

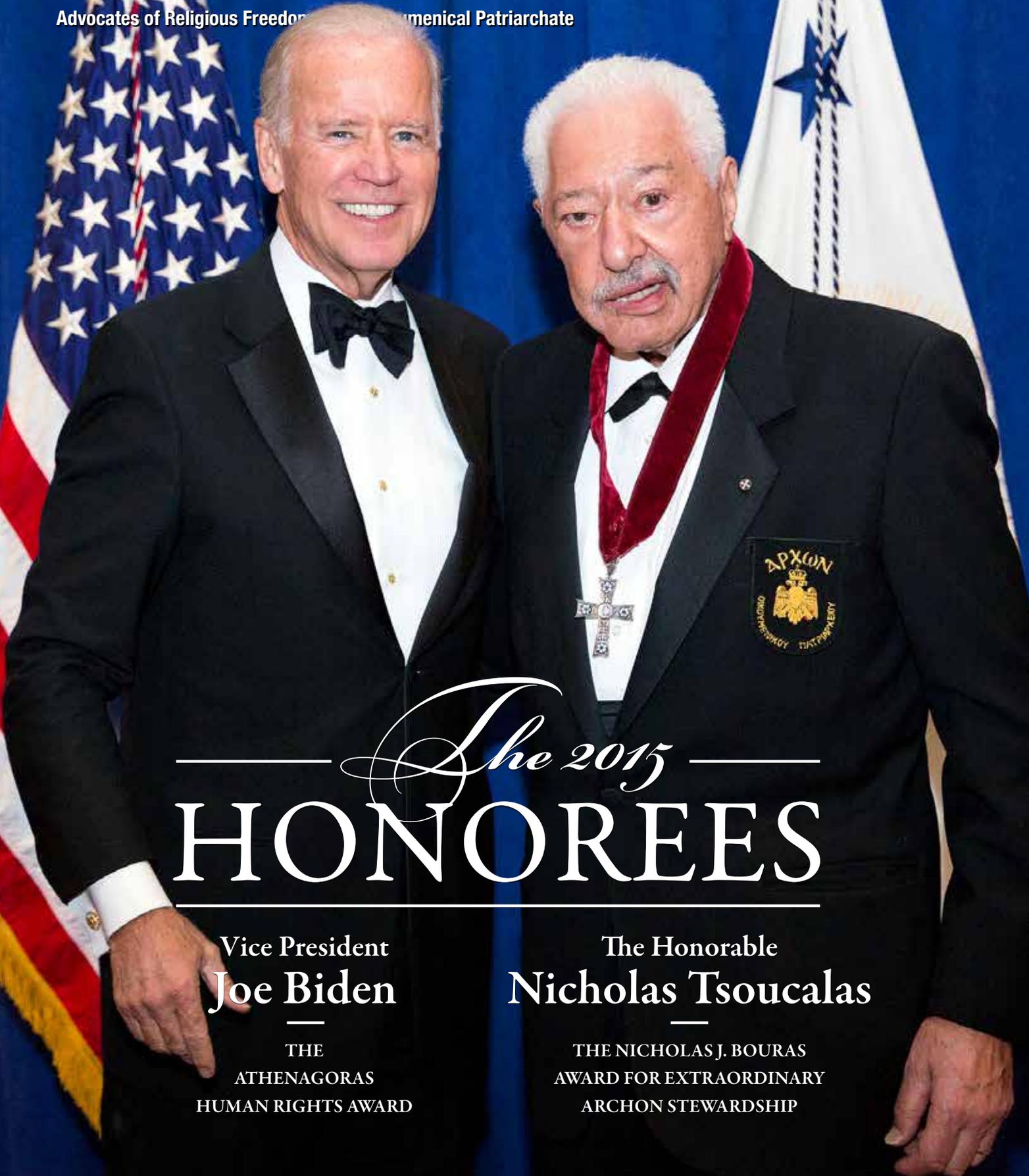


THE ARCHON

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2015
archons.org

Advocates of Religious Freedom Ecumenical Patriarchate



The 2015

HONOREES

Vice President
Joe Biden
—
THE
ATHENAGORAS
HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

The Honorable
Nicholas Tsoucalas
—
THE NICHOLAS J. BOURAS
AWARD FOR EXTRAORDINARY
ARCHON STEWARDSHIP

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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.

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Opposite page: Through the hands of His Eminence Geron Archbishop Demetrios of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and National Commander Anthony J. Limberakis, Vice President Joe Biden is presented with the 2015 Athenagoras Human Rights Award.



VICE PRESIDENT

Joe Biden

2015 Recipient of The Athenagoras Human Rights Award

“

This is maybe the greatest honor
I have ever received in my public life.

”

“

To all of you who have earned the title Archon, you've defended the Church, reminded us, remind me that it is ultimately our faith that sustains us, it's ultimately our faith, and that our religious values are entirely consistent with our civic values, our values as Americans.

”

Archbishop Demetrios of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate together with Archons' National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis presented the Athenagoras Human Rights Award to Vice President of the United States Joe Biden. The Award was presented during the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Award Banquet held at the New York Hilton, Oct. 17, 2015.

The Order of St. Andrew “is honored to honor you,” said National Commander Limberakis to the Vice President as he presented the award. Dr. Limberakis spoke of the history and the meaning of the Award, the personality and the ministry of the “spiritual giant” Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of blessed memory who toiled as a partner of

the United States in defense of freedom and liberty. He further presented the fight of the Order of St. Andrew in defense of human rights, religious freedom and the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

“The core of the spiritual mission of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,” he said, “is freedom, freedom in Christ to live at the utmost of our human potential.”

Dr. Limberakis praised Vice President Biden as “a constant friend and a voice of advocacy of the free exercise of the spiritual mission of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.”

“We thank you for all you have done and all you will do in the future for the Ecumenical Patriarchate,” he concluded.

A video message of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew followed in which the Ecumenical Patriarch paid tribute to the Vice President.

“This is maybe the greatest honor I have ever received in my public life,” said the Vice President in accepting the Award. Biden recounted the fulfilling and moving spiritual experience of his two visits to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, praised Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and said that he is the most blessed man he has ever met in his life, a saintly man. The Vice President said that throughout his career, the absolute commitment to freedom of religion as something we possess simply because we are children of God, has been a guiding principle. Speaking about the Ecumenical Patriarchate, he said that the Greek Orthodox Church must have the right to control its own destiny free of the influence of any government at all.

Archbishop Demetrios, in his response, congratulated



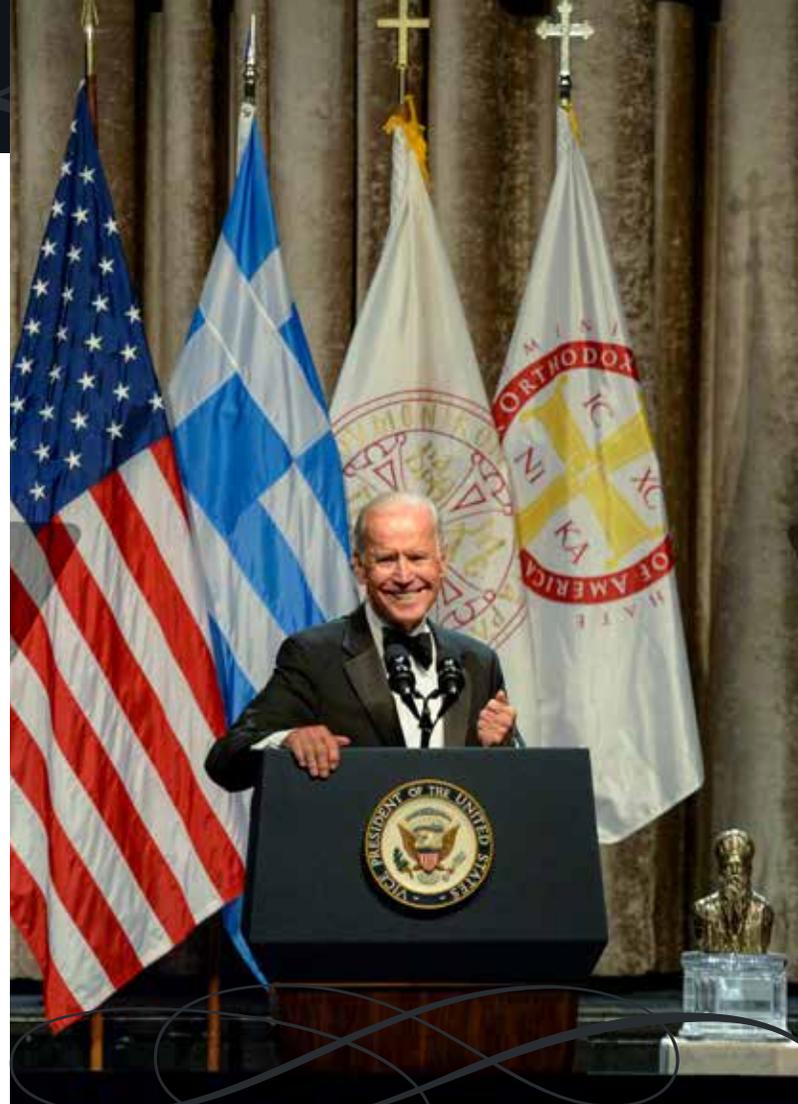
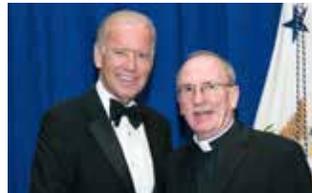
Archon Michael Psaros, introduces the dais.

and praised Vice President Biden as worthy “Axios” of the Athenagoras Human Rights Award.

“The Vice President is someone who fights for freedom

The Vice President with His Eminence Geron Archbishop Demetrios of America, National Commander Drs. Anthony and Maria Limberakis and their family





[Top to bottom] Admiral James G. Stavridis, Supreme Allied Commander Europe and 2011 Athenagoras Award recipient. Archon George S. Tsandikos, Chairman of Leadership 100. Archon Demetrios and Mary Limberakis with their daughter Helen Sampsonis, Archon Stephen and Valine Georgeson and Fordham University President Joseph M. McShane.

in the real sense,” said the Archbishop and explained “freedom has just one limit, my freedom is absolute up to the point it infringes upon the freedom of the person next to me; the next person is the limit of my freedom. If there is no such a limit, then freedom loses value and meaning and becomes an arbitrary thing causing lots of problems.”

His Eminence citing the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre who had written that “the other person is my enemy,” asked rhetorically why and answered: “Because he or she—the other person- limits my freedom.”

The Archbishop maintained that, “the other is not your enemy, but someone who

is enhancing your freedom, preventing this freedom from becoming something uncontrolled and arbitrary,” and added: “This Vice President exemplifies this kind of freedom, freedom but with respect to the other person, so there is mutuality in our freedom; and the Athenagoras Award has this principle as its basis.”

Archon Michael Psaros introduced the dais guests at the beginning of the program, the national anthems were sung by Eva Agathis. Vice Commander John Halecky, Jr. offered the welcoming remarks. Archon Mike Emanuel, Chief Congressional and Senior Political Correspondent of FOX News was the Master of Ceremonies. ■

“

Our work is not yet done. Protecting religious freedom, upholding universal human rights, it’s a work that’s never going to be finished. But we never tire in the defense of that which we hold sacred. And I’m delighted, delighted to celebrate tonight the values and commitments that we all share here among so many friends. I know that we see the same truth. I know that we’ll continue to work together to answer that great calling.

”

His Eminence Geron Archbishop Demetrios of America joined the Order of Saint Andrew in honoring Hon. Nicholas Tsoucalas by bestowing upon him the "Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship." The Award was presented during a special celebratory dinner dance held at the New York Hilton Hotel, which launched the Annual Archon Weekend on Friday, October 16, 2015.

Archon Nicholas' was joined by his daughter, Georgia, along with his family as he received the prestigious Award.

In April 1968, Nicholas was appointed a Judge of the Criminal Court of The City of

New York. He was appointed Acting Supreme Court Justice for Kings and Queens Counties between January 1975 and January 1982, after which he resumed service as Judge of the Criminal Court.

President Reagan nominated Judge Tsoucalas to the Court of International Trade, which nomination was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in June 1986. In addition to his judicial duties with this Court, Judge Tsoucalas has served as a visiting judge in U.S. district courts throughout the country and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second circuit. He became a Senior Judge on September 30, 1996.

Judge Tsoucalas was



PHOTOS BY: J. MINDALA

named an Archon with the offikion Hartoularios in March 1987. He is a member of the National Council and was appointed as a chairman of the Nominating Committee in 1998 and continues to serve this post proudly.

Judge Tsoucalas and his wife

Catherine have two daughters, Stephanie Turriago, a teacher in the New York public schools, and Georgia Argyrople, an attorney who has worked for the American Cancer Society. Judge Tsoucalas also has five grandchildren, Victoria, Nicholas, Catherine, Vivian and Christina. ■



Joined by his family, the Honorable Nicholas Tsoucalas delivers his acceptance speech after being presented with the Bouras Award.





On Sunday morning, Oct. 18, Archbishop Demetrios presided at the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New York City. Following the Divine Liturgy the ceremony of investiture of the new Archons took place by His Eminences Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey and Tarasios of Buenos Aires.



Dr. Nicholas James Bournias, Archon
Prostatis Ton Grammaton, Metropolis of Detroit

Paul Bregianos, Archon Depoutatos
Archdiocesan District

Anthony Xenophon Brigis, Archon
Hartoularios, Archdiocesan District

John Peter Calamos, Sr., Archon Eftaxias
Metropolis of Chicago

James Constantine Catrickes, Archon
Maestor, Metropolis of New Jersey

William Paul Doucas, Archon Notarios
Metropolis of Chicago

Poti George Doukas, Archon Hymnodo
Metropolis of Denver

George Dean Gigicos, Archon Hartophylax
Metropolis of Atlanta

Demitrios Vasilios Halakos, Archon
Skevophylax, Metropolis of New Jersey

Efstathios Karadonis, Archon
Hypommematografos, Metropolis of New Jersey

Theodore Demetrios Konopisos, Archon
Hieromnimon, Metropolis of San Francisco

Elias John Lambiris, Archon Nomophylax
Archdiocesan District

Nikitas Nicholas Manias, Archon Depoutatos
Metropolis of Atlanta

Theodore Maniatakos, Archon Dikaiophylax
Metropolis of San Francisco

Constantine Michael Rogdakis,
Archon Skevophylax, Archdiocesan District

Constantine Sideridis, Archon Proto Notarios
Metropolis of Boston

William Harry Spell, Archon Laosynaktis
Metropolis of Chicago

Michael Nikolaos Stefanoudakis,
Archon Orphanotrofos, Metropolis of Denver

Nicholas Emanuel Terezis, Archon Ekdikos
Metropolis of Pittsburgh

Adam Manuel Tzagournis, Archon Quaestor
Metropolis of Pittsburgh



Mr. Steve Plate, Deputy Chief of Capital Planning and Director, World Trade Center Construction Department at Port Authority of New York/New Jersey was the Keynote Speaker during the annual Agape Luncheon. He was honored by His Eminence, along with Drs. Anthony and Maria A. Limberakis, Father Alexander Karloutsos and Archon Jerry Dimitriou.



Archons APP

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis announces the "Archon App" which debuted during the annual Archon Weekend. The App will feature important announcements and news of the Order of Saint Andrew, along with up-to-date photo and video galleries. It is available for download on the App Store, Google Play and Windows Store.



PATRIARCHAL NEWS



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew receives Honorary Doctorate by the Sophia University Institute

His Holiness Pope Francis sent a message on Monday, October 27, 2015 on the occasion of the conferral of an honorary doctorate to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople. The Honorary Doctorate in the Culture of Unity was granted to the Ecumenical Patriarch by the Sophia University Institute "for

his service to the unity of the human family."

In his message, the Pope said, "I am pleased with this award which, besides being a rightful recognition of his commitment to the promotion of the culture of unity, contributes favourably to the common journey of our churches towards full and visible unity, to which

we tend with dedication and perseverance."

It is the first doctorate in the Culture of Unity awarded honoris causa by the Institute. The Sophia University Institute (IUS) is an academic center for education and research in which life and intellectual inquiry, different cultures and diverse disciplines, meet up in a context

permeated by a strong relational dimension. Sophia Institute is an expression of the Focolare Movement (Work of Mary), developed through the inspiration of its founder, Chiara Lubich, and an international advisory group of scholars from different disciplines.

Below, please find the full text of Pope Francis' message:



SOPHIA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

Honorary Doctorate in the Culture of Unity to Bartholomew I Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch

His Eminence Cardinal Giuseppe Betori
Archbishop of Florence
Grand Chancellor of the Sophia University Institute
Via San Vito, 28, Loppiano
50064 Figline Valdarno

On the occasion of the Conferral of the Honorary Doctorate in the Culture of Unity to His Holiness Bartholomew I, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, by the Sophia University Institute, I wish to assure you of my spiritual closeness and send my warmest greetings to all those present.

I send special greetings to my beloved brother Bartholomew, with whom I renew sentiments of profound and heartfelt appreciation. I am pleased with this award which, besides being a rightful recognition of his commitment to the promotion of the culture of unity, contributes favourably to the common journey of our churches towards full and visible unity, to which we tend with dedication and perseverance.

I wish that the Sophia University institute, following the charism of the Focolare Movement and remaining open to the action of the Spirit, may continue to be a place of encounter and dialogue between different cultures and religions.

With the assurance of my prayers and, asking you to pray for me, I impart my blessing to all those present.

Pope Francis



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visits Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury



At the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew paid a formal visit to Lambeth Palace from November 2-4, 2015. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who is based in Istanbul, Turkey, is Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome, and occupies the First Throne of the Orthodox Christian Church worldwide. The occasion was in response to Archbishop Justin's visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate last year.

The two leaders presided over ecumenical services filled with symbolic significance, participated in formal functions organized by the Nikaeen Club and the Greek Community, and shared private conversations. A service was held at Lambeth Chapel, where the Archbishop of Canterbury welcomed His All-Holiness and congratulated him on the twenty-fourth anniversary of his enthronement.

The two leaders prayed for those affected by conflict, persecution, climate change and



“Fellowship in Christ between our churches is so vital in our world”

Archbishop Justin Welby

the refugee crisis. In light of this, they agreed to undertake the joint organization of an international conference in Istanbul next year on overcoming modern slavery and human trafficking.

A choral evensong took place in Westminster Abbey, where the two leaders visited the Shrine of St. Edward the Confessor and blessed the congregation. During the service, the co-

chairmen of the International Commission for the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue presented the Archbishop and the Ecumenical Patriarch with a copy of the latest Agreed Statement, entitled *In The Image and Likeness of God: A Hope-Filled Anthropology*. The text celebrates what Anglicans and Orthodox affirm together about the human person, created in ‘the Image and Likeness

of God’ and will form the theological foundation for forthcoming discussions on the practical consequences of these theological presuppositions for addressing the key themes, including the protection of the environment, medical interventions, and questions around family life and ethics.

The programme also included two formal addresses by the Ecumenical Patriarch on the ethical concerns imposed by the ecological plight of the planet and on the current state of relations between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion.

The visit concluded with the recognition that the Common Statement of the two leaders at their first meeting at the Phanar in January 2014 continued to provide the necessary basis and vision for witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ today and with an invitation extended by His All-Holiness for a joint pilgrimage with the Archbishop of Canterbury to Nicaea and Cappadocia in 2016. ■



At the invitation of the Oxford Union, His All-Holiness delivered an address to the members and guests of the Oxford Union on November 4, 2015, at the University of Oxford. The Oxford Union is the world's oldest and most prestigious debating society, which has numbered among its renowned international speakers such dignitaries as Albert Einstein, Sir Winston Churchill, and Sen. Robert Kennedy.

CREATION CARE & ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

Reflections by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

Esteemed administrators, faculty and friends of the University, Dear students,

It is a unique pleasure and a great privilege to be invited to address this historic academic union. We express our wholehearted gratitude to our hosts and organizers of this exceptional opportunity in a city where over forty years ago, the official theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion was established.

INTRODUCTION

Many of you will no doubt be surprised that a religious leader concerned with “spiritual” or pastoral values has been involved with “secular” or political issues. After all, what does preserving the planet have to do with saving the soul? It is widely assumed that climate change and the exploitation of natural resources are matters concerning scientists, technocrats and legislators.

Yet, the preoccupation of the highest spiritual authority in the Orthodox Church, namely the Ecumenical Patriarchate, with the ecological crisis demonstrates that we cannot have two ways of looking at or responding to the world: religious on the one hand and worldly on the other. We cannot separate our concern for human dignity, human rights or social justice from concern for ecological protection, preservation and sustainability. These concerns are forged together, comprising an intertwining spiral that can either descend or ascend.

If we value each individual made in the image of God, and if we value every particle of God's creation, then we will care for each other and our world. In religious terms, the way we relate to nature and the biodiversity of creation directly reflects the way we relate to God and to our fellow human beings.

This is precisely why only a few months ago, together with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, we jointly signed an article that appeared in the International New York Times in response to a report by the Lancet Commission on Health and Climate Change. There, we affirmed together that:

We are now – like never before – in a position to choose charity over greed, and frugality over wastefulness in order to affirm our moral commitment to our neighbour and our respect toward the earth. Basic human rights – such as access to safe water, clean air and sufficient food – should be available to everyone without distinction or discrimination.

This is also why, next month, we shall travel to Paris, which will be the center of the world's attention and expectation, urging governmental leaders for long-overdue climate action at the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN OUR WORLD

Dear friends, the first point that we would like to emphasize to you this evening is that religion has a positive and profound role to play in our world. There is a vi-

tal sign of our times at the beginning of this new millennium, and that is what we might call “the return of God” – that is to say, the reevaluation of the function and responsibility of religion in the public square. Religion today comprises a central dimension of human life, both on the personal and the social levels. No longer can religion be relegated to a matter of individual preference or private practice.

Religion is becoming increasingly meaningful and momentous in appreciating the past, analyzing the present, and even assessing the future of our world. In our day, religion claims a public face and a social profile; and it is invited to participate in contemporary communal discourse.

Indeed, even as we prepared our address for you today on the role of religion in raising awareness and responding to questions about climate change – an area where we have focused a great deal of our humble ministry over the last twenty-four years – the world is overwhelmed by an unprecedented human crisis with the flight and plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Middle East, especially from Syria.

We are nowadays facing a worldwide economic crisis and its social consequences are evident on a global scale. Ultimately, we regard this crisis as a “crisis of solidarity.” Yet, our Church has historically sought to build bridges of interfaith dialogue, ecological awareness and the culture of solidarity between diverse faiths and cultures, as well as between humanity and

the natural environment. We are convinced that the future of humanity is related to the establishment of the culture of solidarity.

Solidarity is a term that contains the very essence of social ethos, embracing the pillars of freedom, generosity and justice. It includes the struggle for a just society and the respect for human dignity beyond any division or discrimination of social class, economic status or ethnic origin. We are convinced that the future of humanity is closely related to a culture of solidarity. In many ways, we can speak of a crisis of solidarity and a crisis in the natural environment.

THE CRISIS OF SOLIDARITY AND THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

The most serious contemporary threat against such a culture of solidarity is the prevailing economy – what we might call, the fundamentalism of market and profit. We are not qualified economists, but we are convinced that the purpose of economy should be for the service of humankind. It is not by coincidence that the terms economy and ecology share the same etymological root. They contain the Greek word *oikos* (household). *Oikonomia* (or “economy”) involves the care or management of our household; *oikologia* (or “ecology”) implies the study and appreciation of our home; and, by extension, *oikoumene* (or our “ecumenical” imperative as churches and faith communities) demands maintaining and sustaining our world as a place where we can all live in harmony and justice.

True faith does not release us from our responsibility to the world. On the contrary: it strengthens us to give a witness of reconciliation and peace. Thus, we reject any form of “economic reductionism,” the reduction of the human being merely to homo oeconomicus. In brief, we resist the transformation of society into a gigantic market, the subordination of the human person to the tyranny of consumerism, as well as the identification of “being” with “having” in society.

Wealthy, industrialized countries have unquestionably contributed most to atmospheric pollution. In our effort, then, to contain and reverse global warming, we must honestly ask ourselves: Will we in the West, in more affluent countries, sacrifice our self-indulgence and consumerism? Will we direct our focus away from what we want to what the rest of the world needs? Will we recognize and assume our responsibility to leave a lighter footprint on this planet for them and for the sake of future generations? We must choose to care; otherwise, we do not really care at all.

At stake is not just our respect for biodiversity, but our very survival. Scientists calculate that those most harmed by global warming in the future will be the most vulnerable and marginalized. We know, then, that the ecological crisis is directly related to the ethical challenge of eliminating poverty and advocating human rights. The dignity and rights of human beings are intimately and integrally related to the beauty and – we would dare to say – the rights of the earth itself. After all, who will dare to speak for the voiceless resources of our planet? Who will step up to protect the silent diversity of its species? Will our generation accept responsibility for pushing our environment over the tipping-point?

This underlines what we have been saying for almost three decades – namely, that global warming is a moral crisis and a moral challenge. It is a crisis about and within the human

heart. The solution of the ecological problem is not only a matter of science, technology and politics but also, and perhaps primarily, a matter of radical change of mind, of new values, of a new ethos.

For the Orthodox tradition, sin has a cosmic dimension and cosmological impact. The theolog-

we still continue to act against our knowledge. Knowledge has unfortunately not resulted in metanoia.

THE FUTURE IS OPEN; THE CHOICE IS OURS

Dear friends, the future is open; and the choice is ours,

choice is ours! We stand at a critical moment in the history and future of our planet, a time when our human community must choose about the future of our earth community. The protection of our planet’s vitality and diversity is a sacred task and a common vocation. At a summit organized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate three years ago, former NASA climate scientist Professor James Hansen observed: “Our parents honestly did not know that their actions could harm future generations. But we, our current generation, can only pretend that we did not know.”

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, then, you will now appreciate why a religious leader is concerned with the ecological crisis. We are convinced that we must make the strongest possible call for change and justice at the Climate Conference in Paris next December. This is our ethical and honorable obligation; this is our word of promise and hope to the entire world.

As we stand before you and look into your eyes, we draw a great deal of encouragement, inspiration and hope for a bright future. For your sacred task is undoubtedly to transmit to your colleagues a spirit of openness. It is you that will carry the responsibility for social values, for religion and culture, for freedom and justice, for the respect of otherness, for solidarity with humanity and with the whole of God’s creation. It is you that must educate our world about a vision of participation and a culture of sharing, of existence as coexistence and of life as communion.

It is not too late to act, but we cannot afford to wait; we certainly cannot afford not to act. We all agree on the necessity to protect our planet’s natural resources, which are neither limitless nor negotiable. We are all in this together. People of faith must practice what they preach; citizens of the world must clearly voice their opinion; and political leaders must act urgently and decisively. ■

“For the Orthodox tradition, sin has a cosmic dimension and cosmological impact. The theology of the Orthodox Church recognizes the natural creation as inseparable from the identity and destiny of humanity, inasmuch as every human action leaves a lasting imprint on the body of the earth.”

ogy of the Orthodox Church recognizes the natural creation as inseparable from the identity and destiny of humanity, inasmuch as every human action leaves a lasting imprint on the body of the earth. This means that human attitudes and behavior towards other people directly impact on and reflect human attitudes and behavior toward creation.

This is why we use the term metanoia, which signifies a shift of mind, a total change of heart, to determine the transformation of our attitudes and actions toward our world. This is very important because, during the last century, a century of immense scientific progress, we also experienced the biggest destruction of the natural environment. Science will inform us about the world; but it cannot reach the depth of our soul and mind. Today, we know; and yet

yours. On the one hand, our world is indeed in crisis. Yet, on the other hand, never before in history have human beings had the opportunity to bring so many positive changes to so many people and to the global community. There has never been so much turmoil on our planet; but equally so, there has never been greater opportunity for communication, cooperation and dialogue.

Interfaith dialogue, environmental awareness and the culture of solidarity are responsibilities that we owe not only to the present generation. Future generations are entitled to a world free from fanaticism and violence, unspoiled by pollution and natural devastation, a society that is a place of solidarity. This is the role and responsibility of religion.

As we already noted, the

ARCHON NEWS



Archbishop Demetrios of America Receives the High Title of "Geron"

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America announces with great joy and gratitude to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the elevation of the Holy Archdiocese of America to the rank of Gerontiki Eparchy (meaning an eparchy headed by a Geron/Elder hierarchy) of the Ecumenical Throne in the person of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, who from now on will be called His Eminence Geron Archbishop Demetrios of America.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in his letter to the Archbishop notes that the unanimous decision of the Synod was taken in recognition of the invaluable services to the Mother Church, the entire Orthodoxy and the Theological Literature.

A translation of the announcement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate follows:

The Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate met today, Thursday, November 26, 2015, under the presidency of His All-Holiness for its regularly scheduled meeting and examination of the agenda.

During the meeting, the Holy and Sacred Synod, following the proposal of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, elevated the Holy Archdiocese of America to the rank of Gerontiki (high-ranking) Eparchy of the Throne, in the person of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, who is to be called from now on His Eminence Geron Archbishop of America ■

Order of Saint Andrew to launch new Social Media Initiative



The Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are pleased to announce the launch of a new social media initiative to be funded by the generous contribution of Archon Michael G. Psaros. The initiative seeks to assist the Order in its mission of promoting religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and freedom of worship for all religious minorities in the Republic of Turkey in which the Ecumenical Patriarchate is located.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Order of Saint Andrew, in making the announcement said, "Thanks to the generosity of Archon Michael G. Psaros, we will be able to more effectively project our message of religious freedom to a potential worldwide audience of billions through social media that is becoming the dominant form

of communication, especially among our younger generations."

Archon Psaros said, "the spiritual message of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is timeless and it is my privilege to contribute to promoting this message of Peace through this new medium."

The contribution of \$100,000 dollars by Archon Psaros will fund the social media efforts of the Order for one year, including establishing a relationship with the digital communications firm, customediabooks®, which is based in Wayne, Pennsylvania. The CEO of customediabooks®, Manos Sifakis, said, "our experience is in creating transformative experiences for the digital citizens our clients seek to reach. In this case, the task is made easier by the universality of the message we have been given." ■



Archon Religious Freedom presentation held at Metropolis of Chicago Assembly

With the blessings of His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos, the Archons of the Metropolis of Chicago held an Archon Retreat, November 14-18, 2015 in Madison, WI, as part of the Metropolis' bi-annual Clergy/Laity Philoptochos Assembly.

The Archon Retreat, held at the Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club, began with an informal "meet and greet" fellowship dinner on Friday evening. The following day, Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos presented a multimedia presentation to Assembly at-

tendees elaborating on the Five Issues of Concern facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate to over 100 attendees.

Immediately following the Archon Retreat, a joint retreat was held with the Archons and Metropolis Philoptochos to further discuss religious freedom concerns. Due to its successful impact, the President of Philoptochos requested that Regional Commanders Pablecas and Manos also make the Religious Freedom presentation at the Philoptochos business meeting the following afternoon. ■

Archons Represented at Groundbreaking Social Media and Minorities Conference in Istanbul



Two Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate played a role in a groundbreaking conference in Istanbul, giving voice to the use of social media by religious minorities in Turkey.



The Nov. 13 conference — "Between Freedom of Expression and Hate Speech: Minorities and Social Media" — focused on research findings of the Social Media and Minorities Project. The Project is co-financed by the Republic of Turkey and the European Union and is the first such EU project ever implemented by minorities foundations.

Archon Laki Vingas of Istanbul spearheaded the conference, delivering one of the keynote addresses in his roles as Manager of the Social Media and Minorities Project and President of Istanbul's Yeniköy Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church and School Foundation. The Foundation co-hosted the conference with the Istanbul Bilgi University Human Rights Law Research Center on the University's campus. Vingas also serves as the representative of Non-Muslim Foundations, General Directorate of Foundations.

Archon John Metaxas of New York travelled to the conference to represent the Order. In his presentation, Archon Metaxas elaborated on the plight of the Ecumenical



Patriarchate, the role of an Archon and how social media should be used in a respectful dialogue and debate. Said Archon Metaxas, "We applaud efforts to give religious minorities a voice in Turkey."

More than one hundred professionals in social media, the news industry and members of academia attended the conference, which was part of the Civil Society Dialogue Programme. ■



Archon Nicolaos Georgiamentis Honored

On October 18, 2015 the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Chicago, IL celebrated their 90th anniversary with a gala fellowship evening. The evening's program included honoring Archon Nicolaos Georgiamentis for his dedicated service of 50 years as psalti of Assumption and 34 years as protopsalti of the Metropolis of Chicago. (Left to Right: Bill Vranas, Louis Malevitis, Nicolaos Georgiamentis, Harold Peponis and Theodore Sepsi). ■



Greek school to reopen on Turkey's western Gökçeada after 40 years

A school for Greek children on a Turkish island in the Aegean Sea will open its doors to students for the first time in 40 years next week, a local official said Tuesday.

The school on Gökçeada will welcome 10 students on Sept. 28, Ioakim Makis Kamburopoulos, vice chairman of the Imvrian Educational and Cultural Association, told reporters.

The high school was closed in the 1970s due to lack of students but now aims to cater for the children of the island's small Greek community.

A primary school was opened in 2013 and the renovation of the high school building was recently finished.

Gökçeada, formerly known as Imbros, was mostly populated by Greeks before the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s. ■



Regional Commanders Nikiforos Mathews and George Tsougarakis pictured with Samer Laham, middle, who was the evening speaker.

On Tuesday September 29th at the Museum of the City of New York, the former Director of the Department of Philanthropy of the Patriarchate of Antioch, Samer Laham, addressed a crowd of nearly 200 people re-

garding the devastating impact of the humanitarian crisis in Syria upon Orthodox Christians in the Middle East as well as Syrians of all faiths. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese

of America and His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America were in attendance and offered Archieratical responses to Mr. Laham's multimedia presenta-

tion. The lecture was sponsored by the Order of St. Andrew, the Order of Saint Ignatius of Antioch and the IOCC as the relief agency of the Assembly of Bishops. ■

U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom calls on Turkey to REOPEN HALKI SEMINARY

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) calls on the Turkish government to reopen the Greek Orthodox Theological School of Halki, which was closed 44 years ago this month when the government nationalized all private institutions of higher learning.

"Without the seminary, the Greek Orthodox community cannot educate in Turkey the next generation of clergy to lead their congregants in worship, observance, and practice," said USCIRF Chairman Robert P. George. "The failure to reopen the Halki seminary is a stark example of the Turkish government's failure to uphold its international obligations to protect and promote the freedom of religion or belief."

The Turkish constitution,

adopted in 1982, is based on the French model of *laïcité* (secularism). The constitution states that "there shall be no interference whatsoever by sacred religious feelings in state affairs and politics." Consequently, religious communities – neither the Sunni Muslim majority nor minority communities – have full legal status, and all communities are subject to state control. Furthermore, under Turkish secularism, religious communities have limited rights to own and maintain places of worship or other properties, train and appoint religious clergy, and offer religious education.

In recent years, the Turkish government has taken some



steps that have improved religious freedom conditions for religious communities. These reforms include: returning minority properties that were expropriated over decades, lifting the ban on Islamic headscarves in public and educational institutions, and revising public school religious textbooks. Turkey also is providing safe haven to more than two million Syrian refugees, many of whom are fleeing religious persecution and sectarian violence. However, the government over the past two years also has dramatically curtailed other human rights, including the freedoms of the press, expression, and assembly, with troubling implications

for the freedom of religion or belief in the country.

"Turkey has demonstrated by its response to the Syrian refugee crisis that it can be a world leader in protecting the victims of religious oppression and sectarian violence. President Erdoğan, Prime Minister Davutoğlu, and the newly elected Parliament should demonstrate that same leadership at home by prioritizing freedom of religion or belief and all other internationally protected human rights," said Chairman George. "Unconditionally reopening Halki seminary without delay would be one step in the right direction."

In its 2015 Annual Report, USCIRF placed Turkey in its Tier 2 category because of its restrictions on freedom of religion or belief. ■

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Dr. William Athens, Sr.
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During their May 2009 visit to Istanbul to document the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the late Harry Radcliffe, right, discusses strategy with Bob Simon, reporter of 60 Minutes, who also recently reposed this past year in a tragic car accident.

IN MEMORIAM: HARRY RADLIFFE, CBS 60 MINUTES PRODUCER

It is with a heavy heart that we report the passing of Harry Radcliffe II, CBS 60 Minutes Producer who worked closely with the Ecumenical Patriarchate to produce the groundbreaking interview of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, along with Bob Simon of blessed memory, Jeff Fager the former Chairman of CBS News and the current Executive Producer of 60 Minutes and Michael Karzis, 60 Minutes producer. The 60 Minutes Team received the 2013 Athenagoras Human Rights Award for their extraordinary work bringing worldwide attention to the religious freedom deficit asphyxiating the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as well as championing human rights and religious freedom in the Middle East with their 60 Minute episodes of the Exodus of Christians from the Holy Land and the Persecution of Coptic Orthodox Christians in Egypt. Their two-episode landmark presentation of Mount Athos was a brilliant portrayal of Orthodox monasticism and served to educate its worldwide audience of the spiritual treasures of the Holy Mountain. ■

osce Archons represented at 2015 OSCE Conference

Archons Constantine Caras and Dr. Stamatios Kartalopoulos represented the Order at the 2015 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Meeting in Warsaw, Poland. Archons Caras and Kartalopoulos had a private meeting with the State Department delegation of the United States and provided them with the most current information regarding the status of our Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey, the major issues of which we are all aware, the most recent developments and current documents of the Order. At the Discrimination Session of the OSCE, Archon Caras presented his paper

outlining the discrimination faced on a daily basis by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Archon Kartalopoulos presented his paper at the Freedom of Thought, Conscience, Religion and Belief Session. It is worth noting that the Turkish Ambassador to the OSCE replied to both Archons at the conclusion of their remarks by first making general denials that the alleged discrimination and denial of religious freedom exist in Turkey generally and in regard to the Ecumenical Patriarchate specifically. Of interest was his additional comment that "negotiations are ongoing" regarding the reopening of Halki and that the Patriarchate

is treated no better or worse than any other religious institution in Turkey. Archons Caras and Kartalopoulos also met with the Constantinopolitan Society representative who fully supported and reiterated the concerns of the Order in his own remarks. They also met with the diplomatic delegation from Greece and conveyed the Order's concerns for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The OSCE is the world's largest such organization whose 56 international members and 11 partner states address issues



Archons Constantine Caras and Dr. Stamatios Kartalopoulos.

relating to security and cooperation in all areas of society worldwide. Over 2,000 international delegates participated in the conference which took place in September, 2015. ■

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM NEWS

The National Herald
A WEEKLY GREEK-AMERICAN PUBLICATION

The National Herald, a weekly Greek-American publication, published this article in its December 5-11, 2015 issue.

The Orthodox Church Perseveres, Triumphs over Terror

by Theodore G. Karakostas

The most holy day of Orthodoxy is Holy Pascha and the victory of Jesus Christ over death through his most glorious resurrection. The Christian faith brings with it assurances of the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting for those who repent their sins and embrace faith in Christ. The Orthodox Church is the antithesis of false beliefs and all secular ideologies. It has triumphed throughout the course of history against all adversaries. The quote from Saint Paul comes to mind "O Death where is your Sting" (Corinthians 15:55).

There is unfortunately in some forums a tendency to disrespect the Ecumenical Patriarchate. There are those who argue that the Great Church of Constantinople has lost most of its flock. The fact remains that the Patriarchate bears witness to the power and victory of the Cross through its enduring presence in the City of Constantine despite the brutal history of the twentieth century and the genocide that saw the physical extermination of the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek Christian populations in Anatolia.

The Patriarchate has become a symbol for Orthodoxy by attracting the respect of the international community. Indeed, the Holy and Great Church of Christ receives Ambassadors and heads of State at the Phanar while His All Holiness

Bartholomew I is received by foreign heads of state and Western religious leaders on trips abroad. This is no small achievement considering how isolated and cut off the Church of Constantinople was from the world only decades ago.

In 2010, the patriarch served the Divine Liturgy in the historic Monastery of Panagia Soumela in Trebezond for the first time since the extermination of the Pontian Greeks in 1923. The liturgy, which is now served annually on the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos at the Monastery is a sign of renewal within the Great Church. Bartholomew has been joined at this annual liturgy by Bishops from Orthodox Churches in Greece, Albania, and Russia. In addition, the Russian Church has sent Bishops to join His All Holiness at Worship Services in the historic Churches of Cappadocia.

His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion Alfayev, Secretary of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow stated in June 2010 while participating in the liturgy at Cappadocia, "we were persecuted for our faith for seventy years of godless power in Russia. I cordially greet all whose predecessors lived in this land and those who have come here to honor their memory", and he urged Greeks to "give support to your Patriarch who comes here every year to cel-

ebate in the Churches of this holy land."

When he was in Constantinople in December, 2012, he declared, "Orthodox Christians have lived in this land for many centuries, in spite of all tragic events in history, and have firmly maintained Orthodox faith" and "we admire the courage of those Christians who have stayed here to keep their faith and pass it to their descendants." One must keep in mind the horrific martyrdom that the Church of Constantinople has undergone in the twentieth century from the slaughter at Smyrna in 1922 to the horrific pogroms in Constantinople in 1955.

If the Church lost most of its flock, it was because its Greek Orthodox faithful were martyred for their faith or forced to flee. As such, The Church bears witness and speaks for those who cannot speak for themselves. It is the Church that was served faithfully by Clerics such as the Saint Metropolitan Chrysostom of Smyrna, who refused to leave his flock behind in 1922 and was slaughtered in service to Jesus Christ, as were several other Bishops and priests. In 1955, the 90 year old priest Chrysanthos Mannas was doused with gasoline and set on fire during the anti-Greek Orthodox pogroms.

The international interest in the Patriarchate from Western

media and governments is a sign of increasing visibility for Orthodoxy in the West. The increasing visibility of the Patriarchate is a victory for Christianity in defiance of evil. Saint Constantine the Great who would go on to found the City of Constantinople received the message before going to battle in 312 AD and saw the Sun in the form of a Cross that declared, "With This Sign Conquer."

This is the task of the Church of Constantinople. The late Serbian Saint Justin Popovich wrote, "I bow in reverence before the age old achievements of the Great Church of Constantinople, and before her present cross, which is neither small nor easy, which according to the nature of things, is the cross of the entire Church, for as, the Apostle says, 'when one member suffers, the whole member suffers.'

"Moreover I acknowledge the canonical rank and first place in honor of Constantinople among the local Orthodox Churches, which are equal in honor and rights."

For the last two decades, Bartholomew has been targeted for assassination and the Patriarchate itself has been bombed. Despite this, the Patriarchate continues to demonstrate the power of Christian faith and resistance against terror. ■

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Fr. Stefanos was born in Zimbabwe, raised in South Africa and Greece, and received his higher education in the United States, earning a B.A. in Religious Studies from Hellenic College, a M.Div. from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, both in Brookline, MA., and a Ph.D. in Liturgical Studies from the University of Notre Dame. While at the University of Notre Dame he taught the course "The Spirituality of the Christian East: Experience, Form, and Expression" for which he received the Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Kaneb Award for Excellence in

Teaching. In 2003 Fr. Stefanos returned to Greece where he served as a parish priest and taught for the College Year in Athens Program, for the Greco-Roman Program of St. John's University/St. Benedict's College, Collegeville, MN, and for the Pastoral Institute of the Archdiocese of Athens, Church of Greece. In 2009 he was elected Assistant Professor of Liturgy at the Ecclesiastical Academy of Athens. In the Spring of 2012 he was invited to teach at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University as a visiting professor. His work has appeared in English, Greek, German and Russian. He is

the author of *The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite: A Comparative Analysis of Its Origins, Evolution, and Structural Units* in the series *Liturgia Condenda 21* (Peeters Publishers, 2009). He is a member of the North American Academy of Liturgy and the Society of Oriental Liturgy, which he served as Secretary between 2006-2012. Since 2009 is actively involved in the new Catalogue of Byzantine Manuscripts project out of the Protestant Theological University (Holland). He is an ordained Greek Orthodox priest, the son and grandson of priests, and since 2010 has been appointed full member of the

Special Synodical Committee on Liturgical Renewal of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece. Fr. Stefanos joined the Faculty of the School of the Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University of America in the Fall of 2013. His research focuses on aspects of Byzantine Liturgical History, Eastern Liturgical Traditions and Liturgical Renewal. His current projects include a book-length study on the history of the private "Office of Holy Communion" in the Byzantine rite and a study of the Christian inscriptions on the Parthenon as a source of liturgical information.