



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW ADDRESSES METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO CLERGY-LAITY ASSEMBLY LIVE VIA SKYPE

Champaign, IL—To the surprise of gathered participants, His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople personally addressed the combined Clergy-Laity Assembly and Philoptochos Conference of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago live through video conference (Skype).

This is the first time the Ecumenical Patriarch has used this means to address his spiritual children at a Metropolis Assembly in the United States. The theme of the Assembly was “Orthodox Christianity in the Contemporary World,” and Metropolis Chancellor, Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, noted that this advance in communication was just another example of innovation to advance the ministry of the Church as he announced the surprise event.

Greek Orthodox Christians from throughout the 59 parishes of the Metropolis of Chicago were able to both receive the blessings of His All-Holiness, and also to extend their prayers for health and continued success in ministry, as their spiritual leader observes this year his twentieth anniversary as successor to Saint Andrew the Apostle, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch.

Among extensive comments to the clergy and laity gathered at the Hilton Garden Inn of Champaign, IL, His All-Holiness affirmed his presence in prayer and spirit, united as one body, noting that “indeed Christ is and ever shall be in our midst.”

Actually seeing the assembly members, His All-Holiness added, “we are able to behold the presence of Christ in the face of every human being and discern the trace of Christ in all of creation. Christ is, indeed, in the contemporary world and in our midst.”

Wishing the Clergy-Laity and Philoptochos Conference every success, His All-Holiness emphasized the need to “never forget to respond to the needs of our neighbor, especially during these difficult times in the global world. The Church always becomes the Church when it identifies with the most vulnerable.”

Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago, spiritual leader of Greek Orthodox Christians in a six-state region (IL, WI, MN, IA, MO, IN) noted that “we are both excited for this opportunity and blessed that His All-Holiness granted us this audience when we as a gathering of clergy and faithful together are seeking to minimize the distance between persons within the Church, between the Church and the greater community and throughout the world. Now even the physical distance between our Holy Metropolis and the Mother Church of Constantinople has been reduced thanks to the innovations of modern technology.”

The entire Patriarchal address and exchange may be viewed on the Metropolis of Chicago website (www.chicago.goarch.org).