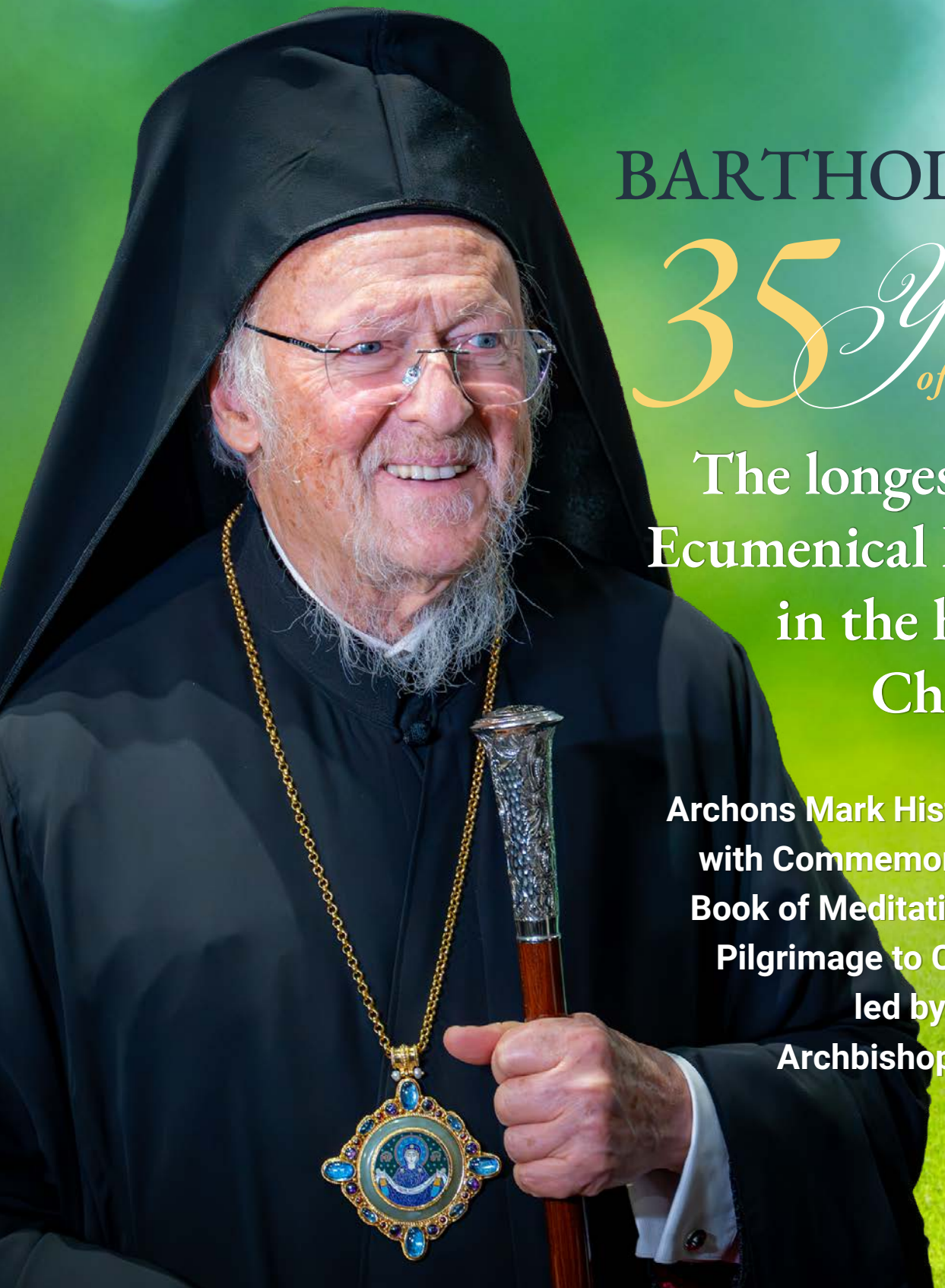
60 Years
1966–2026

Fall 2026

The Archon

Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Newsletter



BARTHOLOMEW

35 Years of MINISTRY

The longest-serving Ecumenical Patriarch in the history of Christianity

Archons Mark Historic Occasion with Commemorative Banners, Book of Meditative Quotes and Pilgrimage to Constantinople led by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America

The Archon
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60 Years 1966–2026

Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate®
Protecting the Future of Faith®

The Annual Archon WEEKEND

NEW YORK CITY
OCT 15–18, 2026



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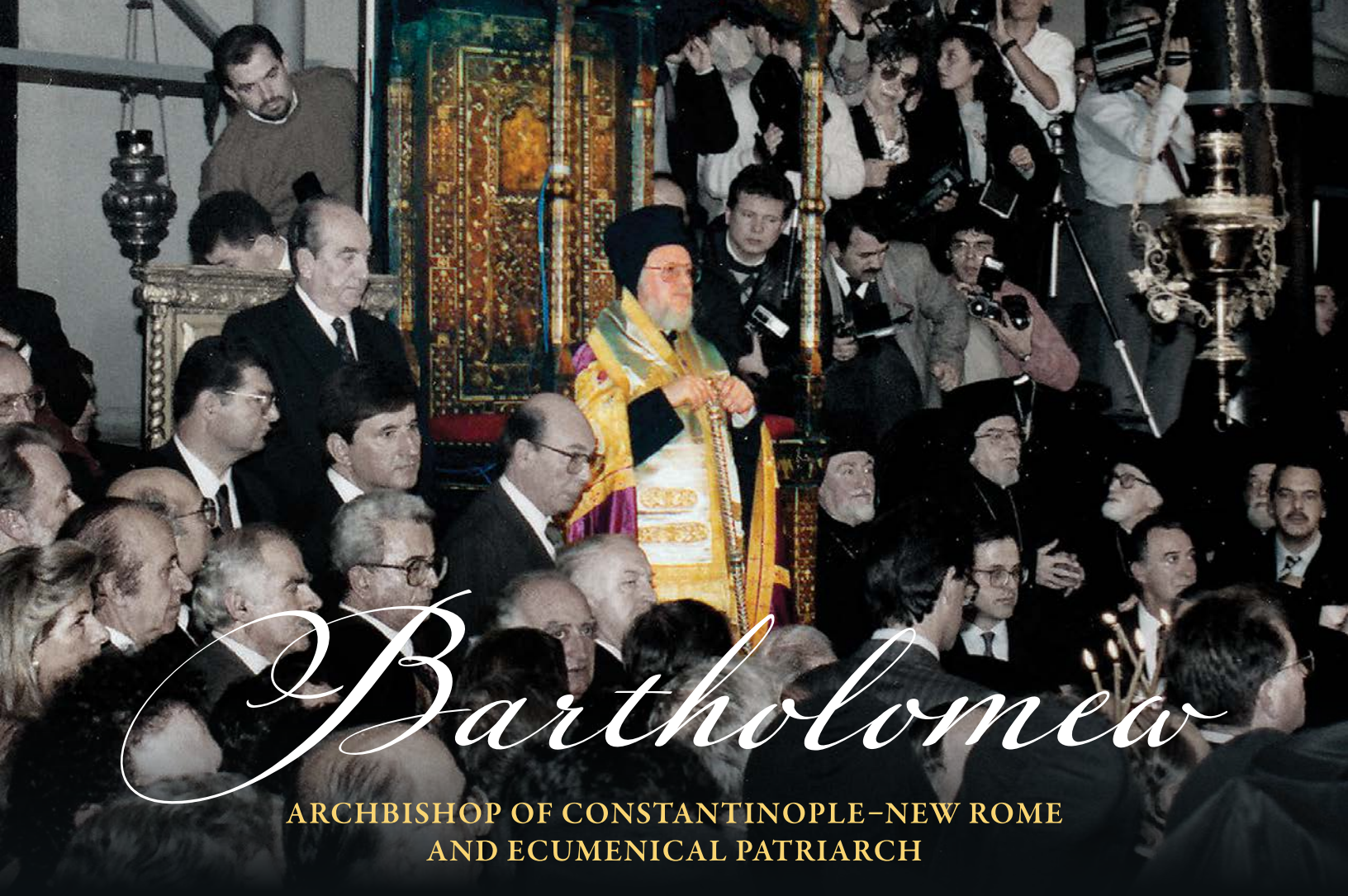
† Chris Philip, DDS (1989–1997), Megas Aktouarios
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COVER PHOTO: J. MINDALA; TABLE OF CONTENTS: ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND J. MINDALA



Bartholomew

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE–NEW ROME AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH

PHOTO BY D. PANAGOS

35 Years of MINISTRY

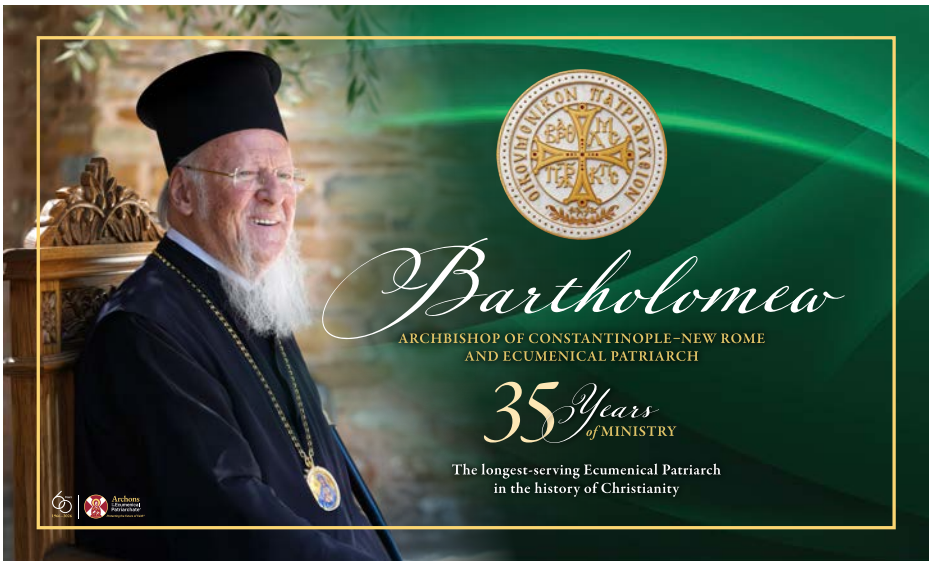
The longest-serving Ecumenical Patriarch in the history of Christianity

For 35 remarkable years, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has served the Mother Church with unwavering faith, courage, and vision. His historic Patriarchal ministry has been marked by extraordinary milestones: advancing Orthodox unity, strengthening inter-Christian and interfaith dialogue, championing religious freedom, protecting God's creation, and carrying the timeless witness of the Ecumenical Patriarchate throughout the world. As we celebrate this historic anniversary, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate proudly reflect upon the milestones, memories, encounters, and defining moments that have shaped his extraordinary ministry and enduring legacy—a legacy that continues to inspire generations of faithful around the world.

Archons Present 700 Parishes With Banners Commemorating 35th Anniversary Of Enthronement

With the blessings of the Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate were pleased and honored to offer parishes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the American Carpatho-Russian Diocese of North America, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, and the Palestinian/Jordanian Orthodox Christian Communities a beautiful 3-ft x 5-ft fabric banner commemorating the 35th Anniversary of the Enthronement of His All-Holiness.

It was our immense honor as Archons of the Great Church of Christ to present this banner is a gift to each parish from the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, to aid in commemorations of this momentous and historic anniversary.



Elected as the 269th direct successor of Saint Andrew the First-Called Apostle and 270th Ecumenical Patriarch on October 22, 1991 and enthroned on November 2, 1991, His All-Holiness is now the longest-serving and one of the most consequential Ecumenical Patriarchs in the history of Christianity.

Huffington Ecumenical Institute Honors Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's 35 Year Unprecedented Patriarchal Ministry

On September 14-15, the Huffington Ecumenical Institute (HEI) at Hellenic College Holy Cross (HCHC) hosted a colloquium recognizing the 35th anniversary of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's enthronement. The event took place under the auspices of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and hosted at HCHC's Maliotis Cultural Center in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Numerous distinguished scholars, Hierarchs, Archons, HCHC faculty members and students were in attendance with speakers and subsequent panel discussions reflecting on His All-Holiness's 35 years of unprecedented Patriarchal ministry – a ministry that has shaped contemporary Orthodox Christianity and influenced inter-Orthodox Christian dialogue, interfaith engagement and the imperative of environmental stewardship.

Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate were well-represented with presentations by Dr. Tom Papademetriou, Dr. James Skedros and James Speros, Regional Commander of the Archons in New England. Other distinguished speakers provided insightful presentations covering ecclesial perspectives, inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical relations, and social issues including human trafficking and the environment. The colloquium offered a unique opportunity to engage with the ministry of His All-Holiness whose leadership continues to inspire us and shape our Church and our world.



Rev. Dr. John Chrysavvigis, Archdeacon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Executive Director of the Huffington Ecumenical Institute (HEI), His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and Hon. Michael Huffington, noted philanthropist and faithful Orthodox Christian who donated $2.5 million to help establish HEI at Hellenic College Holy Cross.

Milestones & Memories



His All-Holiness received the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal on October 21, 1997, in recognition of his contributions to human rights and peace.



His All-Holiness during the Templeton Prize ceremony in New York City, September 24, 2025.



Former Vice President Al Gore and Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis attended and spoke at the Templeton Prize ceremony.



His All-Holiness and His Eminence are greeted by National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis at a special reception at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New York, September 22.



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America from November 17 to 23, 2019 led an Archon Pilgrimage to Constantinople to receive the blessings of His All-Holiness.

PHOTOS BY D. PANAGOS AND J. MINDALA

Archons In New Jersey Honor Ecumenical Patriarch's 35 Years

With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey, more than 250 Greek Orthodox Christian faithful gathered on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Saint John the Theologian in Tenafly, New Jersey, to honor the 35-year Patriarchal ministry of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in New Jersey and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey hosted the evening of prayer, education and tribute, which drew clergy, Archons, FOUNDERS of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, diplomatic representatives, seminarians, Philoptochos leaders and lay faithful from across the region.

The extraordinary turnout reflected the leadership of the evening's event co-chairs, Archon Michael D. Camarinos, Esq. and Archon George A. Tsougarakis, Esq., Regional Commanders.



Archons Publish "Wisdom & Inspiration," Marking 35 Years of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's Ministry

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate have released *Wisdom & Inspiration: From His All-Holiness Bartholomew*, a curated collection of quotations commemorating the 35th anniversary of the enthronement of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople–New Rome. As the longest-serving Ecumenical Patriarch in the See's history, Bartholomew has shaped global conversation on faith and modern life for over three decades, and this compact volume distills his reflections into an accessible keepsake for the faithful and general readers alike.

Organized by theme, the book gathers the Ecumenical Patriarch's insights on the environment and humanity's moral responsibility toward creation, human dignity, interfaith dialogue, the promise and perils of artificial intelligence, theology's living relationship with contemporary life, Christian unity, and the tragedy of war. A foreword from His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and an introductory essay by Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Archons, frame the collection within the Ecumenical Patriarch's broader legacy as a voice for peace, ecological stewardship, and interreligious understanding.

Designed for reflection rather than exhaustive study, the book invites readers to carry it with them and return to its passages often.



HUMAN DIGNITY

"In a world of rapid change,
an upheaval of values,
and dizzying technological advances —
from artificial intelligence
to the impending robotocracy —
our Church proclaims that
'there is nothing more sacred
than the human being,
with whom God Himself
shared His nature.'"

Milestones & Memories



Pope Leo at the Phanar



Pope Francis at the Phanar



Signing of the Tomos of Autocephaly of the Church of Ukraine



Archbishop Elpidophoros of America



His All-Holiness was welcomed at the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Cathedral by Archon Spiriutal Advisor, Father Alex Karloutsos, in Southampton, September 2025.



On September 3, 2023 at the Holy Church of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker of Myra, His All-Holiness elevated Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis to the offikion Archon Grand Aktouarios.

PHOTOS BY D. PANAGOS, J. MINDALA AND N. MANGINAS

His All-Holiness Reflects Upon 65 Years of Ministry

During the Holy Fast for the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, in the company of His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodore II of Alexandria and All Africa and His Beatitude Archbishop Ioannis of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania, traveled back to the island of Imvros, where he was born on February 29, 1940. On Thursday, August 13, 2026, His All-Holiness observed the 65th anniversary of his ordination to the diaconate and offered a series of reflections on his remarkable lifetime of service to Almighty God and His Holy Church.

Before the dismissal of the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy, over which he presided at the Metropolitan Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew celebrated a Trisagion for the repose of his elder and benefactor of blessed memory, Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon. 65 years ago, on August 13, 1961, His Eminence Meliton, then the Metropolitan of Imvros and Tenedos, ordained the 21-year-old Dimitrios Archontonis to the sacred diaconate, and gave him the ecclesiastical name Bartholomew.

Recalling his ordination to the diaconate, His All-Holiness stated that he remembered in particular the words "Jesus only," from the account of the Transfiguration in the Gospels: "And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only" (Matthew 17:8). These words, he explained, have guided him throughout his lengthy and remarkable lifetime of diakonia.

According to Orthodox Times, the Ecumenical Patriarch "spoke warmly of the formative influence of both Imbros and the Theological School of Halki, where his faith, love of learning and appreciation for Orthodox liturgical and theological tradition were cultivated. He also paid tribute to the people of Imbros who remained on the island through difficult decades and preserved its churches, language and identity. Expressing optimism about the island's future, he encouraged younger generations to contribute actively to maintaining a sustainable Greek Orthodox presence there."

His All-Holiness spent eight years as a deacon; Metropolitan Meliton ordained him to the holy priesthood on October 19, 1969, and Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios of blessed ministry consecrated him as a bishop on the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ, December 25, 1973. On October 22, 1991, the Holy and Sacred Synod unanimously elected him as the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch. He was enthroned on November 2, 1991.



In this commemorative photo, His All-Holiness is shown at his ordination as a Deacon by Metropolitan Meliton of Imvros. His All-Holiness is pictured with clergy and residents of Imvros in front of the Metropolis.

On Imvros on August 13, His All-Holiness gave thanks to God for the "supreme gift of the priesthood." He noted that in his service to the Holy Orthodox Church, his efforts had been "devoted to pan-Orthodox cooperation, inter-Christian and interreligious dialogue, peace and solidarity, the protection of the natural environment, and engagement between the Church and the contemporary world."

The Ecumenical Patriarch stated: "My entire journey has been a 'life in dialogue.'" He stressed "that he has always regarded introversion, isolation, self-sufficiency and 'sterile monologue' as incompatible with the Orthodox faith." He explained that as Ecumenical Patriarch, he had always emphasized that Orthodoxy is "fundamentally a call to communion, encounter with others, solidarity and peaceful coexistence." He added that these convictions "have inspired initiatives aimed at fostering cooperation in addressing the major challenges of the contemporary world."

The extraordinary 35-year ministry of His All-Holiness as Ecumenical Patriarch has indeed been marked by remarkable initiatives to in building bridges with Christians of other faith traditions, as well as with non-Christians. In his address, His All-Holiness "also emphasized the wider mission of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, insisting that the Church cannot remain detached from the challenges facing humanity." Throughout his tenure as Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness has consistently and courageously raised a prophetic voice to meet those challenges, calling upon humanity to care for the natural environment, and to recognize that war causes incalculable loss of lives and property while solving nothing.

His All-Holiness said that "the Ecumenical Patriarchate has never been a spectator of the course of human affairs," while "rejecting the notion that engagement with the world necessarily leads to the secularization of the Church."

His All-Holiness also recalled the Lord's words, "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:13-14). He declared: "We cannot journey toward God while turning our backs on our fellow human beings."

That is the ethos that has characterized this holy man's selfless 65 years of service to the Holy Orthodox Church. We are immensely blessed that his ministry continues. *Eis polla eti, Despota!*

PHOTO FROM FOSFANARIOU.GR

Milestones & Memories



President Donald J. Trump



President Joseph R. Biden visits the Phanar



President Barack H. Obama



President George W. Bush



President Bill Clinton



President George H.W. Bush

PHOTOS BY D. PANAGOS, J. MINDALA AND N. MANGINAS

35 Years of MINISTRY

Pilgrimage to CONSTANTINOPLE

OCT 19-25 | 2026

Join His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America together with National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis and the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on a historic pilgrimage commemorating the

35 Years of MINISTRY of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19
- Departure JFK to IST on Turkish Airlines, non- stop

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20
- Arrival IST
- Check-in 3:30P
- Formal Welcome dinner for group at Okra Restaurant with Bosporus panoramic views 7:30P

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21
- Visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate
- Audience with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (Subject to confirmation)
- Visit to Panagia Vlacherna & Baloukli Monastery
- Formal Banquet in honor of HAH 35 Years at 8:00P at Hilton Hotel

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22
- Orthros & Patriarchal Divine Liturgy
- Afternoon : Lunch on own at café in front of Chora. Visit Chora
- Evening Concert in honor of HAH at approx. 8:30P at AKM Theater Taksim (subject to confirmation)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23
- Private cruise on the Bosporus to Halki with probable lunch at the School

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24
- Tour of old city: Hagia Sophia, Underground Cisterns, Hippodrome & Bazaar
- Archon Farewell Dinner

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25
- Departure IST to JFK

Inclusions:
- Round trip international air from JFK to Constantinople including taxes
- Private arrival and departure transfers for those on the same flights as the group or meeting the arrival and departure of the group
- Five nights hotel confirmation at the Hilton in Bosporus view rooms including daily breakfast, service fee and taxes
- Private audience with His All Holiness
- Private sightseeing as indicated on the itinerary with Greek Orthodox English / Greek speaking guide with entrance fees
- Private meal functions: Welcome dinner with Bosporus views, Banquet in honor of HAH & Archon farewell dinner
- Concert in honor of His All Holiness
- In/Out hotel porterage
- All gratuities for daily breakfast, dinner functions, guide, bus driver & boat crew. Chambermaid gratuities on included.

Notes:
- Land only rates, please subtract $1250 for the international air
- Rates reflects a 4% discount if payment by check or Zelle
- Itinerary is subject to change
- If you are interested in reserving a spot on this historic Pilgrimage, please email anthony@cloudtours.com confirming your attendance. Kindly include your passport name and anyone traveling with you.
- Space is limited and due to the proximity of departure, full payment will be required with your reservation.

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Rate per person in double occupancy: $6,500.00
Single rate: $7,600.00



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH POSTER CONTEST

Ages 5-18

AUGUST 1
Contest Opens

OCTOBER 1
Contest Ends

OCTOBER 17
Winners Announced

35 Years of MINISTRY

In commemoration of the 35th Anniversary of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Archon Ecumenical Patriarchate Global Educational Initiative is happy to offer its first Ecumenical Patriarch Poster Contest. This is a chance for students ages 5-18 to honor His All-Holiness' lifelong commitment to protecting God's creation and to share their own vision of a world filled with beauty, peace, and environmental stewardship.

Submit your artwork and let your creativity shine as we celebrate faith, leadership, and the gift of creation!

60 Years 1966–2026

Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate®
Protecting the Future of Faith®

For more information, or to submit your artwork, visit:
archons.org/sprouts

UNDERSTANDING THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH

Three Essential Questions Answered

The role of the Ecumenical Patriarch is often misunderstood, both within and outside the Orthodox Church. Why is the Patriarch of Constantinople called "Ecumenical"? What does it mean when he is described as "First Among Equals"? And what is the basis for his authority to grant autocephaly to local Orthodox Churches? In this special Religion and Faith series, we explore these important questions through the lens of Orthodox history, canon law, and ecclesiastical tradition, providing a deeper understanding of the unique ministry and responsibilities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the life of the Orthodox Church today.

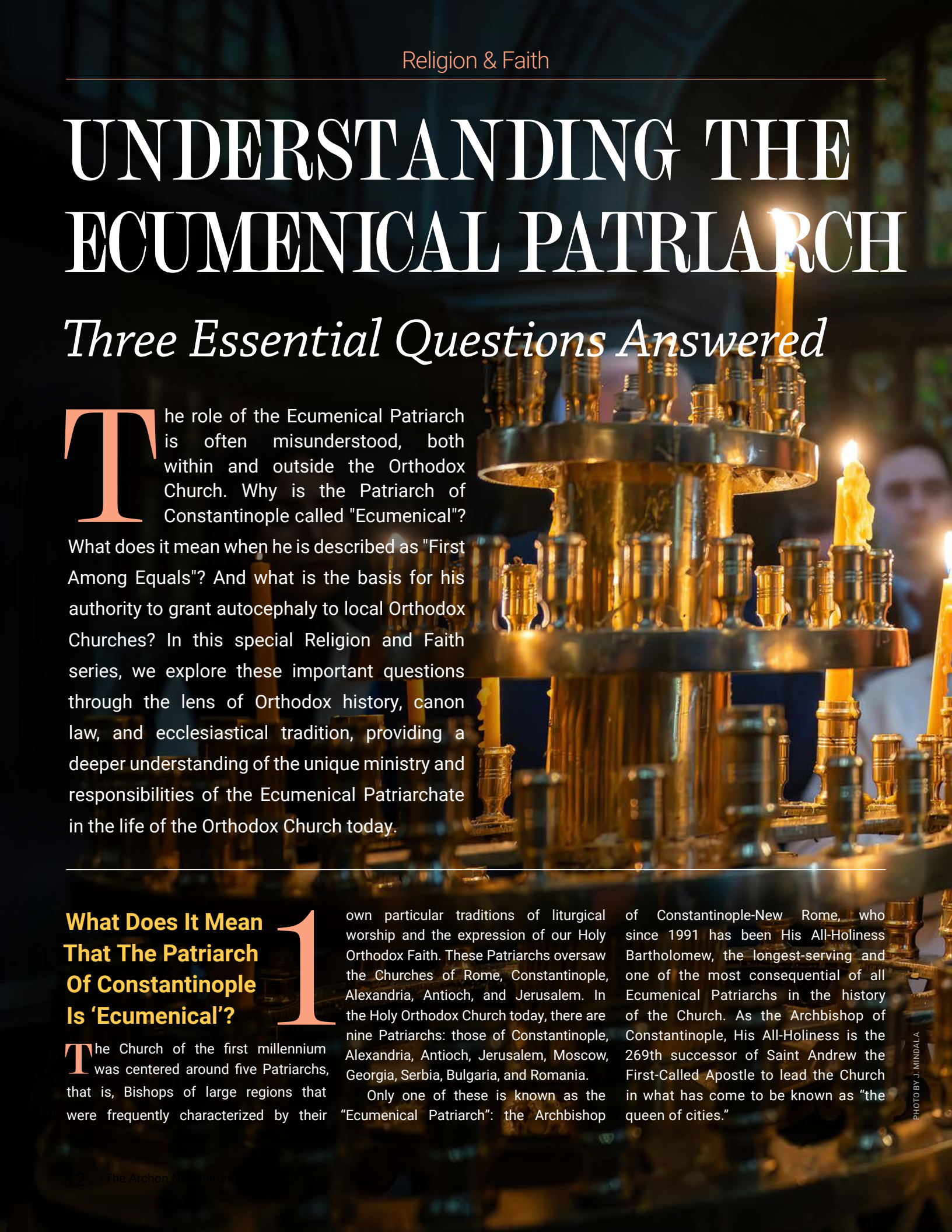


PHOTO BY J. MINDALA

1 What Does It Mean That The Patriarch Of Constantinople Is 'Ecumenical'?

The Church of the first millennium was centered around five Patriarchs, that is, Bishops of large regions that were frequently characterized by their own particular traditions of liturgical worship and the expression of our Holy Orthodox Faith. These Patriarchs oversaw the Churches of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. In the Holy Orthodox Church today, there are nine Patriarchs: those of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow, Georgia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania.

Only one of these is known as the "Ecumenical Patriarch": the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome, who since 1991 has been His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the longest-serving and one of the most consequential of all Ecumenical Patriarchs in the history of the Church. As the Archbishop of Constantinople, His All-Holiness is the 269th successor of Saint Andrew the First-Called Apostle to lead the Church in what has come to be known as "the queen of cities."



Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

The Archbishop of Constantinople has been known as the Ecumenical Patriarch ever since the year 586, when the Roman Emperor Maurice conferred the title "Ecumenical" on the Patriarch of Constantinople, Saint John the Faster. The Emperor conferred this title in view of the fact that the Archbishop of Constantinople was Patriarch of the Church in the city that was the capital of the great empire, the superpower of its day.

This was, however, much more than just a ceremonial title or a recognition that the Patriarch of Constantinople would be honored first in prayers and at gatherings of the worldwide Church. The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople had certain responsibilities that were unique in the Church.

Canon 9 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which was held in Chalcedon in 451, stated: "If a bishop or cleric has a disagreement with the metropolitan of the province, let him appeal to the Exarch of the Metropolis, or to the throne of the Imperial City of Constantinople, and let him be tried there." Canon 17 added: "And if any one be wronged by his metropolitan, let the matter be decided by the exarch of the diocese or by the throne of Constantinople, as aforesaid." Canon 28 spoke of how the Church of Constantinople had "equal privileges" to those of the Church of Rome.

Although these particular ecclesiastical responsibilities of the Church of Constantinople were known and established by the time the Patriarch of Constantinople was granted the title "Ecumenical Patriarch," the Pope of Rome, Saint Gregory Dialogos, was alarmed. Saint Gregory understood the title to meaning that Saint John was being proclaimed the universal bishop of the entire Church, in the sense that the Church now had only one bishop, and all the others had been dethroned.

Saint Gregory wrote in strong terms to Saint John: "Whoever calls himself universal bishop, or desires this title, is, by his pride, the precursor to the Antichrist…. May all Christians reject this blasphemous title – this title which takes the sacerdotal honor from every priest the moment it is insanely usurped by one."

That was not, however, what the title "Ecumenical Patriarch" really meant. It did not establish the Patriarch of Constantinople as a super-bishop at the expense of all the others. It did not mean that the Patriarch of Constantinople had any authority beyond the limits of his own ecclesiastical jurisdiction except that which the Council of Chalcedon and other Ecumenical Councils had granted.

Since it was at that time and remains today the responsibility of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople to adjudicate disputes between bishops, he has an authority that is truly ecumenical. This does not mean, however, that he has full, ordinary, and immediate jurisdiction over every diocese everywhere, after the manner of the Pope of Rome in the understanding of the Roman Catholic Church. It does not mean that he is personally infallible in his pronouncements on matters of faith and morals, as, once again, the Roman Catholic Church teaches about the Pope of Rome.

The title "Ecumenical" for the Patriarch of Constantinople does mean, however, that His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, following in the footsteps of his holy predecessors, is truly "first among equals": a bishop like other bishops, a priest like other priests, and a Christian like other Christians, but at the same time one who has been chosen by Almighty God for a special responsibility for the preservation and defense of the Church worldwide, without infringing upon the rights or privileges of other bishops anywhere.

As such, the Ecumenical Patriarch is the foremost guardian of the Church's unity and integrity around the world. Thanks be to God for the inexpressible gift!

2 What Does It Mean That The Ecumenical Patriarch Is 'First Among Equals'?

Many Orthodox Christians are aware that the Ecumenical Patriarch is "first among equals," but all too many would find it difficult to explain what this actually means. This common designation is rooted in the Orthodox understanding of the nature of the Church, as well as of its unity and authority — an understanding that originated with the Holy Apostles themselves and is faithfully reflected in the Church to this day.

We say that the Ecumenical Patriarch is equal to the other bishops because he himself is a bishop, a successor to the Apostles in the service and government of the Church. His All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch is equal to the other bishops in possessing those spiritual gifts (charisms) and sacred responsibilities that are unique to the episcopate: the ability to ordain other bishops, priests and deacons, and the responsibility to oversee the area under his jurisdiction, and to ensure that the Gospel is faithfully proclaimed there.

At the same time, the Ecumenical Patriarch is first among these bishops. His full title is "Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch." Bishops of large cities often have responsibility for the areas around those cities, and are given the title of Archbishop. Those who have the responsibility to oversee vast regions, encompassing entire nations or even larger expanses, are known as Patriarchs. In the early centuries of the Church, there emerged five Patriarchs, in Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

Others, notably the Patriarch of Moscow, arose later in the life of the Church. After the Great Schism between the Churches of Rome and Constantinople in 1054, the Church of Constantinople became the First See (area of a bishop's jurisdiction) of the Orthodox Church.

The foundational canonical order of the Church, based on the Ecumenical Councils, grants to the Church of Constantinople the sacred responsibility to adjudicate disagreements between Churches. This responsibility stems from Canon 9 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which was held in Chalcedon in 451: "If a bishop or cleric has a disagreement with the metropolitan of the province, let him appeal to the Exarch of the Metropolis, or to the throne of the Imperial City of Constantinople, and let him be tried there."

This is the fullest indication of what it means for the Ecumenical Patriarch to be "first among equals." As bishops, all members of the episcopate are equal, but if there are disagreements among bishops or between Churches, the Church of Constantinople has the sacred responsibility to settle them.

Emanating from this authority to deal with disagreements among bishops, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has the sole authority to convene the Holy Synod, as it is made up of bishops from around the world and is intended to settle issues that may be in dispute. The Ecumenical Patriarch, because he has this universal authority encompassing the entire Church (hence the title "Ecumenical Patriarch," which originated in the sixth century), also has the responsibility to grant autocephaly (independence) to regions that were previously part of other ecclesiastical jurisdictions.

In modern times, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has granted autocephaly to the Churches of Serbia (1920), Romania (1925), Bulgaria (1961), Georgia (1990), Greece (1850), Poland (1924), Albania (1937), and the Czech Lands and Slovakia (1998). Most recently, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew granted autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine in January 2019.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate granted autocephaly to the Church of Russia in 1589, when the Patriarchate of Moscow was first established, over a thousand years after the Council of Chalcedon granted to the Church of Constantinople the responsibility to resolve ecclesiastical disputes.

It is important to understand, however, that these special responsibilities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate do not establish the Ecumenical Patriarch as an "Orthodox Pope." There is and can be no "Orthodox Pope"; the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch within the Orthodox Church is immensely different from the Roman Catholic Church's understanding of the authority of the Pope of Rome.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that "the Roman Church possesses a preeminence of ordinary power over every other Church, and that this jurisdictional power of the Roman Pontiff is both episcopal and immediate." (First Vatican Council, Pastor Aeternus, 3.2) This means that in the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope of Rome has direct authority over every other bishop, and jurisdiction over every other bishop, as well as all the faithful.

The Ecumenical Patriarch, by contrast, does not have immediate or jurisdictional authority over Patriarchs and bishops who are not within his canonical territory. He has no authority that the other Patriarchs and bishops do not have except the responsibility to act as a court of appeal and settle disputes between the Churches.

The Roman Catholic Church also holds that the Pope is infallible, that is, protected by God from error, when he states that something is a part of the Christian Faith, that all the faithful must believe. The Ecumenical Patriarch does not claim infallibility; as Orthodox Christians, we believe that Almighty God protects His Holy Church from error within the teachings of the Ecumenical Councils only.

The Church of Constantinople
His All-Holiness Bartholomew
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch

The Church of Alexandria
His Beatitude Theodoros II
Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa

The Church of Antioch
His Beatitude John X
Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

The Church of Jerusalem
His Beatitude Theophilus III
Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine

The Church of Russia
His Beatitude Kirill
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

The Church of Georgia
His Beatitude Patriarch Shio III
Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Archbishop of Mtskheta and Tbilisi

The Church of Serbia
His Beatitude Porfirije
Patriarch of Serbia

The Church of Romania
His Beatitude Daniel
Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobrudgea

The Church of Bulgaria
His Beatitude Daniel
Patriarch of Bulgaria

The Church of Cyprus
His Beatitude George
Archbishop of New Justiniana and All Cyprus

The Church of Greece
His Beatitude Ieronymos
Archbishop of Athens and All Greece

The Church of Poland
His Beatitude Sawa
Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland

The Church of Albania
His Beatitude John
Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania

The Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia
His Beatitude Rastislav
Metropolitan of the Czech Lands and Slovakia

The Church of Ukraine
His Beatitude Metropolitan
Epiphany of Kiev and All Ukraine

And so when the Orthodox Church teaches that the Ecumenical Patriarch is "first among equals," it is recognizing that he is one among many brother bishops, not a super-bishop whose authority transcends those of them all. This Orthodox view of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and of the episcopacy in general, is faithful to the canonical order of the Church in the first millennium, before the schism with the Church of Rome.

Above all, we join His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in unceasing prayer for a transformative resolution of differences and the definitive restoration in Christ of unity in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith.

3 What Gives The Ecumenical Patriarch The Authority To Grant Autocephaly?

On January 5, 2019, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew signed the Tomos of Autocephaly (independence) for the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, as His Beatitude Metropolitan Epiphaniy of Kyiv and All Ukraine stood by. Although this courageous step to heal the longstanding schism in Ukraine has been the focus of a great deal of controversy and debate, it was the canonical right and responsibility of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to act to settle the longstanding dispute in Ukraine and grant autocephaly to the Church there.

This unique authority to grant autocephaly, as well as to call together the Holy and Sacred Synod which governs the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the Ecumenical Patriarch presiding, is rooted in the exclusive responsibilities that the Ecumenical Councils granted to the Church of Constantinople.

These responsibilities of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople derive from Canon 9 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which was held in Chalcedon in 451 and stated: "If a bishop or cleric has a disagreement with the metropolitan of the province, let him appeal to the Exarch of the Metropolis, or to the throne of the Imperial City of Constantinople, and let him be tried there." Canon 17 of the same Council said: "And if any one be wronged by his metropolitan, let the matter be decided by the exarch of the diocese or by the throne of Constantinople, as aforesaid." Canon 28 added that the Church of Constantinople had "equal privileges" to those of the Church of Rome.



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Signs Tome of Autocephaly for Ukrainian Orthodox Church

On January 5, 2019, in the presence of Metropolitan Epiphanios of Kiev and of all Ukraine, the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko and his family, hierarchs and clergy, a multitude of Ukrainian state and government officials, and officials and media representatives from all over the world, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, in a special session held in the Patriarchal Church in the Phanar, signed the document of the Tome of the official recognition and proclamation of the Autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

On June 24, 1970, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of blessed memory elucidated these particular responsibilities in a letter to His Eminence Metropolitan Pimen of the Moscow Patriarchate (His Beatitude Patriarchate Alexy of Moscow had died on April 17, and so the Moscow Patriarchate was vacant at the time; Pimen would become Patriarch of Moscow on June 3, 1971).

The occasion of the letter was the

Tomos of Autocephaly that the Patriarchate of Moscow had granted to its former archdiocese in North America, which is now known the "Orthodox Church in America." Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras explained that the Moscow Patriarchate had not followed the proper canonical procedures for the granting of autocephaly.

In this letter, Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras reminded Metropolitan Pimen that he had previously recommended "that the Holy Russian Church refrain from any further activities that might disturb ecclesiastical peace and harmony and bring about a condition that might overturn the established canonical order." He stated unequivocally that the "alleged right" of the Moscow Patriarchate or "any other Autocephalous Orthodox Church" to "grant the status of autocephaly to another Church… does not correspond either to canonical requirements or to existing practices within the Church."

Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras emphasized that "certainly and incontrovertibly, and in accordance with the canonical conception of the Church, the concept behind the granting of autocephaly belongs to the domain of canonical authority." He granted that "specific canons exactly characterizing autocephaly are not to be found in ecclesiastical legislation," but pointed out that "certain general guidelines and provisions, relative to autocephaly, may be gathered from the basic principles of such legislation."

Those basic principles, the Ecumenical Patriarch explained, establish that "from the very meaning of autocephaly itself as an ecclesiastical act, from which certain changes result relative to ecclesiastical boundaries and to the rise of new jurisdictional and administrative powers that bring about a new order in the Orthodox Church as a whole — it may be concluded that the granting of autocephaly is a right belonging to the Church as a whole, and cannot at all be considered a right of 'each Autocephalous Church,' as is stated in the letter of Patriarch Alexis of blessed memory."

Citing various rulings of the Ecumenical Councils, Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras pointed out that the "Ecumenical Councils considered that judgment concerning autocephaly was within their jurisdiction and did not lie outside their competence." On some occasions, however, without the convening of an Ecumenical Council, "the Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne gave the stamp of autocephaly with the approval of the other Orthodox Churches." Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras said that "the Ecumenical Patriarchate could do this because of its attribute as the Mother Church and its status as the 'First Among Equals' in reference to the other autocephalous Orthodox Churches, and because it is at the center of the internal unity of the entire Orthodox Church, helping the other Churches in their needs — a duty that derives from its presiding and excelling position within the family of the Orthodox Churches."

Consequently, he said, "such decisions cannot be made by each local Autocephalous Church or by a local Synod of a Church from which a Diocese is requesting autocephaly." The Orthodox Church in Ukraine, even though it was under the authority of the Patriarchate of Moscow, could only be granted autocephaly by an Ecumenical Council or by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. As Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras' analysis was rooted in the teachings of the Ecumenical Councils and sacred canons of the Church, it holds true today as much as it did when he wrote it, and will continue to do so for all time.

PHOTO BY J. MINDALA

The Holy and Great Council | On June 20, 2016, His All-Holiness lead the Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches and their delegations in the opening session of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church at the Orthodox Academy of Crete.



Official Visit of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to ATHENS, GREECE



Archons meet with His All-Holiness

On May 7, Father Alexander Karloutsos, Archon Spiritual Advisor, National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, and National Vice Commander Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis held a meeting with His All-Holiness.

Archons host dinner in honor of His All-Holiness

On May 5, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America and the Pammakaristos Brotherhood of Archons in Europe hosted a dinner in honor of His All-Holiness in Athens.







PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA

Meeting with Ambassador Kimberly Guilfoyle

On May 7, Ambassador of the United States to Greece Kimberly Guilfoyle met with His All-Holiness, right. Father Alex, National Commander Dr. Limberakis, National Vice Commander Bozonelis and Archon Christos Marafatsos were also participants of the meeting.



Archons attend AHI 21st Athens Awards Dinner

On May 7, Archons attended the American Hellenic Institute (AHI) 21st Annual Athens Awards Dinner, below.

Mayor of Athens Honors His All-Holiness

On May 4, His All-Holiness was honored by Haris Doukas, Mayor of Athens, at the Ceremonial Hall of City Hall, below right.





PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA

His All-Holiness speaks at the Greek Parliament

On May 5, His All-Holiness delivered an historic speech to the Plenary of the Greek Parliament.



Official Visit of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to PARIS, FRANCE



His All-Holiness honored by The French Academy

On March 30, an official ceremony was held at the French Academy for the formal proclamation of His All-Holiness as an Associate Member to the French Academy for Ethics and Political Sciences.

An address was given by Jean-David Levitt, President of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, followed by a musical interlude: J.S. Bach, Goldberg Variations, "Aria".

After His All-Holiness offered his address, a presentation was made, right, of the first edition in Greek and Latin (1675) of two volumes on the life and theological work of Saint Maximus the Confessor to His All-Holiness.





PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA

Archons of Monaco host lunch

On March 31, His Eminence Metropolitan Dimitrios of France together with the Archons of Monaco hosted a luncheon in honor of His All-Holiness.



His All-Holiness visits UNESCO

On March 30, His All-Holiness visited UNESCO in which a reception was held in his honor, below, hosted by His Excellency Ambassador Georgios Koumoutsakos, the Permanent Representative of Greece to UNESCO.





PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA



Meeting with His All-Holiness

On March 31, National Vice Commander Hon. B. Theodore Bozonelis and Father Alex Karloutsos met with His All-Holiness, above. During the meeting, Congressional Records from the House and Senate marking the historic visit of His All-Holiness to the United States in September 2025 were presented.

His All-Holiness visits Notre-Dame Cathedral

On March 31, His All-Holiness visited the Notre-Dame Cathedral. The Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris suffered a devastating fire on April 15, 2019, and officially reopened to the public on December 7, 2024.



The Annual

Archon WEEKEND

NEW YORK CITY
OCT 15–18, 2026

Save the date for Thursday, October 15 – Sunday, October 18, 2026, 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 15

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.

Diakonia Ministries joined by National Council, Regional Commanders Luncheon Meeting

12:00–3:00PM • Private meeting of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Archon Diakonia Ministries 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 16

Archon Boot Camp

8:00–11:30AM • 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 AEP.

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 **Dr. Nicholas G. Loutsion**, Archon Aktouarios, 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.

PHOTO BY D. PANAGOS

Saturday, October 17

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 and the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation (EPBF).

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 His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America.

Sophia Award 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 Sophia Award Luncheon which will feature the presentation of the Archon Sophia Award for Excellence to **Archon Michael Kratsios** who has distinguished himself in endeavors that serve the needs of the Holy Mother Church.

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 2026 Athenagoras Human Rights Award to His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan.

PHOTO BY D. PANAGOS AND ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

Sunday, October 18

Matins and Procession of Archons and Archons-elect

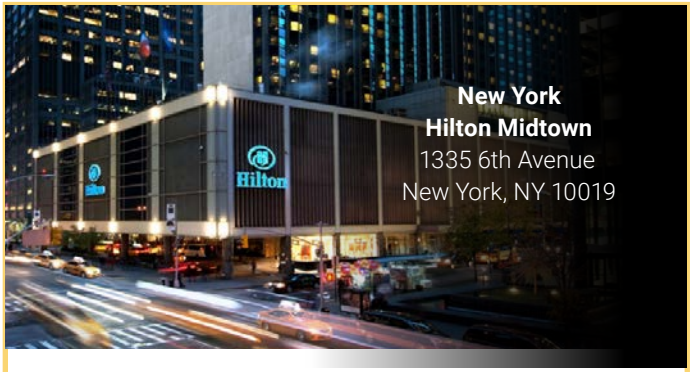
8:30AM • Archons and Archons-elect will assemble in Cathedral undercroft for a group portrait with the Exarch, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, and additional investiture instructions. Then all Archons will process into the Cathedral together for Matins, Divine Liturgy and the Archon 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, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, the Archon Class of 2026 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

Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop Emeritus of New York, to Receive 2026 Athenagoras Human Rights Award

With 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 are pleased to announce that the 2026 Athenagoras Human Rights Award will be presented to His Eminence Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop Emeritus of New York. The Award will be presented on Saturday, October 17, 2026 at the AEP's annual Athenagoras Human Rights Award black-tie banquet at the New York Hilton Midtown Hotel in New York City.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, Archon Grand Aktouarios and National Commander of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, stated: "Throughout his sixteen years as Archbishop of New York, Cardinal Timothy Dolan consistently demonstrated heartfelt and deeply informed concern for the human rights and human dignity, and particularly the well-being of all the Christians and people of other faiths around the world who are suffering for exercising their religious freedom. He has been a true friend and ecumenical partner of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, laboring indefatigably to strengthen the relationship between our Sister Churches. Cardinal Dolan's long and distinguished record of defense of human rights make him a most worthy recipient of the Athenagoras Human Rights Award."

Cardinal Dolan has exemplified the highest values of leadership to improve the global human condition. His service on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty and the Justice Department's Religious Liberty Commission, among many other actions for religious freedom, demonstrate his lifelong commitment to the all-important cause of defending the freedom of conscience and the dignity before God of every human being.



PHOTO BY ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

Established in 1986, the Athenagoras Human Rights Award is given in honor of Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, who served as Archbishop of the Americas for 18 years before being elected Ecumenical Patriarch in 1948. He was universally acknowledged as a visionary leader and worked for peace among Churches and people throughout his life.

Previous recipients include Russian dissident Yulia Navalnaya; the Prince's Trust (now the King's Trust), an international youth charity founded by King Charles III while he was Prince of Wales; His Beatitude Theodore II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa; His Beatitude Epiphaniy, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine; President Joseph Biden (when he was vice president); former President Jimmy Carter; former President George H. W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush; Nobel Laureate and former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev; Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel; Mother Teresa of Calcutta; former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo; and the scientists who developed COVID vaccines and treatments.

Archon Dr. Nicholas G. Loutsion To Receive 2026 Nicholas J. Bouras Award For Extraordinary Archon Stewardship

With the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are pleased to announce that National Council member Nicholas G. Loutsion, VMD, Archon Aktouarios, will be the recipient of the 2026 Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship. The Award will be presented on Friday, October 16, 2026, at the Bouras Award Dinner during the Order's annual Archon Weekend in New York City.

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, said: "Archon Dr. Nick has a long and distinguished record of service to our beloved Ecumenical Patriarchate and to the Archons in an extraordinary variety of capacities. He has been a member of the National Council for over twenty years, and has served as Chairman of the Archon Regional Commander Liaison Committee for nearly as long. He has represented the Archons at the annual meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Warsaw, and was coauthor of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Resolution in defense of Religious Freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In addition to these and other great responsibilities, Archon Dr. Nick recently helped organize our outstanding Archon Family Reception and Archon Booth at the 2026 Clery-Laity Congress in Cleveland."

Dr. Limberakis continued: "Archon Dr. Nicholas Loutsion's service to our Holy Mother Church and the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is just one aspect of his multifaceted diakonia. In addition to his tireless and selfless labors for the Archons, Archon Dr. Nicholas Loutsion has served the Archdiocese of America in numerous capacities, including as a member of the Archdiocese Council and of the Religious Education Committee, and as Co-chair of the Marriage and Family Committee."

Archon Dr. Loutsion stated: "This is an immense honor, and deeply humbled to receive this recognition from the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It has been a tremendous source of joy and gratitude to God for me to stand with the Archons for the protection of our Holy Mother Church and the defense of religious freedom. Above all, Susan and I are simply grateful for the opportunity to be of service to our beloved Ecumenical Patriarchate and to God's Holy Church in America and worldwide."

> *This is an immense honor, and deeply humbled to receive this recognition from the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It has been a tremendous source of joy and gratitude to God for me to stand with the Archons for the protection of our Holy Mother Church and the defense of religious freedom*
>
> *– Archon Dr. Loutsion, recipient of the 2026 Nicholas J. Bouras Award for Extraordinary Archon Stewardship*



PHOTO BY D. PANAGOS

Archon Hon. Michael J. Kratsios To Receive The Archon Sophia Award For Excellence

With the blessings of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, and on behalf of the National Council of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will present the Archon Sophia Award for Excellence to Archon Hon. Michael J. Kratsios. The presentation will be made on Saturday, October 17, 2026, at the Archon Agape Family Luncheon, during the annual Archon Weekend at the New York Hilton Hotel in New York City.

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate give the Sophia Award for Excellence annually 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, remarked: "Archon Michael Kratsios exemplifies the Archons' mission to bring the light of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and unwavering dedication to the global ministry of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to all sectors of society, including the scientific, the political, and cultural realms."

Archon Kratsios stated: "I am immensely honored to receive the Sophia Award for Excellence, and will continue to strive in all my endeavors for the Church and in my professional life to show myself worthy of this recognition. Above all, I am deeply honored to be a part of this group of hard-working, dedicated, and devoted individuals who are determined to support and defend our Holy Mother Church, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople."

Archon Hon. Michael J. Kratsios is President Trump's science and technology advisor. As an Assistant to the President and the thirteenth Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Michael oversees the development and execution of the Nation's science and technology agenda.



PHOTO BY D. PANAGOS

New Regional Commanders Appointed

With the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and in consultation with the respective hierarch presiding in each Metropolis, Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, has appointed Archon Demetrios J. Ziozis as Regional Commander for the Direct Archdiocesan District, Archon Konstantinos Mastorakis as Regional Commander for the Metropolis of Atlanta and Archon James G. Lakerdas, Esq. as Regional Commander for Chicago. National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis quoted the following:







PHOTOS BY D. PANAGOS

Archon Demetrios Ziozis has been an exceptional Archon since the very moment of his investiture in 2019, and for many years before that, a devoted servant of God and His Holy Church. His entire family, including his beloved wife Vasiliki, is strongly committed to our Holy Orthodox Faith and to Hellenism. Time and time again, with tremendous devotion to Almighty God and His All-Holy Mother, Archon Jim has offered his time, talent and treasure to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America."

Archon Konstantinos Mastorakis already has an impressive record of faithful service to God's Holy Church, offering his Time, Talent and Treasure. He is a FOUNDER of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation and a participant of the Exarch's Appeal. Archon Dino will be an outstanding Regional Commander, and no doubt will distinguish himself in the coming months and years, as he joins more senior Regional Commanders."

Archon James G. Lakerdas is an experienced and accomplished attorney and has also been a devoted son of our Holy Mother Church of Constantinople for five decades now, serving his home parish and numerous Hellenic charitable organizations in numerous capacities. I am looking forward to the energy and vision he will bring to our Archon activities in the Metropolis of Chicago."

The Enthronement of

Archbishop Apostolos of Canada

Archon Executive Committee Joins Celebrations

From September 18–20, 2026, enthronement celebrations were held for His Eminence Archbishop Apostolos of Canada, culminating in his formal enthronement on September 19, at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Toronto, Ontario. His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Great Britain presided as the Patriarchal Representative of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate were represented throughout the festivities through the participation of members of its executive committee. The occasion drew a distinguished array of civic and religious dignitaries, including former Prime Minister of Canada Jean Chrétien and Premier of Ontario Doug Ford, reflecting the historic significance of the event.



Father Alexander Karloutsos, Archon Spiritual Advisor and National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, greet the former Prime Minister of Canada Jean Chrétien and Premier of Ontario Doug Ford before the Enthronement service.

PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA

















PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA



The 48th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress
Moments from Cleveland

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate played a significant role throughout the 48th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, held in Cleveland, Ohio, from June 29 through July 2, 2026.

The Congress opened with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church in North Royalton, Ohio, followed by the official opening of the Exhibition Hall at the Huntington Convention Center, where delegates, clergy, and faithful from across the Archdiocese gathered for the biennial assembly.

A highlight of the week was the Archon Family Reception, held on Tuesday, June 30. The reception welcomed Archons and their families from throughout the country and was led by Regional Commander Nicholas E. Terezis, Archon Ekdikos, and Regional Commander Nicholas J. Tranto, Archon Protekdikos. His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America offered the invocation, while Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, Archon Grand Aktouarios and National Commander of the Archons, served as Master of Ceremonies.



This year, the Archons sponsored an exhibit booth to bring awareness to our mission.

The evening featured special presentations by Archbishop Elpidophoros, His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh, His Eminence Metropolitan Arsenios of Austria, His Eminence Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, and the Very Reverend Grand Archimandrite Iakovos. Metropolitan Arsenios offered remarks on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, followed by a response from Archbishop Elpidophoros in his capacity as Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The reception concluded with the benediction offered by Metropolitan Savas.



The Exarch, host Metropolitan and representatives from the Ecumenical Patriarchate were recognized with special honors during the Archon Family Reception.

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate continued their hospitality by hosting the Clergy Family Dinner at the Great Lakes Science Center. The event provided an opportunity for clergy families, hierarchs, and Archons to gather in fellowship while celebrating the shared ministry and mission of the Church.

The Congress concluded with the Plenary Session, bringing to a close several days of worship, deliberation, fellowship, and ministry.

PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA















PHOTOS BY J. MINDALA

Archon National Commander Dr. Limberakis Receives AHEPA Archbishop Iakovos Humanitarian Award

Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis received the AHEPA Archbishop Iakovos Humanitarian Award on July 31, 2026, during the AHEPA Supreme Convention Grand Banquet in Philadelphia. The award recognizes distinguished service to human and civil rights and religious freedom.

Presented by AHEPA Supreme President Archon Emmanuel Chris Kaitson, the honor recognized Dr. Limberakis' long-standing advocacy for religious freedom and human dignity. In his remarks, Dr. Limberakis reflected on Archbishop Iakovos' historic 1965 march alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, describing his example as a powerful demonstration of moral courage.

Connecting that legacy to the Archons' mission today, Dr. Limberakis highlighted ongoing religious and human rights abuses around the world, including challenges facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey, persecution of Uyghurs in China and Christians in Nigeria, and the oppression of women and girls in Afghanistan.



National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, who is joined by his family, is presented with the AHEPA Archbishop Iakovos Humanitarian Award by Supreme President E. Chris Kaitson, during the AHEPA Supreme Convention in Philadelphia, PA.

"Religious freedom is not a Greek issue, nor a Christian one, nor even an American one. It is a human issue," Dr. Limberakis said, calling on others to follow Archbishop Iakovos' example by standing courageously against injustice.

During the evening, AHEPA Past Supreme President Archon George G. Horiates also announced that he and his wife, Lisa, were becoming FOUNDERS of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, joining Supreme President Chris Kaitson and numerous AHEPANS from the United States and Canada.

Archon Webinar to Focus on Women in the Orthodox Tradition

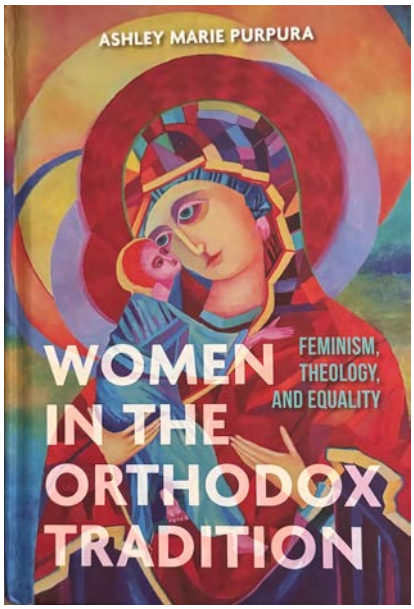
With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, the Archon Diakonia Ministry on Women in Orthodoxy will host a webinar featuring Ashley M. Purpura, Ph.D., to discuss her book, Women in the Orthodox Tradition: Feminism, Theology, and Equality.

The webinar will take place on Sunday, November 8, from 7-8 p.m. EST. Listeners can register for the webinar on Zoom.

This unique and enlightening webinar will be part of the Diakonia Ministry on Women in Orthodoxy's commitment to exploring the history, present, and future of women in the Orthodox Church.

Dr. Purpura's book explores the ways that the Orthodox tradition shapes and is in turn shaped by women's roles, voices, and action in the Church. Following Dr. Purpura's presentation, there will be a question-answer session.

Dr. Ashley M. Purpura is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies at Purdue University. Her research focuses on the history of Christian thought and practice and the potential of Christianity's historical sources for shaping and reshaping contemporary religious perspectives among Orthodox Christian practitioners and communities. Purpura holds a Master of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School and a Ph.D. in the History of Christianity from Fordham University.



PHOTOS FROM AHEPA

Archons' 4th Annual Pilgrimage Of Discovery

Eighteen Orthodox Young Adults Arrive In Constantinople



PHOTOS FROM PILGRIMAGE OF DISCOVERY

Eighteen Orthodox Christian young adults from across the United States arrived in Constantinople on August 2 for the 4th Annual Pilgrimage of Discovery (POD), founded and supported by the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and generous donors.

The seven-day, all-expenses-paid pilgrimage immerses participants in the history, faith, and challenges of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Pilgrims visit sacred and historic sites including the Panagia of Blachernae, Hagia Sophia, and Halki Theological School, culminating in a private audience with His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the Phanar.

During an audience with pilgrims on August 7, His All-Holiness held up a banner announcing the Ecumenical Patriarch Poster Contest, giving his endorsement to this program that is designed to educate Orthodox youth about his global spiritual ministry.

Upon returning home, participants join the POD Alumni Leadership Network, sharing their experiences, educating their communities, and raising awareness and support for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its future.

This year's pilgrims, representing every Greek Orthodox Metropolis in the United States and the Archdiocesan District, were:

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Kaitlin Kaye, Amerisa Kyriazis, Maria Menoutis

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Stavros Boardman, Mary Moshos, Katherine Spetseris, Nicholas Staviski

Metropolis of Boston
Elaina Stamas

Metropolis of Chicago
Theodore Greanias, Maria Mantice, Athanasia Tortorelis, Niko Vasilopoulos

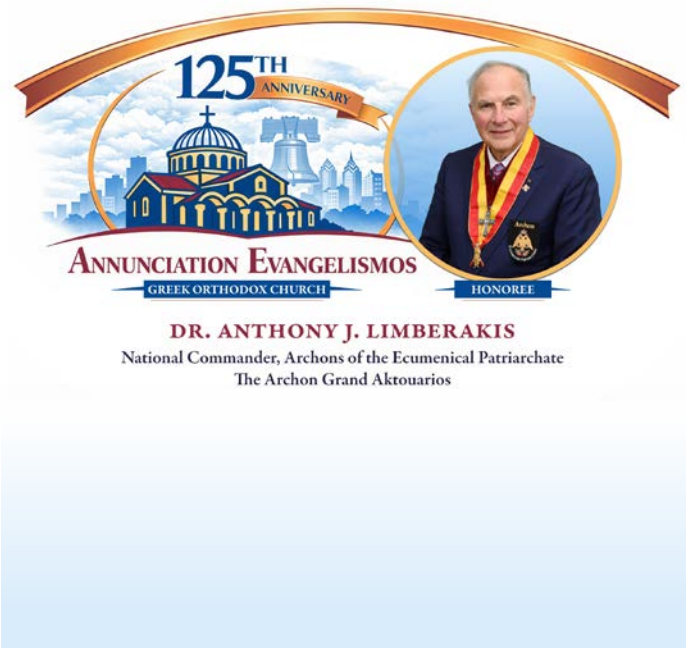
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Metropolis of Pittsburgh
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Metropolis of San Francisco
Aleksandar Lucic, Alanis Tziouvalas



Historic Parish Honoring National Commander Limberakis

National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis will be honored at the celebration of the 125th Anniversary of the Church of the Annunciation–Evangelismos, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, a Philadelphia suburb, for a lifetime of diakonia to the Holy Mother Church. During his 28-year tenure as National Commander, domestic and international religious freedom initiatives were developed, Diakonia Ministries for all Archons were inaugurated, and — most importantly — the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation was established, to ensure the financial security of the Holy Mother Church in perpetuity.

A unique distinction of the Annunciation is its ties to Archon Leadership, as it was the home parish of the second National Commander, Dr. Anthony G. B. Borden (1976 to 1989), the late father-in-law of Dr. Limberakis, as well as the current and longest-serving National Commander, Dr. Limberakis.



Canadian Archon Delegation Visits Ottawa To Advance Issues Regarding The Ecumenical Patriarchate

Archon Evagelos Sotiropoulos, the President of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Archons in Canada, and Archon Theodore Papadatos traveled to Ottawa, the capital of Canada, on June 4, 2026, to meet with parliamentarians for discussions on the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Senator and Archon Leo Housakos joined them there.



Archons Present At St. Stephen's Summer Camp In South Carolina

Archons Gus Kazakos, Dr. Terry Sarantou, Drew Theodore, and Steve Trakas developed an Archon presentation to be delivered to over 500+ campers and youth advisors during St. Stephen's Summer Camp held at the Alexios Retreat Center in Salem, South Carolina.



Archon Scurtis Becomes First Recipient Of Borden Regional Commander Award

Archon John C. Scurtis, who recently concluded his tenure as Regional Commander for the Metropolis of Atlanta, South Florida, is the inaugural recipient of the newly established Dr. Anthony G. B. Borden Regional Commander Award for Distinguished Diakonia. The honor was conferred on May 30, 2026, at Gallaghers Steakhouse in Boca Raton, Florida, in recognition of his years of devoted service. Archon Scurtis now holds the distinguished status of Regional Commander Emeritus and Archon Konstantinos Mastorakis has succeeded him.



Hellenic Federation Of New Jersey Honors Archon Tsougarakis With Lifetime Achievement Award

The Hellenic Federation of New Jersey honored Archon George A. Tsougarakis, Esq. with the Alexander the Great Lifetime Achievement Award. This prestigious and respected award was conferred upon Archon Tsougarakis at the Foundation's Thirteenth Annual Awards Gala, June 7, 2026.

For many years now, Archon George has demonstrated in numerous capacities his devotion to our Ecumenical Patriarchate and our Church as a whole.



Archon Steve And Frosene Zeis Receive Honorary Degrees From University Of North Carolina Asheville

On May 8, 2026, Chancellor Kimberly van Noort and the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina Asheville bestowed honorary degrees upon Archon Stavros (Steve) Zeis and his beloved wife Frosene, in view of their many years of dedicated philanthropy and support for the university.

These honorary degrees are a recognition of a lifetime of consistent and dedicated diakonia. The three-million-dollar gift that Archon Steve and Frosene made to UNC Asheville is to this day the largest private gift that university has ever received.

Archons Expand Sprouts Program with Multi-Language Lessons and Launch of "Delving Deeper" Curriculum



The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are pleased to announce two major expansions to their Sprout Global Educational Initiative: the release of Spanish and French language translations for the program's Foundations lesson series, and the official launch of Delving Deeper, a new set of advanced lessons for Sunday School classrooms across the country.

Since its introduction, Sprouts has given Sunday School educators an engaging, age-appropriate way to introduce students — from Pre-K through high school — to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the structure of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the broader mission of protecting Orthodox identity and religious freedom around the world.

Foundations Now Available in Español and Français

The Foundations series — the program's core curriculum, spanning Pre-K through high school — is now available in full Spanish and French translations alongside the original English lessons. Teacher guides, activities, and student materials for every grade band, from Pre-K–1st Grade through High School, can now be downloaded in three languages, making the program accessible to a broader range of Orthodox families and parishes worldwide.

Foundations lessons introduce students to the identity and role of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the meaning of clerical vestments, the governance and history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the Patriarchate's ongoing challenges — including the continued closure of the Halki Theological School — through age-appropriate activities, videos, and discussion guides.

Delving Deeper Launches as the Program's Advanced Track

Building on the foundation established by the original curriculum, the Archons have also launched Delving Deeper, a companion set of lessons designed to take students further into the life and legacy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Available now for all grade levels, Delving Deeper lessons include:

- Pre-K through 4th Grade: Lessons on Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's role as "The Green Patriarch," including hands-on activities such as building pinecone bird feeders, creating crosses from recycled materials, and writing poems on caring for God's creation.
- Upper Elementary: A study of the Phanar and the major feast days observed there throughout the liturgical year, culminating in a student-built calendar of commemorations.
- Middle School: An in-depth look at the Halki Theological School, including its history, closure, and the ongoing international effort to reopen it.
- High School: A critical examination of the systematic persecution of religious minorities in Turkey, guided by primary-source reading and a call to action for student advocacy.

Together, these lessons help our Sunday School educators build both breadth and depth in our students' understanding of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Foundations introduces students to who our Ecumenical Patriarch is and what he represents; Delving Deeper invites them to engage more critically with the issues he and our Church face today.

Both the Foundations and Delving Deeper lesson series, along with supporting teacher resources, glossary materials, and videos, are available free of charge at archons.org/sprouts.

Archons Honor Archon Louis Laros Of Blessed Memory At OCF NIKA House At The University Of Illinois



Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Metropolis of Chicago gathered on September 13 and 14, 2026, at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign to take part in the U of I's Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) Alumni Weekend. In conjunction with the event, the Archons, led by Archon Thomas Kanelos, held a plaque dedication ceremony at the NIKA House Orthodox Christian Student Living Center in memory of Archon Louis Laros, Protonotarios, and gave a presentation at Three Hierarchs Greek Orthodox Church.

Funeral of Inspector John V. Kassimatis

On June 19, 2026, the funeral of Archon Inspector John V. Kassimatis took place at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Hempstead, NY and was officiated by His Grace Bishop Athenagoras. National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis offered the Eulogy and the NYNJ Port Authority Officers were led by Superintendent Michael Brown.





PHOTOS BY D. PANAGOS

John Lewis Marks
Depoutatos
Chicago, IL
Departed on January 19, 2026

Tom Nixon
Dikaiophylax
Charlotte, NC
Departed on January 23, 2026

John C. Harbilas
Eftaxias
Mechanicsburg, PA
Departed on February 4, 2026

George H. Kossaras
Ostiarios
Scottsdale, AZ
Departed on February 20, 2026

Ernie Anastos
Hieromnimon
New York, NY
Departed on March 12, 2026

Spiro C. Hondros
Ostiarios
Charlotte, NC
Departed on March 23, 2026

Dr. Louis J. Roussalis
Aktouarios
Casper, WY
Departed on March 29, 2026

Inspector John V. Kassimatis
Depoutatos
Hempstead, NY
Departed on June 15, 2026

G. Thomas Yearout
Ekdikos
Birmingham, AL
Departed on June 17, 2026

Theodore G. Kays
Eftaxias
Miami, FL
Departed on July 16, 2026

George P. Vourvoulias
Eftaxias
Green Lake, WI
Departed on Sep 3, 2026

Michael Johnson
Depoutatos
Denver, CO
Departed on Sep 20, 2026

Eternal be their memory!

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH
BARTHOLOMEW FOUNDATION
For the Sacred See of Saint Andrew

FOUNDERS $100,000 Donors

The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation: For the Sacred See of Saint Andrew, has been established as an endowment by the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Ours is a global mission and invitation for everyone across the various Eparchies of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to be united as one. Together, we can ensure that the Ecumenical Patriarchate, "the Light - continues to shine in the darkness."

www.bartholomew.foundation

List as of September 21, 2026

As of August 31, 2026, the Foundation assets are:

$38,540,300

comprised of $26,484,912 in cash and investments and $12,055,388 in pledges receivable.

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105 Fulfilled Founders

188 Remaining Founders

18 Founding Parishes

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George P. Psihogios • Kastrinsios • 10/26/2008

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