

Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Newsletter



Save the Date: October 16-19

Save the date for Thursday, October 16 – Sunday, October 19, 2025, as the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as well as the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation Trustees and FOUNDERS gather together in New York City for the Annual Archon Weekend focusing on religious freedom pursuits for the Mother Church of Constantinople.



Three New Regional Commanders Appointed For The Carolinas







With the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and in consultation with His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos of Atlanta, National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis has appointed Archons Frank Boardman, Dr. Terry Sarantou and Stephanos (Steve) G. Trakas as Regional Commanders for North and South Carolina.

Archons Spearhead Religious Freedom Proclamation In New Hampshire State Senate



31 New Hampshire State Senator Denise Ricciardi made a speech in the New Hampshire State Senate, urging the state body to adopt a Proclamation for Religious Freedom. Spearheading this all-important initiative was Archon Christos Chrisafides.



Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate:

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America

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Rev. Alexander Karloutsos

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Past Commanders

† Chris Philip, DDS (1989-1997), Megas Aktouarios

† Anthony G. B. Borden, MD (1976-1989), Megas Aktouarios

† Pierre A. Demets (1966–1975), Skevophylax

Editor & Graphic Designer:

John J. Mindala II, Notarios

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His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew receives the 2025

Templeton Prize

The World's
Most Interesting Prize

is All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has been named the Templeton Prize Laureate for 2025. On April 10, 2025, the John Templeton Foundation, in

collaboration with the Templeton
World Charity Foundation and

the Templeton Religion
Trust, announced
that the Ecumenical
Patriarch was this
year's recipient of the

Templeton Prize, which "honors individuals whose exemplary achievements advance Sir John Templeton's philanthropic vision: harnessing the power of the sciences to explore the deepest questions of the universe and humankind's place and purpose within it."

The Ecumenical Patriarch will receive this prestigious international award in New York City in September 2025.

The Templeton Prize announcement states that "His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is the spiritual leader of 300 million Eastern Orthodox Christians whose pioneering efforts to bridge scientific and spiritual understandings of humanity's relationship with the natural world have brought together people of different faiths to heed a call for stewardship of creation."

The announcement adds that "using the stature of his office—the highest spiritual authority within the Eastern Orthodox church," Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew "has convened

The CApostolic Visit



Previous recipients of the Templeton Prize have included:



Mother Teresa



Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama



Archbishop Desmond Tutu



Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



King Abdullah II of Jordan



Jane Goodall

groups of scientists, scholars, political leaders, and clerics from the Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim worlds. His 'ecumenical imperative' to care for creation recognizes that science plays a critical role in helping religious leaders accept their responsibility to be good stewards of the Earth. In 1997, he made history by declaring that acts harming the environment—such as pollution, deforestation, and climate change—are not just practical missteps but moral failings. This pastoral teaching introduced a new category of sin—'ecological sin'—which has since influenced both religious and secular discourse on environmental ethics."

The John Templeton Foundation also points out that "His All-Holiness is well known for groundbreaking engagements in environmental, interreligious, and peace-building efforts around the world. These include his Religion, Science and Environment Symposia held from the Amazon River to the Arctic Sea, his numerous Ecumenical and Interfaith initiatives within all the Abrahamic Traditions and beyond, and his forthright and courageous stand for the sovereignty, integrity and peace of Ukraine."

On receiving the Templeton Prize, His All-Holiness stated: "We gratefully and

humbly accept this unique recognition, which reflects the philanthropic vision of Sir John Templeton, the exceptional founder of a worldwide enterprise of investment in the human spirit and in the ability for the human person to perceive and harness the capacities of the Spirit. This honor is not only to our humble person, but to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Apostolic See of Saint Andrew the First-Called Disciple. For seventeen centuries, this Church of Saints and Martyrs, Confessors and Theologians, has led the spiritual mission of teaching and preaching the transformational Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the oikoumene. We accept this singular dignity in the name of this history of service to God and the human family."

The Templeton Prize organizers also released a video of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, in which he states: "I am a child of the island of Imbros. I grew up in this natural environment, beauty, green, flowers. Everything is well organized by the good God. And while we say that we respect and love God, we destroyed what he created. Destroying nature is a sin. In Greek, we use the word metanoia, change mentality, correct ourselves to save our common home. It is a sacred goal."



His All-Holiness is well known for groundbreaking engagements in environmental, interreligious, and peace-building efforts around the world. These include his Religion, Science and Environment Symposia held from the Amazon River to the Arctic Sea, his numerous Ecumenical and Interfaith initiatives within all the Abrahamic Traditions and beyond, and his forthright and courageous stand for the sovereignty, integrity and peace of Ukraine."

The John Templeton Foundation

ABOUT THE PRIZE

THE TEMPLETON PRIZE honors individuals whose exemplary achievements advance Sir John Templeton's philanthropic vision: harnessing the power of the sciences to explore the deepest questions of the universe and humankind's place and purpose within it.

55 PRIZES AWARDED

The Templeton Prize has been awarded 55 times. Its first reception was in 1973.

OVER THE LAST FIVE DECADES...

The award has gone to inspiring figures from around the world, including philosophers, theoretical physicists, Buddhist and Benedictine monks — and one canonized saint.



September 15-25, 2025 Schedule of Events

is Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the hierarchs of the Ecumenical Throne in America, the clergy, and the faithful Orthodox people of the United States will joyfully welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to the United States for an official visit in September 2025. The visit follows the announcement of the Templeton Foundation of the awarding of the internationally-recognized Templeton Prize to His All-Holiness for his "pioneering efforts to bridge scientific and spiritual understandings of humanity's relationship with the natural world, bringing together people of different faiths to heed a call for stewardship of creation."

SEP 15 | Official Arrival, Joint Base Andrews Military Facility, Washington, D.C.

SEP 15-17 | Meetings with the President of the United States Donald Trump, members of Congress and the Senate, and members of the Diplomatic Corps

SEP 17 | Patriarchal Doxology at Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church, Falls Church, Virginia

SEP 18 | Patriarchal Doxology at Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine

SEP 19 | Address the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)

SEP 19 | Audience with young adult leaders in New York and New Jersey at Saint Nicholas National Shrine

SEP 19 | Saint Nicholas National Shrine Beacon of Hope Dinner, at Casa Cipriani

SEP 20 | Environmental Tribute and World Clean Up Day, and reception in honor of His All-Holiness, hosted by Stony Brook University, at the Southampton Campus

SEP 20 | Synaxis of Hierarchs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the United States, Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, Southampton, New York

SEP 21 | Patriarchal Divine Liturgy at the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, Southampton, New York

SEP 22 | Reception in honor of His All-Holiness, hosted by Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation and the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

SEP 22 | Address the Concordia Annual Summit

SEP 23 | Audience and meeting with hierarchs, clergy, presvyteres, and monastics at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

SEP 23 | Visit to Fordham University and the Orthodox Christian Studies Center

SEP 24 | Patriarchal Doxology at St. George Greek Orthodox Church, New York City

SEP 24 | The Templeton Prize Dinner

SEP 25 | Farewell luncheon in honor of His All-Holiness and in gratitude to Rabbi Arthur Schneier, Founder and President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, hosted by Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and Archons John Calamos, John Koudounis and Yanni Sianis

SEP 25 | Departure



Patriarchal Visit to the UNITED KINGDOM



Ecumenical Patriarch Delivers Major Address On The First Ecumenical Council At International Conference



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was the keynote speaker on Saturday, June 21, 2025 at the Ecclesiastical Law Society's 2025 Conference, "Nicaea Received: 1700 years of Canons, Councils and Ecumenism."

This international conference, a landmark event for ecclesiastical lawyers, church historians, and ecumenists, was held in the historic Chichester Cathedral, which is celebrating its 950th anniversary as the Nicene Council marks its 1700th, and The Bishop's Palace in Chichester, England, from Friday, June 20 to Sunday, June 22, 2025.

His All-Holiness addressed the conference on the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and the council's key role in the formation of core elements of canon law.

At the conclusion of the address, His All-Holiness was awarded a Fellowship of the Ecclesiastical Law Society by the Ecclesiastical Law Society's President, the Rt Revd Christopher Hill, in Chichester Cathedral. This is the first Fellowship in the Society's history, and is an award reserved for those who have made "a contribution of great and lasting significance to the study and of ecclesiastical and canon law".



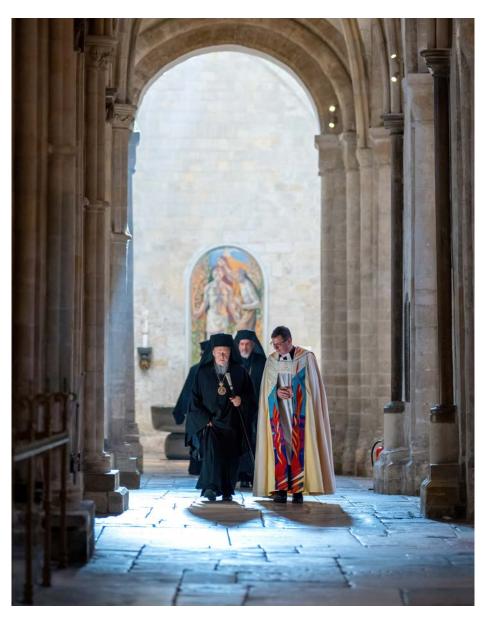
Ecumenical Patriarch delivers homily at the conclusion of Choral Evensong

The Ecumenical Patriarch also delivered a homily at the conclusion of Choral Evensong in the Chichester Cathedral, in which he stated: "We stand together in this evensong, from the East and from the West, to pause and reflect upon the 1700 years since this sacred cleros that established the faith of the apostles once and for all." In an address full of sacred joy and gratitude to God, His All-Holiness said: "We are filled with hope for the unity we seek."

Discussing the central importance of the Council of Nicaea for the Christian faithful of all faith traditions. the Ecumenical Patriarch spoke movingly about the necessity to reestablish Christian unity: "We stand on the cusp of the third millennium of the faith of Jesus Christ, and the course of His Holy Church, for all the sinfulness of her members, has never deviated from the path set forth at Nicaea. So then, let us ask to renew this faith of the apostles, and for it to be revealed to all of us as the foundation for the unity that evades us, the unity we seek, the unity that has always been available, if only we open our eyes to it."

His All-Holiness also pointed out that "Nicaea opens the door of experience of the most holy Trinity to every believer. To the wise and the foolish, to the intelligent and the unthinking, to those of the first hour as well as to those of the eleventh."

His All-Holiness is escorted, top, inside the Chichester Cathedral by Dean of Chichester, the Very Rev. Dr. Edward Dowler. Father Alexander Karloutsos, Archon Spiritual Advisor, left, attending Vespers. His All-Holiness delivers his homily, right.







The Consecration Of The Monastery Of Saint John The Baptist, Essex, In Maldon

In the presence of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the newly built Chapel dedicated to Saint Sophrony the Athonite, founder of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Essex, was consecrated in Maldon, England on Sunday, June 22, 2025. Presiding over this solemn and joyful event was His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain.

"This day of consecration," said Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, "is truly a day of joyous commemoration and historic celebration. It is a day that brings to completion and fruition a circle of aspiration and expectation."

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew also recounted his 2022 Patriarchal visit



National Commander Dr. Limberakis speaks to the Archons of Great Britain on the importance of becoming FOUNDERS or Builders of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation.

to Great Britain, during which he laid the foundation stone for the new church: "It was a privilege and pleasure, and really a blessing," he said, "for us to lay the foundation stone for this church in a momentous

and memorable service just three years ago in the context of our patriarchal visit on the occasion of the 100th anniversary since the establishment of our archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain."



Archons Honor Grand Ecclesiarch Aetios As He Successfully Defends His Doctoral Dissertation

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on Monday, June 23, 2025 hosted a luncheon in Cardiff, Wales, in honor of the Very Rev. Grand Ecclesiarch Aetios, Director of the Private Patriarchal Office, and devoted assistant to the Ecumenical Patriarch.

The occasion for the luncheon was the fact that Father Aetios received word, in the presence of His All-Holiness; His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel, Geron of Chalcedon: His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain; His Eminence Metropolitan lakovos of Mexico; hierarchs and clergy of the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain; and professors and Archons of the United Kingdom, that he had successfully defended his doctoral dissertation with the highest distinction "without any corrections" and was granted a Ph.D. in Canon Law from Cardiff University's School of Law & Politics. Archimandrite Aetios' doctoral thesis is entitled: "The Creation of a System of Orthodox Canon Law: The Case of the Pedalion (1800)."

Father Aetios is a brilliant assistant to the Ecumenical Patriarch having attained his academic degrees with distinction. He has an M.Div. degree in Canon Law from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary (Valedictorian, Summa Cum Laude); an LL.M. (Master of Laws) degree in Legal Theory from New York University School of Law (Fulbright Scholar); an M.Phil. in Public Law & Political Science with a major in Constitutional Law from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Law; and an LL.B. (Bachelor of Laws) degree, also from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Law (Class Rank 2/97).



Father Aetios is joined by His All-Holiness, Father Alexander Rental, Canon Law Professor of St. Vladimir's Seminary, and other professors of Cardiff University School of Law & Politics.



Father Aetios is joined by the National Commander and the National Vice Commander, along with his doctoral supervisor, the renowned Professor of Canon Law Norman Doe.



National Commander Limberakis congratulates Father Aetios during the luncheon.

Archons Host Farewell Dinner, 'The Culture of Giving,' in Honor of His All-Holiness

On June 24, the final evening of the Patriarchal Visit to the United Kingdom, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America hosted a farewell dinner in honor of His All-Holiness. The dinner took at place at the historic Cavalry and Guards Club in the heart of London, the Club of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pavlos.

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis thanked His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pavlos, Vice President of King's Trust International and eldest son of King Constantine and Queen Anne-Marie



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pavlos was the evening's host at the historic Cavalry and Guards Club in London.

of Greece, for welcoming His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the other guests.

Dr. Limberakis discussed the need for all Archons to "adopt a culture of giving." He explained that "the Archon Stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure should be



National Vice Commander Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis delivered an uplifting toast to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

the guiding principle for all global Archons in order to ensure that the Great Church of Christ has the resources to pursue its worldwide ministry."

Earlier, the Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis, National Vice Commander, offered an uplifting toast to His All-Holiness.



His All-Holiness was welcomed by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pavlos, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain, National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis and National Vice Commander Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis to the Cavalry and Guards Club for a farewell dinner. Also present are His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel Geron of Chalcedon and His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean Islands.

Patriarchal Visit to the United Kingdom



His All-Holiness in greeted by Dr. Limberakis at the Farewell Dinner.



Crown Prince Pavlos welcomes His All-Holiness.



His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain addresses the guests in attendance.



Andrea Catsimatidis, center, daughter of Archon John A. Catsimatidis, greeting the Orthodox faithful of Great Britain.



PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA



"The Archon Stewardship of Time,
Talent and Treasure should be
the guiding principle for all global
Archons in order to ensure that
the Great Church of Christ has the
resources to pursue its worldwide
ministry, without concern for
economic constraint."

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis



National Commander Dr. Limberakis discusses the need for all Archons around the world to "adopt a culture of giving."



His All-Holiness with Father Nephon Tsimalis and Orthodox faithful of the United Kingdom.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew And Pope Leo XIV Meet In Rome, Plan Nicaea Meeting In November

n Sunday, May 18, 2025, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew flew to Rome to attend the inauguration ceremony of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV. In an unforgettable moment, he prayed together with the new pontiff as Leo XIV embarked upon his journey as the spiritual leader of the world's Roman Catholics.

The following day, His All-Holiness had a private meeting with Pope Leo. At this meeting, both the Ecumenical Patriarch and Pope Leo affirmed their dedication to continuing and strengthening the brotherly ties that Pope Francis had with His All-Holiness. They mutually resolved to work together to defend those who are weak and in need, and to promote peace worldwide.

His All-Holiness and the new Pope also agreed to meet together in Nicaea toward the end of November, near the Feast of Saint Andrew, in order to commemorate together the 1,700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council, which took place in the year 325. During this historic visit, Pope Leo may also visit the headquarters of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, at the Phanar in Constantinople.

The meeting at the Phanar would be in response to the invitation of His All-Holiness, who stated recently of Pope Leo: "May he combine his visit to Nicaea with an official visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, on the occasion of our patronal feast of St. Andrew, on November 30."

The Ecumenical Patriarch and Pope Francis had begun planning the meeting

in Nicaea over a decade ago. At the time of Pope Francis's passing, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew recalled that he and the late Pope Francis made plans during that 2014 meeting in Jerusalem for what would have been an historic meeting this year: "He was due to come to our country and together we would go to Nicaea, where the First Ecumenical Council was convened, to honor the memory of the Holy Fathers and exchange thoughts and wishes for the future of Christianity. All of this, of course, was canceled — or rather, postponed."

When Pope Leo was elected, His All-Holiness stated: "We look forward, with Christian hope, to the new successor. I intend to attend his enthronement and to propose that we continue the dialogue between East and West."





"Indeed, a Pope of American origin has been elected, who took the name Leo XIV. From what I remember during my time in Rome, Leo XIII was distinguished for his social teachings. We hope that Leo XIV will also embrace the Church's contribution to the world, not only in the social sphere but by offering answers to the existential questions that continue to concern humanity."

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew





Archons Of The Ecumenical Patriarchate In America Congratulate Pope Leo XIV, The First American Pope

he Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America have received the news of the election of the new Pope of Rome, His Holiness Leo XIV, with great joy. This appears to be truly a providential choice, with His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew coming to this country in September of this year, and the 250th anniversary of American independence next year. Both of these joyful observances and much more will be significantly affected by the fact that the Pope of Rome is an American.

As a longtime and proud resident of Philadelphia, I am also happy to note that the new Pontiff is a graduate of Philadelphia's own Villanova University!

And so we offer our heartfelt congratulations to His Holiness Pope

Leo XIV, and look forward to a new period of fruitful cooperation and collaboration with our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers.

All-Holiness His Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has issued an English-language statement on the new Pope, which I urge you to watch here. His All-Holiness observed: "Indeed, a Pope of American origin has been elected, who took the name Leo XIV. From what I remember during my time in Rome, Leo XIII was distinguished for his social teachings. We hope that Leo XIV will also embrace the Church's contribution to the world, not only in the social sphere but by offering answers to the existential questions that continue to concern humanity."

The Ecumenical Patriarch also expressed his hope for continuing

ecumenical dialogue with Pope Leo XIV: "Since the time of Pope John XXIII and especially Pope Paul VI — and from our side, Patriarch Athenagoras — a new era began in the relations between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. With the late Pope Francis, we sought, in full harmony and mutual understanding, to continue the Ecumenical Dialogue."

His All-Holiness announced that he would be attending the enthronement of Pope Leo XIV: "We look toward the new Pontiff with Christian hope. I intend to travel for his enthronement and propose that we advance the dialogue between East and West. May he combine a visit to Nicaea with an official visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, on the occasion of our feast of Saint Andrew on November 30."

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW AND POPE FRANCIS:

A Profound And Unique Friendship

s he prepared to travel to Rome for the funeral of His Holiness Pope Francis, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew spoke on April 25, 2025 with profound emotion and deep affection for his dear friend, who passed away on April 21. His All-Holiness stated: "I would like to ask for your prayers for the repose of Pope Francis, who was a friend of Orthodoxy." This was a reaffirmation of His All-Holiness' statements on the day of the Pope's passing, when he referred to Pope Francis as a "precious brother in Christ" and "a true friend of Orthodoxy."



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis had a long and fruitful collaboration. "We cooperated decisively for a greater rapprochement of our Churches" and "for the promotion of theological dialogue," said His All-Holiness shortly after he arrived in Rome on April 25 for the Pope's funeral. "We worked with dedication for the further rapprochement of our Churches, to promote theological dialogue between us, to overcome difficulties, but above all to highlight all that unites us, so that this journey may lead us to the blessed day when we will once again share the Common Cup."

His All-Holiness recounted that he and Pope Francis together walked "the path of awakening the powerful of the world and every man of good will on the refugee and immigration issues. We sent a common message from Lesvos in every direction, in order for all our well-meaning fellow human beings to realize that behind the soulless numbers there are faces of our suffering and frightened brothers."

The Ecumenical Patriarch pointed out other common aspects of his mission and that of the Pope, saying: "We shared common concerns about our testimony as pastors, about the witness of our Churches in modern societies, which are facing multiple challenges in a world troubled by conflicts and wars. We shared common views on the need to protect God's Creation, to preserve our common Home, at a time when the planet is experiencing daily environmental degradation and the consequences of climate change, as a result of our own selfish behavior."

His All-Holiness also spoke of his deep personal friendship with the Pope: "Throughout these twelve years of his papacy, he was a faithful friend, companion, and supporter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate... He left behind an example of genuine humility and brotherly love." The Ecumenical Patriarch recounted that when he met Pope Francis in Jerusalem in 2014, "we knelt together, side by side, in front of the Tomb of the Lord and prayed



Doxology in honor of Pope Francis

On Saturday, November 29, 2014, a Doxology was held at the Ecumenical Patriarchate in honor of the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis. His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew presided over the service.

for the unity of the Christian world and for peace across the globe."

At that groundbreaking meeting, the Ecumenical Patriarch and Pope Francis issued a common declaration, stating: "Our fraternal encounter today is a new and necessary step on the journey towards the unity to which only the Holy Spirit can lead us, that of communion in legitimate diversity. We call to mind with profound gratitude the steps that the Lord has already enabled us to undertake....Well aware that unity is manifested in love of God and love of neighbor, we look forward in eager anticipation to the day in which we will finally partake together in the Eucharistic banquet." They

said that "by achieving this hoped for goal, we will manifest to the world the love of God by which we are recognized as true disciples of Jesus Christ (cf. Jn 13:35)."

They concluded their statement with an appeal to the mother of all Christians: "In undertaking this shared pilgrimage to the site where our one same Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and rose again, we humbly commend to the intercession of the Most Holy and Ever Virgin Mary our future steps on the path towards the fullness of unity, entrusting to God's infinite love the entire human family."

At the time of the Pope's passing, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew also recalled that he and Pope Francis made plans during that 2014 meeting in Jerusalem for what would have been an historic meeting this year: "He was due to come to our country and together we would go to Nicaea, where the First Ecumenical Council was convened, to honor the memory of the Holy Fathers and exchange thoughts and wishes for the future of Christianity. All of this, of course, was canceled — or rather, postponed." The year 2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council, which was convened in Nicaea in the year 325.

His All-Holiness revealed that when he suggested this meeting in Nicaea to the Pope, the Pontiff was enthusiastic, responding: "This is an amazing thought, an amazing idea and proposal."

Now, the Ecumenical Patriarch states: "It was not meant to be for him to come." He added that "the God of life and death decided otherwise, calling him to His side, and now Brother Francis will pray from Heaven for all of us and for the unity of the Churches."

His All-Holiness still retains hope, however, that this historic meeting will take place: "I believe that his successor will come, and we will go together to Nicaea to send a message of unity, love, brotherhood, and shared path toward the future of Christianity."

His All-Holiness' long friendship with Pope Francis is just one manifestation of his tireless labors as an apostle of unity and reconciliation. He has stated that "we must recognize that there is nothing to divide us from our brothers and sisters of other denominations or religions. On the contrary, there are many things that unite us."

The Ecumenical Patriarch has also pointed out that "Christianity and the religious traditions hold principles not only for nurturing inner spiritual peace but also for striving to establish peace in human rela-

tionships and society. It is contrary to the essence and mission of a representative of the Church or religion to promote violence in the name of God."

Pope Francis stood together with his dear friend Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as prophetic voices for healing ancient divisions and bringing humanity together. The Pope issued a challenge to us all: "May we never fear to pursue the paths of concord that the Spirit points out." The Pope also stated, with humble simplicity and deep wisdom, that "Christian unity is achieved by walking together."

Pope Francis not only stated this principle; he lived by it. And so as he offered prayers for the repose of the soul of Pope Francis, His All-Holiness remembered him above all as a beloved brother, saying: "Eternal be your memory, Brother Pope Francis."



Throughout these twelve years of his papacy, he was a faithful friend, companion, and supporter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate... He left behind an example of genuine humility and brotherly love."

-Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew



The Funeral of Pope Francis

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew attended the funeral of Pope Francis in Rome on April 26, 2025, and was accorded a position of special honor, in keeping with his ecclesiastical prerogatives as stated in the canons of the Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Christian Church.

At the papal funeral, His All-Holiness was situated in a position of immense honor, next to the high altar and in front of the Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church. This placement was in accord with canon 3 of the Second Ecumenical Council, which was held in Constantinople in the year 381, and which stipulates that in the order of the hierarchs, the Archbishop of Constantinople is second only to the Bishop of Rome: "The Bishop of Constantinople... shall have the prerogative of honor after the Bishop of Rome; because Constantinople is New Rome."

The Fourth Ecumenical Council, in Chalcedon in 451, likewise noted that the Sacred See of Constantinople "enjoys equal privileges with the old imperial Rome, should in ecclesiastical matters also be magnified as she is, and rank next after her." The Penthekti (Quinisext) Council of 692 affirmed that "the see of Constantinople shall have equal privileges with the see of Old Rome, and shall be highly regarded in ecclesiastical matters as that is, and shall be second after it."

Ecumenical Patriarchate Issues Statement On Status Of Saint Catherine Monastery Of Sinai

he news from Egypt in late May was frankly shocking. The Times of London reported on May 29, 2025 that "Egypt could be set to close the world's oldest continuously functioning Christian monastery after almost 15 centuries, igniting international concern and fury from the Greek Orthodox community."

Saint Catherine's Monastery in Mount Sinai was established in the sixth century by the order of the Roman Emperor Justinian, and has functioned continuously as a Greek Orthodox Christian monastery since then. The idea that it could be suddenly closed on the order of the Egyptian government was a profound shock not only to Greek Orthodox Christians worldwide, who have recently endured the conversion of Hagia Sophia and the Chora Church in Constantinople into mosques, but to all Christians and people of good will.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate expressed deep sorrow and surprise upon learning that the competent Egyptian court called into question the longstanding ownership status of the historic Holy Monastery of Sinai. The court recognized the local monastic brotherhood only as having the right to use the monastery's property.



The First-Throned Church of Orthodoxy is disappointed and saddened by this ruling. The Church has always embraced the venerable foundation established by Emperor Justinian, admiring and grateful for its contributions to faith, nation, and culture over the centuries.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate appeals to the Egyptian government to preserve the monastery's ownership status — an arrangement that Islam itself has respected and safeguarded for centuries — and to implement the recent agreement reached with the monastery. Respecting longstanding traditions and honoring agreements will enable the Monastery of Saint Catherine to continue its religious and cultural mission from the Sinai Peninsula, where God once spoke to humankind.

The centuries have respected the Monastery of Sinai; let Egypt respect it today as well as a civilized, law-abiding nation that upholds religious freedom and human rights.

The monastery is a precious spiritual and cultural treasure for Egypt, bringing honor to the country and symbolically and substantially connecting the two great religions of Christianity and Islam on its soil.





Save the date for Thursday, October 16 – Sunday, October 19, 2025, as the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as well as the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation Trustees and FOUNDERS gather together in New York City for the Annual Archon Weekend focusing on religious freedom pursuits for the Mother Church of Constantinople.

Thursday, October 16

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation Board of Trustees Breakfast Meeting

9:00–11:00AM • Board members of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation will gather to deliberate and decide on important issues regarding the Foundation.

Engagement Committees joined by National Council, Regional Commanders Luncheon Meeting

12:00–3:00PM • Private meeting of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Archon Engagement Committees with National Council members and Regional Commanders to coordinate and launch new engagement activities.

EPBF FOUNDERS Dinner

6:00–10:00PM • FOUNDERS in good standing (pledges up-to-date) of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation are invited to attend a dinner of gratitude for their generous financial support of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation. An elegant reception will begin at 6:00PM followed by dinner at 7:00PM (with unique entertainment).

Friday, October 17

Archon Boot Camp

9:30–11:30AM • Archon John Zavitsanos, Esq., Chair, and Archon Committee members will address Archons-elect and their families as they are about to assume the serious responsibility to defend the Holy Mother Church. National Council members and Regional Commanders and all Archons are invited to attend and reenergize their commitment to the mission of the Order.

National Council and Regional Commanders Luncheon Meeting

12:00–3:00PM • Private meeting with members of the National Council and Regional Commanders who will offer an overview and briefing of regional Archon activities in their respective jurisdictions.

Nicholas J. Bouras Award For Extraordinary Stewardship Award Presentation & Dinner Dance

6:00PM Cocktails, 7:00PM Dinner and Dancing • All Archons, Archons-elect and family members are invited as we begin the evening with a cocktail reception, followed by an elegant dinner and formal presentation of the Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship to Alexander Pritsos, Archon Hieromnimon, and AEP Sergeant at Arms, by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros



of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the National Commander. After the presentation program, the evening concludes with festive dancing and fellowship where Archons, Archons-elect and their families meet and socialize within the Archon Family. Archons-elect will be gratis.

Saturday, October 18

Orientation Breakfast for Archons-elect and their families, together with National Council members and Regional Commanders, and Engagement Chairs

7:30–9:30AM • Archons-elect and their families will gather for an orientation presentation by the National Commander who will offer a multi-media program reviewing the awesome responsibilities and roles of Archons, who are advocates of religious freedom and Protecting the Future of Faith.

Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Annual Meeting

10:00AM-12:00PM • All Archons, Archons-elect and families are expected to attend the annual meeting to discuss the vision and strategy to secure religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Specific religious freedom programing, formal committee reports and other items of concern regarding the well-being of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will be presented thereby offering an open Archon forum for deliberation. Archons-elect will be introduced to Archbishop Elpidophoros.

Archon Agape Family Luncheon and Presentation of Archon Sophia Award for Excellence

12:30–2:30PM • All Archons, Archons-elect and families are invited to attend our annual Agape Family Luncheon which will feature the presentation of the Archon Sophia





Award for Excellence to veteran educators **Dr. Helen Nixon and Katina Limberakis Tsatalis, M.Ed.** for creating (pro bono) the AEP Ecumenical Patriarchate Catechism School Education Initiative.

Athenagoras Human Rights Award Banquet

6:00PM Cocktails, 7:00PM Dinner
The black-tie gala is the Archon premier
event and fundraiser which begins with a
one-hour cocktail reception, followed by
the introduction of the dais and the presentation of the 2025 Athenagoras Human
Rights Award to the Honorable **Michael R.**Pompeo, the 70th Secretary of State of the
United States.



Sunday, October 19

Matins and Procession of Archons and Archons-Elect

8:30AM • Archons and Archons-elect will assemble in Cathedral undercroft for a group portrait with the Exarch, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, and additional investiture instructions. Then all Archons will process into the Cathedral together for Matins, Divine Liturgy and the Archon Investiture service.

Divine Liturgy and Archon Investiture

9:45AM-1:00PM • The morning begins with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and members of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese participating. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, the Archon Class of 2025 will be invested and presented with their Offikia and Cross of Saint Andrew.

Archon Fellowship Reception

1:00PM • Following Divine Liturgy and the Investiture of the Archon Classes, an Archon Fellowship Reception of Thanksgiving hosted by the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will be offered in the adjacent Cathedral Center ballroom.



Anyone who is having a difficulty making a reservation during Archon Weekend, please contact **Alex Pritsos** at apritsos@archons.org

For up-to-date times, locations, and RSVP information, please visit:

archons.org/ArchonWeekend

Former Secretary Of State Mike Pompeo To Receive The 2025 Athenagoras Human

Rights Award

ith the blessings of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the approval of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (AEP) is pleased to announce that the 2025 Athenagoras Human Rights Award will be presented to the Hon. Michael R. Pompeo, the 70th Secretary of State of the United States of America. The Award will be presented on Saturday, October 18, 2025 at the AEP's annual Athenagoras Human Rights Award black-tie banquet at the New York Hilton Midtown Hotel in New York City.

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis welcomes Secretary Pompeo and his wife Susan to Athens for the 4th Archon International Conference on Religious Freedom.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the AEP, stated: "Secretary Pompeo has consistently demonstrated a heartfelt and deeply informed concern for the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and all of the religious minorities in Turkey, as well for the plight of all those around the world who have suffered for exercising their freedom of conscience. His 2020 visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate was a profound demonstration of his awareness of the central importance to the Orthodox Church and the world at large of the Holy Mother Church of Constantinople, and of the urgent necessity to protect and defend religious freedom.

Throughout his lifetime of public service, Secretary Pompeo has been a staunch and steadfast defender of human rights, and is thus a richly deserving recipient of the Athenagoras Human Rights Award."



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew greets Former Secretary of State Hon. Michael R. Pompeo, October 2021

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and Archon John A. Catsimatidis speaking with Secretary Pompeo.

On July 17, 2019, during Mr. Pompeo's tenure as Secretary of State, the State Department presented a Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom; the AEP was invited to hold a sidebar, led by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America. In attendance were numerous members of Congress, including Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), then-Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. Then on Sept. 24, 2020, Secretary Pompeo also met with His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros to discuss issues involving the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus. And as Dr. Limberakis noted, on Nov. 17, 2020, during his tenure as Secretary of State, Secretary Pompeo visited the Phanar and met with His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

Secretary Pompeo's concern for religious freedom continued after his tenure

in the State Department. On May 28, 2024 in Athens, Greece, he addressed the 4th Archon International Conference on Religious Freedom, which the AEP hosted at the direction of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in collaboration with the Brotherhood of Panagia Pammakaristos in Greece, the Order of the Holy Apostle Paul in Canada, as well as the Archons from Europe and Australia.

Secretary Pompeo at the Archon Conference in Athens, May 2024, during a fireside chat with Archon James G. Rockas.

In his remarks, Secretary Pompeo praised His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, saying that this gave Ukrainians the ability to exercise their true faith. Pompeo criticized the Russian government for shamefully using the Church to justify war; he likewise noted that religion has been abused in Iran, and that the people of Iran deserve better than their regime.

Archon Alexander Pritsos To Receive 2025 Nicholas J. Bouras Award For Extraordinary Archon Stewardship

ith the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (AEP) are pleased to announce that AEP Sergeant at Arms Alexander Pritsos, Archon Hieromnimon, will be the recipient of the 2025 Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship. The Award will be presented on Friday, October 17, 2025, at the Bouras Award Dinner at the New York Athletic Club, during the Order's annual Archon Weekend in New York City.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the AEP, said: "For decades now, Archon Alex Pritsos has been a living embodiment of what it really means to give one's time, talent and resources in support of our Holy Mother Church of Constantinople, the Orthodox Christian Church throughout the United States, and the mission of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It is highly fitting

to recognize his long years of selfless service by naming him as the recipient of this prestigious Award. Axios!"

As Sergeant at Arms of the AEP, Archon Pritsos has provided indispensable logistical services to the Order, particularly in helping to organize the Athenagoras Human Rights Award Banquet, Archon Weekend, and other activities. He served as co-chair of the committee to establish the website Archons.org, and was

instrumental in making possible the virtual Archon Weekend of 2020, at the height of the Covid pandemic. "Without Archon Alex," said Dr. Limberakis, "many of the most important Archon events would not have gone as smoothly as they did, or even happened at all."

"My primary focus," Archon Pritsos

stated, "has always been simply to serve God's Holy Church and defend our beloved Ecumenical Patriarchate. To be an Archon, and a part of the Archons' efforts to protect and defend religious freedom, is a tremendous honor for me, and always will be. I'm deeply honored to receive this Award, and give thanks to God for enabling me to be able to serve His Church."







To be an Archon, and a part of the Archons' efforts to protect and defend religious freedom, is a tremendous honor for me, and always will be. I'm deeply honored to receive this Award, and give thanks to God for enabling me to be able to serve His Church."

– Archon Pritsos, recipient of the 2025 Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship

Veteran Educators Helen Nixon And Katina Limberakis Tsatalis To Receive The Archon Sophia Award For Excellence

n Saturday of Archon Weekend, October 18, 2025, at the Annual Archon Agape Family Luncheon, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (AEP), with the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, will present the Archon Sophia Award for Excellence to Helen Nixon, Ed.D. and Katina Limberakis Tsatalis, M.Ed. The Sophia Award for Excellence is given annually by the Order to an individual or individuals who have distinguished themselves in endeavors that serve the needs of the Holy Mother Church and the Sacred Mission of the Archons of the Great Church of Christ.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, stated: "Dr. Helen Nixon and my beloved sister Katina Limberakis **Tsatalis** have been the driving and creative forces behind our overwhelmingly successful Archon Ecumenical Patriarchate Global Educational Initiative Program. This milestone program teaches our beloved youth in our catechism schools



across the country, a comprehensive understanding of the canonical, historical and ecclesiastical significance of the Holy Great Church of Christ, and the person of the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness Bartholomew."

In addition, the Archon Sprout Program enables educators to introduce their Sunday School students to the challenges that His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy Mother Church of Constantinople face today.

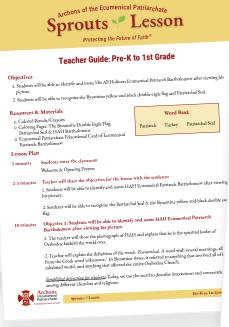
"These two remarkable professional educators," Dr. Limberakis continued,

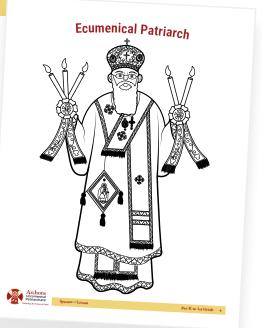


"contributed hundreds of hours pro bono to create this much needed and innovative program, and they did a splendid job. Our gratitude to them cannot possibly be overstated."

The Archon Sprout Program is agespecific and grade-specific; it covers every grade level from preschool to high school with a pre-prepared curriculum. The curriculum resides in a digital platform that is easily downloaded providing the local Sunday School teacher with specific teaching instructions and education goals of the specific lesson.







New Regional Commanders Appointed For North And South Carolina

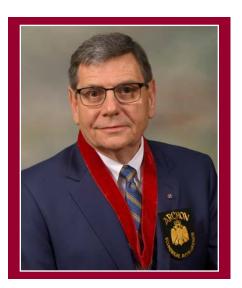
ith the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and in consultation with His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos of Atlanta, Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, has appointed Archons Frank Boardman, Dr. Terry Sarantou and Stephanos G. Trakas as Regional Commanders for North and South Carolina. They succeed Archon Harry T. Cavalaris, who has retired, and has accepted the Commander's invitation to assume Emeritus status, in recognition of his many years of service. National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis quoted the following:



"Archon Frank Boardman is Chairman of the Archon Metropolis and Parish Education Committee, and was among those who gave selflessly of their Time, Talent and Treasure to make Archon Sunday a reality. He worked with other Engagement Committee members to develop a six- to seven-minute script for the Archons, enabling them to explain succinctly in their parishes about the mission of the Archons, the importance of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the threats to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and more. I am delighted to make this appointment and am certain that Archon Frank will be an energetic and effective Regional Commander."



"Archon Dr. Terry Sarantou is indefatigably dedicated to, among many other avenues of service for God's Holy Church, the education of our youth. He and his fellow new Regional Commander, Archon Steve Trakas, have given presentations to young people at the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival and the Hellenic Dance Festival for the Metropolis of Atlanta on the work of the Archons, along with a capsule history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He and Archon Trakas, along with Archon Drew Theodore, organized the groundbreaking Religious Freedom Symposium at the University of South Carolina, 'God Created Us to Live In Harmony (Romans 12:16),' at which His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America was a featured speaker. With these and other initiatives, Archon Dr. Sarantou has shown the energy, dynamism, and deep love of the Ecumenical Patriarchate that he will bring to his duties as Regional Commander."



"Archon Steve Trakas is a man of service and vision, who in less than three years as an Archon has thrown himself fully and joyfully into the service of our beloved Ecumenical Patriarchate. Our pair of new Regional Commanders for North and South Carolina, Archons Trakas and Sarantou, enlightened our youth about the work of the Archons and the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival and the Hellenic Dance Festival for the Metropolis of Atlanta. Along with Archon Drew Theodore, Archons Trakas and Sarantou also organized the trailblazing Religious Freedom Symposium at the University of South Carolina, 'God Created Us to Live In Harmony (Romans 12:16),' which featured His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America. Archon Trakas is inspiring in his unstinting dedication to our Holy Mother Church of Constantinople."

National Commander and AEP honored at Boston Red Sox's 2025 Greek Heritage Night



s baseball's Boston Red Sox prepared to square off against the Tampa Bay Rays on the evening of June 10, 2025 at Boston's storied Fenway Park, the Alpha Omega Council of Boston teamed up with the Red Sox to host its annual Greek Heritage Night.

Over 3,000 Greek Americans came out to Fenway Park to celebrate Hellenism; among them were National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, who was named as a "special honoree"; the Regional Commanders for the Metropolis of Boston, Archons James Speros and Constantine Sideridis; and Boston-area Archon Christos Chrisafides, who served as Chairperson of the event. Along with Chairperson Archon Chrisafides, and Archon Costa Sideridis, the Alpha Omega Council Greek Heritage Night's planning committee includes Archon Tom Gatzunis.

The announcement went out over the stadium as the Limberakis family stood on the field: "Tonight we honor the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Please welcome our very special honoree and a few guests — the National Commander of the Archons and a renowned radiologist, Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, along with his family members, son John Limberakis and his spouse, Dr. Danielle Tyree; and grandsons of Dr. Limberakis, Anthony and Felix Limberakis."

Dr. Limberakis expressed his deep gratitude to the Archons whose efforts did so much to make Greek Heritage Night a success, saying that it was "a fantastic evening at the 2025 Red Sox Greek Heritage Night. It was a real thrill for me personally, as well as bringing attention to the AEP and our mission to Protect the Future of Faith and serve the needs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate."



National Commander Limberakis with Archon Chris Chrisafides.

Archon Chrisafides remarked: "Greek Heritage Night with the Boston Red Sox has grown into a beloved tradition for the Alpha Omega Council. It's an incredible opportunity to celebrate Hellenism and bring together thousands of Greek Americans from across New England for a night of community, pride and America's favorite pastime. We're proud to use this platform to raise awareness and funds for causes that make a real difference, while recognizing some of the exceptional individuals and organizations in our community. Serving as Chairperson these past few years has been an honor, building on the foundation laid by pioneers like Bill Galatis and the Boston AHEPA. And of course, this event wouldn't be possible without the tremendous partnership and support of the Boston Red Sox organization."

In addition to welcoming Dr. Limberakis as AEP National Commander and honoring the Archons for their service to God's Holy Church, the Consul General of Greece in Boston, The Honorable Symeon Tegos, was honored during the on-field pregame ceremony, as the Metropolis of Boston Camp (MBC), the beneficiary of the charitable donations for the evening. The net proceeds from the event went for the benefit of the Metropolis of Boston Camp Gym & Field House Project that is currently underway at MBC's St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center in Contoocook, New Hampshire.

This was the eighth year that Greek Heritage Night has been celebrated at Fenway Park; it serves as a fundraiser to benefit charities supported by Alpha Omega Council.

Red Sox Celebrations, from top to bottom:

Fenway Park's sign welcomes the Archons; Greek dancers perform prior to the start of the game;

Regional Commanders Costa Sideridis and James Speros with the National Commander;

Regional Commander Costa Sideridis son, Alex Sideridis, who is an Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation "Builder," throws the first pitch;

Fenway Park recognizes "Greek Celebration"; National Commander Dr. Limberakis with his son, John, spouse Dr. Danielle Tyree and grandson Felix with members of the Greek American Community and Red Sox mascots.













The John Halecky Jr. 21st Annual National

Archon Lenten Retreat

Renewing Our Call to Be Disciples

Understanding Who
We Are Called to Be
and Recommitting
Ourselves to Our
Sacred Charge

PASADENA CALIFORNIA

he Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate hosted the John Halecky Jr. 21st Annual National Archon Lenten Retreat on the West Coast for the first time on Friday, March 28 and Saturday, March 29, 2025 at St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church in Pasadena, California.

At the Inaugural West Coast Lenten Retreat, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos provided outstanding pastoral guidance. Father Stavros Akrotirianakis provided wisdom and insight in his capacity as the Retreat Master, as he will also at the East Coast Retreat. Father Stavros spoke on the topic, "Renewing Our Call to Be Disciples: Understanding Who We Are Called to Be and Recommitting Ourselves to Our Sacred Charge." His deeply spiritual and enlightening presentation won considerable acclaim from attendees.



Father Stavros Akrotirianakis of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Tampa, FL served as the Retreat Master for both West and East Coast.

The West Coast Retreat was the result of excellent planning and execution on the part of the local committee headed by Southern California Regional Commanders Archon Hon. Steven and Stacia Counelis; Archon Theodore and Jeri Konopisos; and Archon Gerry and Jeannie Ranglas. Father Peter Stratos gave generously of his time in serving as Retreat Pastor.

National Vice Commander Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis socializes with Archons that morning following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.





His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco with participants of the National Archon Lenten Retreat, held in Pasadena, CA.



Regional Commanders Hon. Steven Counelis and Theodore Konopisos, coordinated the West Coast Retreat.



His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco welcomes West Coast Retreat participants.





Peter J. Skeadas, Retreat Coordinator

SOUTHAMPTON NEW YORK

he East Coast Archon Lenten Retreat was held on April 4–5, 2025 at Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church in Southampton, NY.

Hosting the retreat was the Archons' Spiritual Advisor, the Rev. Protopresbyter Alexander Karloutsos, and Father Constantine Lazarakis, who served as Retreat Pastors.

Participants of the East Coast Archon Lenten Retreat, above, gathered in Southampton.

As in past years, the AEP offers heart-felt thanks to all those at Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church in Southampton, New York for their generous hospitality, and to all the Archons and their spouses who attended and provided the essential financial support to make this Retreat an ever-memorable experience.



Archbishop Elpidophoros leads National Council meeting



Archon Michael Psaros, Retreat Co-Chair, welcomes His Eminence.

Archons Spearhead Religious Freedom Proclamation In New Hampshire State Senate



A religious freedom proclamation is read on the floor by New Hampshire Senator Denise Ricciardi

n Thursday, May 15, 2025, New Hampshire State Senator Denise Ricciardi (R-Bedford) made a speech in the New Hampshire State Senate, urging the state body to adopt a Proclamation for Religious Freedom. Spearheading this all-important initiative was Archon Christos Chrisafides.

The Proclamation, signed by Ricciardi and 22 other New Hampshire state senators, recognizes the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the spiritual leader of the world's 300 million Orthodox Christians, and calls out the denial of religious

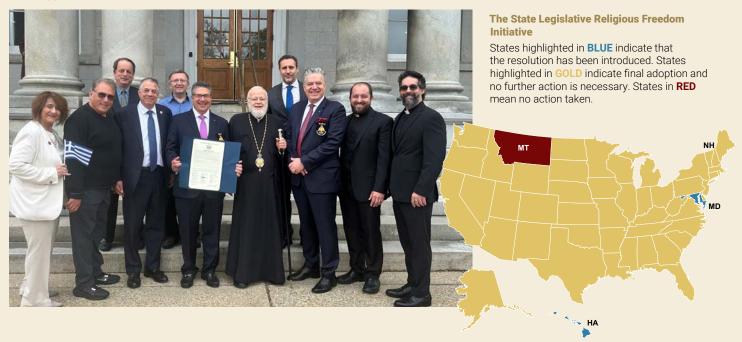
freedom by the Turkish government in modern-day Turkey, where the Ecumenical Patriarchate has been located since the dawn of Christianity two thousand years ago.

The Proclamation observes that "the Turkish government's current treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership conditions and goals of the European Union," and that "Orthodox Christians in this state and throughout the United States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of the continued actions of the Turkish

government." It calls upon the Turkish government to "uphold and safeguard religious and human rights without compromise," and to "cease its discrimination" against the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

"This is a very significant accomplishment for us," said Archon Chrisafides. "We are grateful to Senator Ricciardi and Dick Anagnost for orchestrating and executing today's historical event, and to Congressman Pappas for lending his support. We are all grateful for this opportunity to serve and defend our Holy Mother Church of Constantinople."

His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston with Regional Commander Constantine Sideridis and Archon Christos Chrisafides, who was instrumental in spearheading the initiative, along with other supporters.





Archon Spiritual Advisor Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

n overflow crowd filled The Muses, the banquet hall at Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church in Southampton, New York, on the evening of Saturday, April 5, 2025, to celebrate the eightieth birthday of Father Alex Karloutsos, Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Spiritual Advisor of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The celebration and tribute to Father Alex took place after the conclusion of the John Halecky Jr. 21st Annual National Archon Lenten Retreat on the East Coast, held on April 4-5.



You have conducted yourself with the highest values of the priesthood."

Archbishop Elpidophoros

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, offered praise and gratitude to Father Alex and presented an icon of the Mother of God, left, following services on Friday, April 4, 2025. Archons and faithful came together, below, to honor and celebrate his remarkable milestone.







Father Alex, above, thanks Archons and friends who attended his birthday celebration.



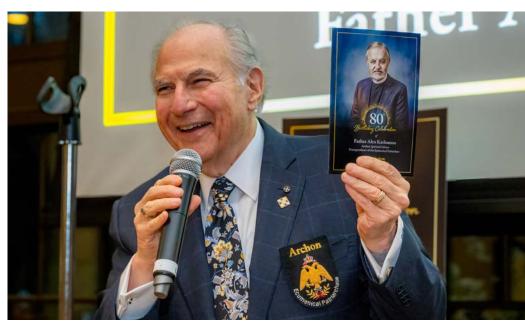




Father Alex with Archon Dean Poll, top; Archon Michael Karloutsos is joined by his sisters Anastasia and Olga to offer reflections, middle; Father Alex and Presbytera Xanthi with Archon John Manos and family, above; National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, right, holds a commemorative book on Fr. Alex's life and ministry, prepared to mark the occasion.



Father Alex with friends Archons Dennis Mehiel and Michael Psaros.





is Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, addressed a Religious Freedom Symposium, "God Created Us to Live In Harmony (Romans 12:16)." This symposium, presented by the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, was held on Saturday, March 22, 2025 at the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

Other featured speakers included His Eminence Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States from the Holy See of Rome; the Reverend Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace, Ordained Pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church; and National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis.

The organizers of the symposium were Archons Steve Trakas, Dr. Terry Sarantou and Drew Theodore; the moderators were Archon Professor Aristotle "Telly" Papanikolaou, Professor of Theology and Archbishop Demetrios Chair in Orthodox Theology and Culture and Co-founding Director of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center at Fordham University; and



Symposium Organizers

Profound gratitude is expressed to an exceptional Archon team of leaders, Archons Drew Theodore, Steve Trakas and Dr. Terry Sarantou, who were instrumental in all planning aspects for the Symposium.

Professor Elizabeth Prodromou, Professor of the International Studies Program at Boston College and a Non-Resident Senior Fellow of the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center. Archons throughout the east coast were in attendance.

The symposium's mission was to look through the lens of the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant faith teachings to better understand how our loving God has protected His flock and the issues facing Christians today.





USC President Archon Dr. Amiridis

A Salutations Service was held at Holy Trinity Church in Columbia, SC. At the conclusion of the service, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America invested Dr. Michael D. Amiridis, President of the University of South Carolina, as an Archon. That evening, the newly invested Archon Dr. Amiridis, along with university First Lady Ero Aggelopoulou-Amiridis, hosted an elegant welcoming reception and dinner at the official presidential residence on campus for panelists, moderators and Archons who were visiting for the conference



Who The Archons Are

Dr. Limberakis welcomed the gathering in the Opening Session and presented the origins of the ancient title Archon. He also detailed the significant Archon initiatives in educating the oikoumene regarding the deficit of religious freedom in Turkey and the Archons' efforts to ameliorate that deficit.



Archon Religious Freedom Symposium Day

Archon Hon. Nick Theodore, the 85th Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina from 1987 to 1995 presented an official Proclamation issued by Henry Dargan McMaster, the Governor of South Carolina proclaiming March 22, 2025 as Archon Religious Freedom Symposium Day.



Photo Briefs



1. "From Rome to New Rome" Pilgrimage

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros led a pilgrimage to Rome where Archons and pilgrims had the opportunity to meet His Holiness Pope Leo XIV. Later, they traveled to Constantinople, joined by His Eminence Cardinal Tobin of Newark and met with His All-Holiness.

Archons Promote Mission at Metropolis of San Francisco Clergy-Laity Assembly; Archbishop Elpidophoros Welcomed

On May 5-6, 2025, the Metropolis of San Francisco convened its Annual Clergy Laity Assembly at St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Squaw Valley, CA.

3. Hellenic College Holy Cross Awards Honorary Doctorate To Father Alex Karloutsos

Father Alex Karloutsos, Archon Spiritual Advisor, received an Honorary Doctorate degree from his alma mater Hellenic College / Holy Cross School of Theology at the 83rd commencement ceremony on May 17, 2025.

4. Archons in the Metropolis of Chicago Celebrate the Holy Apostle Bartholomew

The Archons in the Metropolis of Chicago wish both His All-Holiness and Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago, a happy Nameday.

 Archons educate Holy Cross/Hellenic College Seminarians on Religious Freedom issues

> Archon Alexander Pritsos, Sergeant at Arms along with Regional Commanders John Kassimatis, Nikoforos Mathews and George Tsougarakis offered presentations on the work of the Archons

Presentation on the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Property Rights in Turkey

Archon Anastasios (Tassos) Efstratiades, Esq. spoke on April 23, 2025 at Kyma Flatiron in New York City.

7. In Georgetown Commencement Speech, Archon Michael Psaros Reveals THE Roadmap To Success

Archon Michael Psaros, the worldrenowned philanthropist and recipient of the 2022 Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship, gave an extraordinary and memorable commencement speech at his beloved alma mater, Georgetown University.

Archons Hold First Pilgrimage Of Discovery Alumni Retreat In Chicago

The first-ever Pilgrimage of Discovery (POD) Alumni Retreat was held on May 16-18, 2025, in Chicago. The event was organized by the POD Alumni Leadership Network (ALN), a branch of the Archon Youth Participation Activities Engagement Committee, to bring together as many of the 21 young adults that participated in the first two Archon POD programs in 2023 and 2024.

9. Archon Boardman offers presentation in Metropolis of Atlanta

PHOTOS BY ORTHODOX OBSERVER/BRITTAINY NEWMAN AND ORDER OF MALTA

On June 12, 2025, Archon Frank Boardman represented the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the Metropolis of Atlanta Clergy Laity Conference Grand Banquet in Charleston, SC.

10. 10th Annual Retreat for Archons in the Metropolis of Chicago

The April 26, 2025 meeting kicked off with a surprise telephone greeting from Archon National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, who conveyed words of gratitude for the Archons' work.

Archon presentation at American Carpatho-Russian Diocese Clergy Convocatio

On April 29, 2025, Regional Commander Gary Grysiak delivered a presentation to His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa and visiting clergy who were attending the American Carpatho-Russian Diocese Clergy Convocation, held at Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA.



Photo Briefs





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Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago Unanimously Votes to Become the First Metropolis of Chicago Parish to Be a FOUNDER

ssumption Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago, Illinois has become the latest parish in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America to undertake the sacred, all-important mission of promoting and defending the Ecumenical Patriarchate by donating \$100,000 to become a FOUNDER of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation (EPBF). Assumption is the first parish of the Metropolis of Chicago to become a FOUNDER.

Demonstrating its fervent devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ, His All-Holy Mother, and our beloved Ecumenical Patriarchate, the parish voted unanimously to make this extraordinary and generous gesture of sacrificial love.

Other parishes are expected to follow the lead of Assumption Church in the near future.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, Chair of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, stated: "Assumption parish

in Chicago has become the latest in a growing number of parishes around the Archdiocese that have sacrificially demonstrated the immense devotion that the Orthodox faithful in America have for our Holy Mother Church of Constantinople. We offer our immense gratitude to the entire parish, along with Rev. Father Apostolos N. Georgiafentis, Proistamenos; Archons James Lakerdas and Dr. Peter J. Panton, who are both themselves EPBF FOUNDERS; and Parish Council President Thomas Demos and the Parish General Assembly, which voted unanimously to become a FOUNDER! We hope that this will be the first of many churches in the Metropolis to become FOUNDERS."

On behalf of Father Apostolos, Archon Lakerdas, Parish Council President Demos, and the entire Panagia-Chicago family, Archon Dr. Panton said: "Jim Lakerdas and I attended the 2024 Archon assembly in Athens. We heard – and were inspired by – Dr. Limberakis' remarks as he enumerated the multiple Archon and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation initiatives. As our National Commander spoke, Jim whispered to me: 'We are going to add Panagia's name to the list of Churches that have become EPBF Founders!'"

Archon Dr. Panton added: "The Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago is celebrating her 100th anniversary this fall. While we have primary responsibility to our local church, our Parish Council and General Assembly considered it equally important to support our Mother Church in Constantinople. We look forward to presenting the initial installment of our EPBF gift on October 12, during our Centennial Celebration. While we may be the first parish in the Metropolis of Chicago to make this step, we pray that others will join us."

The Annual Exarch's Appeal

With the extraordinary accomplishments and undertakings of the Archons, it now costs over \$2,000,000 a year to operate our religious freedom mission.

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