depoutatos
Summit, NJ

Departed on December 22, 2013

Vaseleos S. Colevas
Archon Depoutatos
Upper Marlboro, MD

Departed on July 1, 2013

Thomas Koliopoulos
Archon Depoutatos
Norwood, NJ

Departed on November 10, 2013

John N. Panas
Archon Depoutatos
Harrison, NY

Departed on November 20, 2013



9 BOĞAZIÇI UNIVERSITY HONORS HIS ALL-HOLINESS

His All-Holiness received an honorary doctorate for his extraordinary vision and initiatives for the protection of the natural environment.

9 ARCHBISHOP ANASTASIOS OF ALBANIA HONORED BY FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters

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21 new Archons are invested at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

Michael Parlamis
Archon Nomophylax
Teneffly, NJ

Departed on October 6, 2013

Thomas Zaferes
Archon Depoutatos
Cincinnati, OH

Departed on February 2, 2014

THE
ARCHON
NEWSLETTER

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    OrderStAndrew



60 MINUTES

becomes recipient of Athenagoras Human Rights Award

CBS President and CEO Jeff Fager accepts on behalf

New York—The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate awarded the prestigious Athenagoras Human Rights Award to the CBS News television program *60 Minutes* at the New York Hilton's Grand Ballroom on October 19, 2013.

Honorees included, Jeff Fager, CBS News President and *60 Minutes* Executive Producer; Bill Owens, Executive Editor; Bob Simon, Senior Correspondent; Harry A. Radcliffe, II, Producer; Michael Karzis, Co-Producer; Magalie Laguerre, Associate Producer and Christopher Albert and Wim DeVos, cameramen.

The Athenagoras Human Rights Award was presented to the *60 Minutes* team because of their perilous work to expose the Turkish government's negative treatment of minority religions, including that of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in their December 2009 segment titled *The Patriarch*. Had it not been for the CBS news program's work, Turkey's actions would continue on unknown to the rest of the world.

"I ask you, in Turkey, can Orthodox Christians or other religious minorities train their own clergy at their own schools? NO!

...In Turkey, do Christians, whether they are Roman Catholic, Protestant, Aramean or non-Christians including Jews.... or Alevi Muslims.... have a bona fide legal personality? NO," remarked an emotional, Anthony Limberakis, M.D., the Archon National Commander, who presented the award.

Dr. Limberakis went on to state that *60 Minutes* masterfully combined two of the quintessential elements of the First Amendment in the segment: Freedom of the Press and Freedom of Religion to shed light on a critical issue to the Orthodox faith, which many in the world had never previously acknowledged. Dr. Limberakis went on to note that the news program's positive work didn't stop there, "With the encouragement of His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, *60 Minutes* has gone on to air insightful programs about Mount Athos and the Exodus of Christians from the Holy Land."

His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America also presented the award and commented that "We congratulate this evening the CBS Television news program *60 Minutes* for providing to His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the valuable opportunity to voice his pain over the religious suppression and viola-



Jeff Fager, CBS' President and CEO, accepts the Athenagoras Human Rights Award, above, on behalf of the television program, *60 Minutes*, for its coverage on the Ecumenical Patriarchate focusing the world's attention on religious freedom and human rights offenders. Mr. Fager was joined later, top, by the entire news team.

tion of religious freedom endured by the Patriarchate. I pray that they will continue to work in the public interest as they heighten the awareness and understanding of important issues of our time and partner with the public in the community of which they are a vital part."

CBS News President Jeff Fager graciously accepted the award for their humanitarian efforts remarking, "We have a very strong culture at *60 Minutes* and it really involves covering what's important in some cases covering what is important involving human rights and religious freedoms." He added, "We try to give voice to people who don't have it otherwise and we like to cover

ANNUAL ARCHON WEEKEND



things that some people would rather not be told."

60 Minutes has been one of the most rewarded news programs in television history. This groundbreaking 46-year old institution has won more Emmy Awards than any other primetime broadcast in the history of television, including a special Lifetime Achievement Emmy. It has also won every major broadcast journalism award over its tenure, including 20 Peabody and 14 duPont-Columbia University awards for excellence in television broadcasting.

60 Minutes joins past recipients of the Athenagoras Human Rights Award, including President Jimmy Carter, President George H.W. Bush, Mother Teresa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Elie Wiesel and Mikhail Gorbachev.

Dr. Stephen J. Yallourakis honored

The previous evening, through the hands of Archbishop Demetrios, the Order honored Archon Stephen J. Yallourakis, M.D., D.D.S., with the Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship.

Dr. Limberakis, stated, "Archon Dr. Yallourakis' contribution in many capacities as an Archon of the Great Church of Christ is exemplary. His leadership donation towards the rebuilding of Transfiguration of

Christ Our Savior Monastery on Halki which was destroyed by rioting workers of the Turkish Forestry Ministry; his personal commitment, along with his beloved wife Doctor Anna in the development, funding and distribution of 160,000 copies of the Zine Magazine *First Among Equals* to educate our faithful throughout America regarding the canonical, historical and ecclesiastical significance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and his many pilgrimages to the Mother Church in Constantinople render him a most worthy recipient of this prestigious Award. Axios! Axios! Axios!"

The Nicholas J. Bouras Award is presented annually to an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary and incomparable stewardship to the Order, enabling Archons to vigorously pursue securing religious freedom for the Mother Church of Constantinople. The Award is named after the National Vice Commander Nicholas J. Bouras, of blessed memory, who himself



had demonstrated remarkable leadership as a faithful son of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Archon George D. Behrakis was the recipient of the inaugural Bouras Award in 2011 while Archons John Halecky, Jr. and James C. Fountas became dual-recipients the following year.

The Investiture of New Archons

The annual Archon Weekend concluded on Sunday morning, October 20, with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Archbishop Demetrios presided at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New York City with Metropolitans Methodios of Boston, Alexios of Atlanta, Savas of Pittsburgh and Bishop Sevastianos of Zela concelebrating. Following the Divine Liturgy the ceremony of investiture of the new Archons took place. ■

Top: Archon John C. Metaxas, Master of Ceremonies, Michael Grant, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston, Stephanie Katherine Grant, Dr. Anna Yallourakis, Archbishop Demetrios, Archon Dr. Stephen J. Yallourakis, Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta, and Dr. Limberakis. His Eminence, above, presents the Nicholas J. Bouras Award to Archon Yallourakis, who accepts along with his wife, Dr. Anna, and children Michael and Stephanie Katherine.

THE
ARCHON
 CLASS of 2013



AXIOS! AXIOS! AXIOS! They are worthy!

Michael Angeliades, Skevophylax
 Archangel Michael, Port Washington, NY

Arthur Constantine Anton, Jr., Kastrinsios
 Holy Trinity, Weston, MA

Robert Morris Buchanan, Jr., Hartoularios
 Holy Trinity and St. John the Theologian,
 Jackson, MS and Archangel Michael, Pensacola, FL

Nicholas Euthimios Chemicles, Esq., Nomophylax
 St. Luke, Broomall, PA

John Nicholas Colis, Notarios
 Sts. Peter and Paul, Glenview, IL

James Coromilas, M.D., Aktouarios
 St. Nicholas, Wyckoff, NJ

George Chris Demos, Esq., Dikaiophylax
 Assumption, Long Beach, CA
 and St. Sophia Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA

Phillip Themistocles Frangos, Esq., Referendarios
 Holy Trinity, Lansing, MI

John Halecky, III, Notarios
 St. Nicholas, Elizabeth, NJ

Stavros Haviaras, Depoutatos
 Kimisis, Brooklyn, NY

John Kalucis, M.D., Aktouarios
 St. Paul, North Royalton, OH

Louis Koumoutsos, Kastrinsios
 St. George, Ocean Township, NJ

Frank Lagouros, Ekdikos
 All Saints, Peoria, IL

Nicholas Louis Lekas, Proto Notarios
 Annunciation, Akron, OH

Elias John Livaditis, Hartophylax
 Annunciation Cathedral, Atlanta, GA

John G. Manos, Eftaxias *
 St. Demetrios, Chicago, IL

John Metaxas, Esq., Nomophylax
 Holy Trinity, New Rochelle, NY

Steven Constantine Padis, Exarchos
 Ascension Cathedral, Oakland, CA

Constantinos Perdikakis, Ostiarios
 Annunciation, Cranston, RI

George Stefanidakis, Ph.D., Aktouarios
 Annunciation Cathedral, Houston, TX

George Venizelos, Referendarios
 St. Andrew, Randolph, NJ



Right, top: Archbishop Demetrios invests George Venizelos. Middle: Metropolitan Evangelos invests Louis Koumoutsos. Bottom: Metropolitan Savas invests John Halecky, III.

* Invested by His All-Holiness at the Phanar, March 2013

IN MEMORIAM

NICHOLAS J. BOURAS

ARCHON DEPOUTATOS
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER

1920 – 2013

Eternal be his memory.



On October 21, 2006, Archon Bouras was honored with the Athenagoras Human Rights Award.

Indeed, it was Archon Nicholas' generosity -- unfeigned and pure -- that brought to him and to you a noble presence, a presence that guided not only his beloved parish of the Holy Trinity, but also the Order of Saint Andrew and the whole Archdiocese with sage wisdom, unimpeachable understanding, and a living faith. These spiritual gifts (cf. I Corinthians 12) were part and parcel of his daily life, which he lived responsibly, fully, and righteously.

It has been less than a decade since the Order of Saint Andrew bestowed on its most noble and distinguished son the Human Rights Award named for our ever-memorable predecessor on the Throne of Saint Chrysostom, the late Patriarch Athenagoras. As so many of you know, Archon Nicholas was truly reluctant to accept this high honor. His was both a natural and grace-filled humility that always sought the advancement of the cause, not the praise of any individual. He assiduously avoided the light of acclaim and admiration; rather he sought to shine the light of love, truth, and justice to illuminate the world around him.

His successes in life are far too numerous to recount with a mere listing. His undying love for his beloved wife, Anna, his heroism in the Second World War, his genius at industry, his generosity and sensitivity with his co-workers, his steadfastness and faithfulness in all Church affairs, and

"IF A MAN BE ENDOWED WITH A GENEROUS MIND,
THIS IS THE BEST KIND OF NOBILITY."

– PLATO –

Patriarchal Message

From our Patriarchal and Primatial Throne, we have learned most grievously of the passing into eternal habitations of the ever-blessed servant of God, Nicholas J. Bouras, Archon Depoutatos of our Great Church of Christ.

We address the plenitude of the Church: the Mother Church throughout the oikoumene, our beloved brother His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey, the Most Reverend Metropolitans and Bishops, the clergy and faithful of the Holy Trinity Parish in Westfield, New Jersey that Archon Nicholas served for so many decades with faithful and constant

stewardship, the Order of Saint Andrew that he served as Vice-Commander, and indeed his beloved relations and countless friends.

The falling asleep in the Lord of Archon Nicholas is a heavy loss for the Holy Archdiocese of America, but for the Ecumenical Patriarchate worldwide. His advanced years yield no lasting comfort in the face of the loss of his extraordinary life that was lived so well and so long. A mighty pillar has been withdrawn -- not fallen, for we are all called to pass beyond this world. But he was an unshakeable pillar upon whom all of you have leaned for generations to provide wise counsel, stability, constancy, and a generosity rarely found in the world today.

Archbishop Demetrios of America announced with great sadness the falling asleep of a truly exceptional member of our Church, Archon Nicholas J. Bouras, on December 22, 2013. Archon Bouras was a member of the Executive Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, National Vice Commander of the Order of St. Andrew, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, member of the Board of Trustees of the Leadership 100 Endowment Fund, founder of FAITH: An Endowment for Orthodoxy and Hellenism, founder of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Westfield, NJ, major contributor for the building of the new Church of St. Anna in Flemington, NJ, and a generous and committed member of nu-

merous committees and boards within the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America's institutions and organizations.

Archon Bouras was also a World War II hero, a prominent industrialist and an astonishingly generous philanthropist. As owner and president of Bouras Industries from which he retired a few years ago, he donated profusely to assist in the construction of numerous parish churches within our Holy Archdiocese.

In addition to being an ardent and practical supporter of our Ecumenical Patriarchate and of our Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, he was instrumental, through his anonymous



Archons escort the flagged draped coffin of Nicholas J. Bouras at Holy Trinity Church in Westfield, NJ to his final resting place.

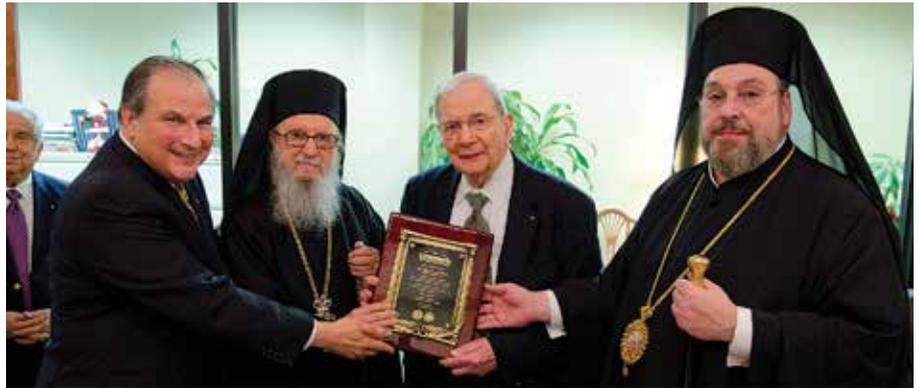
and huge donations, in supporting the diversified ministries of our Church in America. He left us with a most precious legacy of true faith and genuine love.

On December 9, 2010, Archon Bouras was honored by the Order, right, on the occasion of his nameday and 90th birthday.

as we know here at the Phanar, his utter and complete devotion to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In all his endeavors, the strength of the steel which endowed him and allowed him to be so wonderfully generous to others was manifest in his strength of character.

Of special love and interest for him in the past few years was the Church of his heavenly namesake, which was destroyed on the fateful day of September 11, 2001. He was the first to contribute in a truly magnanimous way to the rebuilding of Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church at Ground Zero. We pray and expect that a fitting tribute to Archon Nicholas be suitably readied in the new church structure. Such a merciful and giving presence can never be forgotten!

For Archon Nicholas was not unlike his heavenly patron, the Wonderworker of Myra who hailed from the regions of our Ecumenical Patriarchate. The generous and noble mind of Saint Nicholas of Myra was somehow mystically imbued into Archon Nicholas J. Bouras. It was as if the spirit that flowed from these ancient lands of our Ecumenical Throne transcended time and space to find a new home in the heart of Archon Nicholas. And in his noble heart the spirit of Saint Nicholas, that "Canon of faith and Exemplar of humbleness" found a space large to dwell, for Archon Nicholas conducted his life in the way of righteousness, and the Lord made his heart spacious (cf. Psalm 118:32).



"THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

– HABAKKUK 2:4, ROMANS 1:17 –

Indeed, dear and beloved children in the Lord: Archon Nicholas lived as a one who knew the secret to a happy and fulfilling life. He was righteous in his ways, generous in his heart, faithful in his soul, and noble in his spirit. His passing from us and from this world to the fullness of God and the world to come is a most worthy passage, and his attainment of rest the sure and certain outcome of his life.

As he is rightly and most befittingly mourned as one so dearly loved and esteemed, let us also celebrate the his noble accomplishments -- the chief of which was his generous mind. His achievements will last well beyond our memory and the girders and structures created by his inventiveness and industry. Indeed, as the Spirit bears witness: 'His accomplishments shall ac-

company him to his rest,' (cf. Revelation 14:13).

May the memory of Nicholas J. Bouras, Archon Depoutatos of the Holy Mother and Great Church of Christ be eternal. Amen. So be it!

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Christmas 2013

Your fervent supplicant before God,

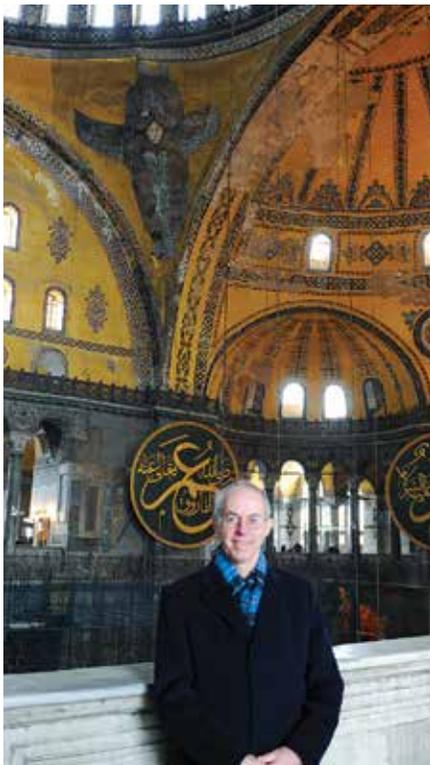
✠ Bartholomew
Archbishop of Constantinople-New
Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch



THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY:

"Hagia Sophia Should Not Become A Mosque"

Photos and Story by Nikolaos Manginas



Istanbul—The official visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of His Grace Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, leader of the worldwide Anglican Church, occurred from January 13-14, 2014. During the visit the Archbishop expressed his opposition to the possibility that the Church of Hagia Sophia of Constantinople be transformed into a mosque.

In response to our question concerning the idea in certain circles to use Hagia Sophia again as a mosque, His Grace said clearly: "It should not become a mosque." Upon completing a visit to Hagia Sophia, the symbol of Christianity for centuries, on the 14th of January, he added: "That would be another loss, in which a great

symbol of civilization throughout the world was transformed into a particular symbol of exclusivism."

Inquiring about his impressions of Hagia Sophia after his visit, the Archbishop responded: "My main impression is of the extraordinary history of the place, a sense of sadness that it is such an example of loss -- of a great building that feels in need of more love and affection. I was overwhelmed by the beauty of the building and the importance that it is kept available for everyone and not becomes the property of one particular group. Its beauty is overwhelming. It is a place that needs explanation so that it is understood when people come in, of what it stood for and stands for." ■

Archbishop Welby visits Hagia Sophia museum, left, the symbol of Christianity for centuries. His Grace was also welcomed to Halki Theological Seminary, above, by His Eminence Metropolitan Elpidophoros of Bursa and His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of Derkon.

PHOTO BRIEFS



Archbishop Anastasios of Albania honored by Fordham University

Bronx – His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Fordham University on January 29. Archon Professor George E. Demacopoulos and Archon Professor Aristotle Papanikolaou, Directors and Co-Founders of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center bestowed the Award upon His Beatitude, along with His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, Joseph M. McShane, President and Nora Ahern Grose, Secretary of the Board of Trustees.



Tampa Bay Archons host Conference

Tampa Bay – On Nov. 14, the Archons of North Florida, under the leadership of Regional Commander Theodore P. Vlahos MD, held a Conference on Religious Freedom, attended by over 350 people, entitled, “The Persecution of Christians Today in the Lands of the Bible.”



The Feast of Saint Andrew

Miami – On Nov. 29, local clergy gathered at St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church to celebrate vesper services for the feast day of Saint Andrew. In attendance was Archon John C. Scurtis, Regional Commander of South Florida along with Dr. Andreas Tzakis, Basil Yanakakis and Theodore Kays.



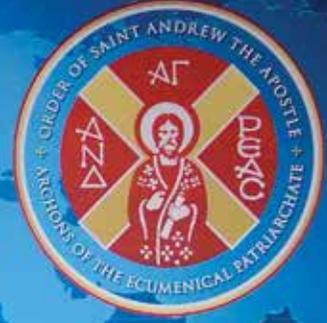
Congressional Briefing held for House of Rep. members on efforts to reopen Halki

Washington, D.C. – With the initiative of Archom Congressman Gus Biliakis (R-FL), a Congressional briefing on the suffering religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the continued 42-year closure of the Halki Seminary was held on Nov. 20 at Capitol Hill. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America was one of the three presenters, which also included National Commander Dr. Limberakis and Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou.



His All-Holiness receives academic honor from Boğaziçi University

Istanbul – On December 19, His All-Holiness received an honorary doctorate from Istanbul's Boğaziçi University for his extraordinary vision and initiatives for the protection of the natural environment. Not only is this Turkish institution of higher learning the first ever to be ranked among the top 200 universities in the world, but this is the first Turkish university to bestow such an honor on His All-Holiness, and the first also publicly to acknowledge his status and position as Ecumenical Patriarch, a title which has been used since the 6th century A.D.



THE ARCHON
2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
DECEMBER 4-5, 2013 • BERLIN, GERMANY

Defenders of the Faith



International Conference calls on Turkey to address Religious Freedom and Human Rights Issues

Visit CONFERENCE.ARCHONS.ORG for all presentations, photos and videos!

The Status of Equality, Pluralism and State Neutrality in Turkey

Dr. Steven Ealy, right, Senior Fellow, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, Indiana moderates the panel discussion. Panelists included, left to right, Fatma Benli, Lawyer and Human Rights Activist, Turkey's Representative to the International Jurists Union; Dr. Aykan Erdemir, Member of the Turkish Parliament representing Bursa, Member of Turkey – EU – Joint Parliamentary Committee, and Dr. Tugba Tanyeri-Erdemir, Deputy Director of the Center for Science and Society, Member of American Research Institute, Ankara, Turkey.

Berlin—The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in cooperation with the Patriarchal Liaison Office to the European Union and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Germany, hosted its 2nd Archon International Conference on Religious Freedom December 4-5, 2013 at the historic Adlon Hotel in Berlin, Germany. Taking place in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate, the theme of the Conference was, "Tearing Down Walls: Achieving Religious Equality in Turkey."

The Conference focused on religious freedom issues affecting minorities in Turkey stressing the concepts of equality, state neutrality and pluralism as they relate to religious freedom and the status of religious freedom under Turkey's current and proposed new constitutions.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, as well as Hillary Clinton, former U.S. Secretary of State, United States Senator and First Lady, both addressed the participants by video.

In addition, the Conference featured over 35 world-renowned speakers and panelists from the interfaith, diplomatic, journalistic, legal, and academic communities. From the civil sphere, there were politicians, diplomats, human rights lawyers and activists, scholars, journalists, and political commentators. From the religious sphere, there were members of religious minorities, including Alevi Muslims, Armenians, Catholics, Jews, Orthodox Christians, Protestants and Syriacs. All of these diverse participants came together to discuss freedom of faith issues in Turkey and to discuss the

day-to-day challenges religious minorities encounter in order to survive and how to overcome those challenges.

One of the most critical discussions at the Conference was on the forcible closure of the Halki Theological Seminary. The shuttered seminary has become the Berlin Wall of religious freedom, exemplifying the repression of religious minorities. This repression was exposed to the world by the CBS News program, 60 Minutes in their December 2009 segment titled The Patriarch in which His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew boldly stated that he felt "crucified in his own country." ■



“ Religious freedom has to be built on trust and confidence of communication, acceptance of the difference between us and appreciation of the common religious and social principles which we all share. We can learn from each other and our past in order to avoid further injury to the human spirit that lives in each of us.”

His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France

 PARIS, FRANCE

- Director, The Liaison Office of the Orthodox Church to the European Union

“ Halki knows very well how to tear down walls; it also knows how to build, how to construct. It knows how to destroy walls and how to build bridges. It will tear down the walls of suspicion and erect bridges of love and cooperation – and especially the bridge of Turkey's accession and full incorporation to the place where it belongs historically, geographically, and culturally: namely Europe and the European Union.

Such is the contribution of Halki to our world and to our country Turkey.”

His Eminence Metropolitan Elpidophoros of Bursa

 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Abbot of the Halki Holy Trinity Patriarchal and Stavropeghial Monastery



“ Comparing the mood of the second conference to the first, I observed this time that the Greek Orthodox have less hope and are more frustrated and fed up with the situation in Turkey. Who can blame them? The government has insisted on not taking even the most basic steps for the survival of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul.

The exclusion of the reopening of the Halki Theological School from the last democratization package was of course a cause for huge disappointment and pessimism within the Orthodox community.

Other problems of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, not just the Halki School, are not disappearing. All these problems have been around since the beginning of the Turkish Republic -- and even before it.”

Orhan Kemal Cengiz

 İZMIR, TURKEY

- Attorney, Human Rights Defender and Newspaper Columnist

... speaking on "Legal and Political Obstacles to Achieving Equality, Neutrality and Pluralism" at the Kafers Restaurant in the Bundestag, Germany's Parliament Building.



ARCHON CONFERENCE

Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

- Former Secretary of State, U.S. Senator and First Lady



Religious freedom is a fundamental human right. It is also bound up with other important human rights: the right of people to think what they want, say what they think, associate with others, assemble peacefully without the state looking over their shoulders, or prohibiting them from doing so. ... In particular, I want to salute His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. Through my years of friendship with His All

Holiness, I have admired his commitment to build bridges across religious and cultural divides in Turkey and around the world.

We've worked together to encourage positive steps, like continuing to push for the re-opening of the Halki Seminary and to encourage constructive dialogue."



Religious freedom is one of the most cherished freedoms in the world. The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, has a deep commitment and dedication to religious freedom that transcends their denomination. In fact, this conference in Berlin will have a lasting impact on religious freedom throughout the globe."

Jay Alan Sekulow, Ph.D.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

- Chief Counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice, Washington, D.C.
- Chief Counsel to the European Center for Law and Justice, Strasbourg, France



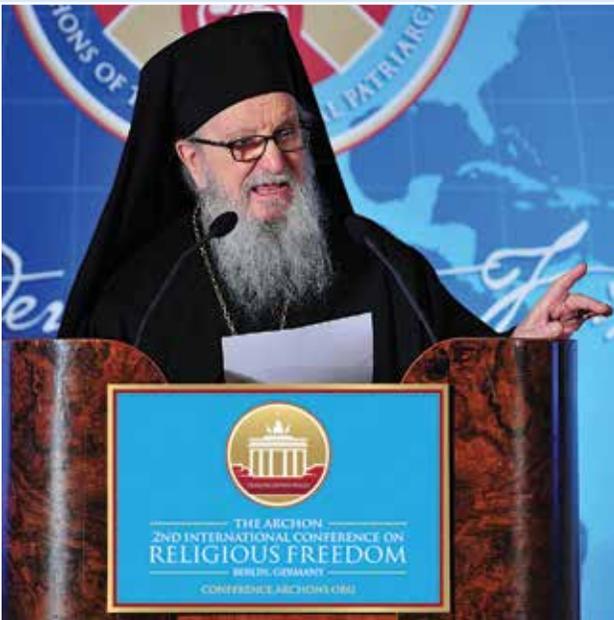
There is another reason why a conference that deals with Turkey must take place in Berlin. This is because there are thousands of citizens of Turkish origin living in this city, who contribute to the cultural diversity of the federal capital.

It is said that that about 6% of Berlin's population comes from Turkey and that the largest Turkish community outside of Turkey lives in Berlin. The presence of this large group of migrants is therefore not only a topic of research for sociologists and cultural scientists, but also a project for religious tolerance and diversity that has to be implemented day by day."

His Eminence Metropolitan Augustinos of Germany

BONN, GERMANY

- Metropolitan of Germany



“ To live in a nation and a society where there is religious oppression and limitation of religious freedom—whether as the oppressor or as the one oppressed—is to live behind a prison wall. It is to live spiritually in a condition of diminished light and joy of diminished human quality.”

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America

 NEW YORK, NEW YORK

- Archbishop of America
- Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

“ This Conference was held in Berlin because this is where hope triumphed over hatred and where peace overwhelmed enmity. We came to Berlin to manifest our determination to bring down every wall of religious intolerance and obstruction. We came to Berlin to advocate for the full liberty of conscience that every human being deserves. And in particular, we came to bear witness to and address the issues that are facing Turkey, as it seeks a wider role in the region and inclusion, not only in the European Union, but also in the wider family of leading Nations of the world.”

Anthony J. Limberakis, M.D.

 PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

- National Commander of the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Dr. H.C. Nikolaus Schneider

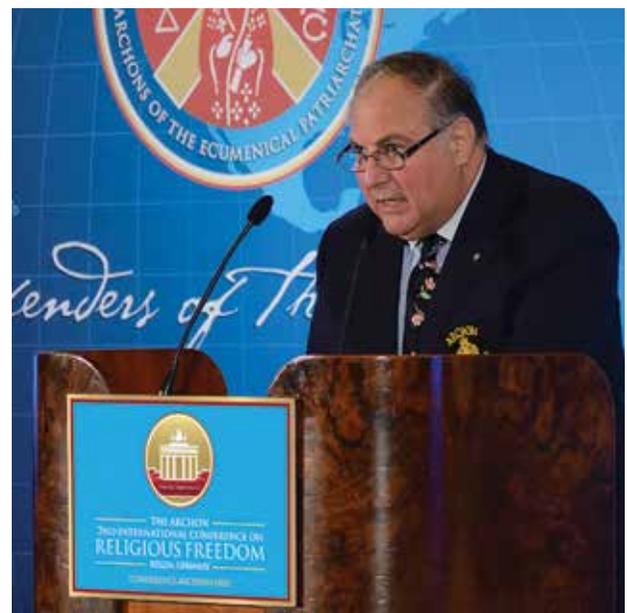
 HANOVER, GERMANY

- Chairman, Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany

“ The edict [of Milan] did not indeed only signal an end to the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. It was in fact the first European legal act that institutionalized the positive freedom for the practice of all religions, stating: "that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred ... freely and openly, without molestation."



Constantine, whom you venerate as a saint, saw his edict as a contribution toward "the peace of our times", as he put it. Or as we might say today: toward social peace. And the edict did not leave it at mere words, but provided the material basis for the practice of this religious freedom through the return of confiscated buildings."





P. Lakis Vingas

 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Council Member, General Directorate of Foundations
- Representative of Non Muslim Foundations

“ People [minority populations] became strangers in the lands where they once belonged, and new generations remain unaware of them. Processes from integration to assimilation were experienced. Because of abeyance or political attitudes, their languages degenerated, schools were closed, and their properties and institutions were confiscated (sequestered by state). With all these incidents, their endurance diminished and their principal identities became distorted.

The most resistant component to distortion and change, common to all these communities undergoing those processes, has always been the concept of religion.”



Ergun Özbudun, Ph.D.

 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Professor of Constitutional Law, Bilkent University
- Turkish Representative to the Venice Commission, Council of Europe

“ [T]he right to educate its clergy is a very essential component of the freedom of religion because without that possibility, the religious community is doomed to extinction without being able to educate and raise its clergy. This is a very clear breach of the [European] Convention, and also of the Turkish Constitution itself ... [which] recognizes and guarantees the freedom of religion.”

“ Tearing down the wall between Europe and Turkey will require setting aside not just hubris on both sides, but also conceit and fear. Tearing down walls is a metaphor for embracing hope and diversity. On both sides, that begins with respect.”



William J. Antholis, Ph.D.

 WASHINGTON, D.C.

- Managing Director, Brookings Institution

“ Non-Muslims are not a serious problem. Anyone who gets it as a very serious problem and hesitates to make some rehabilitations and to correct the situation has not a good mind, nor a knowledge in history and geography.”



İlber Ortaylı

 İSTANBUL, TURKEY

- Historian, Professor, and former director of the Topkapi Palace Museum



The State of Religious Equality – The View of Minority Communities

Emre Oktem, left, Associate Professor of International Law and Head of the International Law Department at the Faculty of Law, Galatasary University, Istanbul, Turkey, moderates the panel discussion. Panelists included, from left to right, Paris Asanakis, Representative of Orthodox Community, Lawyer, Athens, Greece; Rober Koptas, Representative of Armenian Community, Editor-In-Chief of Agos, an Armenian newspaper, Istanbul, Turkey; Dogan Bermek, Representative of Alevi Muslim Community, President, AVF Federation of Alevi Foundations, Istanbul, Turkey; Rinaldo Marmara, Representative of Catholic Community, Director, Caritas, Turkey; Johny Messo, Representative of Syriac Community, President of World Council of Arameans (Syriacs); and Pastor Ihsan Ozbek, Representative of Protestant Community, Ankara Kurtulus Church and Association of Protestant Churches.



Johny Messo

 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

- President, World Council of Arameans (Syriacs)

“ The Turkish state prefers religious partiality to religious equality. We disagree, but we can still live with that. However, when it continues to make it difficult for its citizens to freely express, manage and cultivate their own religion, we can never live with that. It is in Turkey’s best interest to change itself. As a native people, we must help Turkey to redefine itself in order to become a true democratic country.”

“ Why is it that Turkey is incapable of making this final step of granting religious freedoms to these people? There is really very little political cost. We have to look for the answers not so much in it’s relationship with minorites in Turkey, but relationships with itself—with it’s own majorities.”



Andrew Finkel

 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Journalist

“ The question is so important: what achieving neutrality, equality, and pluralism means in Turkey? My answer is: it means everything. Everything positive. Everything like bread, and water, and air, and the sun.”



Rober Koptaş

 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Editor-In-Chief, Agos

ARCHON CONFERENCE



Tearing Down Walls—Legal and Humanitarian Perspectives on Equality, State Neutrality and Pluralism

Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou, left, of Harvard University, moderated the panel discussion. Panelists included, from left to right, Cole Durham, Susan Young Gates, Professor of Law, Director, International Center for Law and Religious Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Doug Bandow, Senior Fellow, Cato Institute, Washington, D.C.; Yannis Ktistakis, Assistant Professor of Human Rights Law, Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey and Democritus University, Thrace, Greece and Legal Advisor to the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and Muna B. Ndulo, Professor of Law, Cornell Law School, Director of Cornell's Institute for African Development, Human Rights Advocate and Humanitarian, Ithaca, New York.

“ Religious freedom is a universal human right that is the bedrock of a healthy democracy. Turkey's political leadership needs to make a simple choice—either to ensure rights of religious freedom for all the country's citizens, or to enfeeble Turkish democracy by continuing to persecute religious minorities. The condition of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Greek Orthodox Christians in Turkey will be a bellwether of the country's standing as an upstanding member of the international community.”



George C. Rockas, Esq.,
Conference Planning Chairman.

“ The 2nd Archon International Religious Freedom Conference was an historic event that again brought together members of minority communities, human rights lawyers and advocates, diplomats, religious leaders, scholars, politicians and journalists. Each presentation was filmed and is available for viewing on the Archon website. I urge people to go to the website and view the extraordinary presentations. The highlights are many. They include compelling speeches by His Eminence Metropolitan Elpidophoros of Bursa entitled " Halki - The Berlin Wall of Religious Freedom" and by the leading constitutional scholar in Turkey, Professor Ergun Ozbudun, who spoke about the treatment of religion under the current Turkish constitution. The Professor stated that there is no impediment under the constitution to reopening Halki. This statement was the first time such a leading jurist has made such an admission about Halki and proves once and for all that the time to reopen Halki is now.”

George C. Rockas, Esq.

 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

- Conference Planning Chairman and Attorney

“ Ultimately, our struggle for religious freedom and our respect for the conscience of every human being are proof of the triumph of love over hatred, of unity over division, and of compassion over the numbing sensation of indifference that is rooted in contemporary materialism.

True freedom of conscience is based on the conviction that our relationship with "the other" is not separate from but integrally related to our relationship with ourselves.

Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou

 BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

- Harvard University, Center for European Studies
- Former Vice Chair, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom



Why Does Religious Freedom Matter – The Relationship Between That Freedom and Other Civil, Political and Economic Liberties

Dilek Kurban, right, of Stiftung Mercator-IPC Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, Germany and Former Director of the Democratization Program, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey, moderates the panel discussion. Panelists included, left to right, Willy Fautre, Chairman, Human Rights Without Frontiers International, Brussels, Belgium; Andrew Finkel, Writer and Broadcaster and Founding Member of P24 Association for Independent Journalism in Turkey; and Jordan Sekulow, Executive Director, American Center of Law and Justice, Washington, D.C.

“ The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate serve as a beacon of hope for international religious freedom. Dedicated to correcting the wrongs inflicted on religious minorities, this conference in Berlin represented a major step forward in bringing attention to religious freedom in Turkey. Building on the advances made in the past while focusing on the work that still needs to be done in achieving religious equality in Turkey, this conference was critically important and truly inspiring.”

Jordan Sekulow

 WASHINGTON, D.C.

- Executive Director, American Center of Law and Justice



Christopher Stratakis, Esq.,
Chairman, Legal Committee.



Fr. Emmanuel Sfiatkos, accepts a plaque on behalf of Metropolitan Augoustinos, at the farewell reception.



Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis,
Conference Planning Co-Chair.

PHOTO CREDIT: D. PANAGOS, J. MINDALA

After all, again in the words of Saint Paul...

"we are all members of one body."

–Romans 12.5

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

- Archbishop of Constantinople–New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

2013 HONOR ROLL

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EX - Exarch's Appeal
 AA - Athenagoras Human Rights Award
 RFC - Religious Freedom Conference
 † - Deceased

The Order of Saint Andrew's fundamental mission is to promote the religious freedom, wellbeing and advancement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate—the spiritual center of the world's 300 million Orthodox Christians. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is headquartered in Istanbul, Turkey.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM NEWS

Legal Entities of Non-Muslims: "Problems and Rights"

Istanbul— On behalf of the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, on January 30, 2014, the Honorable B. Theodore Bozonelis, Archon Ekdikos and Regional Commander of New Jersey, attended a conference in Istanbul, Turkey sponsored by Bilgi University Faculty of Law in partnership with Community (Minority) Foundations and the Council of European Human Rights (the Venice Commission). The topic of the conference was Legal Entities of Non-Muslims: "Problems and Rights".

Laki Vingas, as the duly elected representative of all Minority Foundations to the government of Turkey's General Directorate of Foundations, organized the conference which featured speakers and panelists from the Turkish government, the Venice Commission, academia and attorneys. In addition to the speakers and panelists, the conference had over 150 participants which included embassy and consulate diplomats from the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and many other countries, as well as European Union representatives, and Turkish officials, including the Deputy Minister to the European Union, the Turkish Ombudsman and the Vice President of the Diyanet (Office of Islamic Religious Affairs). In this regard, Judge Bozonelis, representing the Order, had the opportunity to interact with the speakers, panelists and participants on issues central to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The conference concluded by the speakers, panelists and participants offering potential solutions to resolve and enforce minority rights. One such solution discussed was to have the new proposed Turkish Constitution look to a restructuring of minority foundation laws and allow a legal status, even if limited in scope, to minority religious groups without the need of further court actions. Also, at the conclusion of the conference, Judge Bozonelis had the opportunity to offer the Order's assistance in a meeting with Yannik Ktistakis, legal counsel to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and Patriarchal Deacon Joachim Billis, a lawyer and Deputy Secretary to the Holy and Sacred Synod, on the progress of the return of confiscated properties to foundations loyal to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and on proposed efforts to transfer properties into the name of "Rum Patrikhanesi" (Patriarchate of the Roman Greeks) and/or the Ecumenical Patriarchate to test the creation of a legal status.

Full article and photos on archons.org »

ANNUAL ARCHON LENTEN RETREAT · MARCH 21–22, 2014



Orthodox Christians, Paradise Is In Front of Us, Are We There Yet?

Retreat Master

His Grace Bishop Gregory of Nyssa
of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

Session 1: To Dwell Together in Unity - Psalm 132

Session 2: Confronting and Controlling Our Thoughts

Session 3: Repentance and Confession

What:

The Annual Archon Lenten Retreat

Where:

The Ukrainian Cultural Center
135 Davidson Avenue
Somerset, NJ 08873

When:

March 21–22, 2014

Cost:

\$50 per person. Checks can be made out to 'Order of Saint Andrew'

Accommodations:

A special rate of \$79/night
(arrival March 21, ask for Archons)

The Holiday Inn of Somerset
195 Davidson Avenue
Somerset, NJ 08873

Call 732-356-1700 for reservations.

Contact:

For additional information, visit: archons.org

or contact:

Regional Commander Peter Skeadas
skeadas@optonline.net

