



ORDER OF SAINT ANDREW
ARCHONS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
Defenders of the Faith

2021 REGIONAL COMMANDERS' REPORT

2021 METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO REGIONAL COMMANDERS' REPORT

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The following report reflects the Metropolis of Chicago Archon activities from October 2020 to October 2021. Activities are as follows:

- 1) The Metropolis of Chicago Archons were notified in October 2020 that they were awarded the Hellenic Foundation Matching Grant, one of two matching grant opportunities the Chicago Archons applied for in August 2020. The grant will help them fulfill their “Pilgrimage of Discovery” initiative, which is comprised of travel, education and ultimately, a testimonial, focused on the Young Adult Leaders in the Metropolis of Chicago and their journey to Constantinople. The Travel, Education and the creation of the pilgrimage will focus around selected Young Adult Leaders of the Metropolis of Chicago, who will partake on a journey to Constantinople to meet with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and representatives of the Patriarchate. Along with the Young adults, the program is conceived to have officials from the Hellenic Foundation, Metropolis of Chicago Archons and Metropolis members, who at their own expense, will visit Constantinople at a time to be determined, subject to travel or security restrictions. The travel experience — when completed — will be shared with the Metropolis of Chicago community.

The Pilgrimage of Discovery program's objective is to allow young leaders of our community to see, in person, the place where Orthodoxy started and to have an opportunity to speak directly with and learn from His All Holiness, Patriarchal Hierarchs and representatives of the Patriarchate. This will also provide young leaders the opportunity to ask questions first hand as they spiritually grow and enrich their Orthodox faith. In addition, they will attempt to visit historical religious sites, including, but not limited to, the Patriarchate, St. George, Hagia Sophia, Halki and the Prinkipo Greek Orphanage. The goal is for young adults to learn and see firsthand the beginning of Orthodoxy, the ministries of the Patriarchate and to engage with the leader of approximately 300,000,000 Orthodox Christians, the First Among Equals.

- 2) On November 29, 2020, Metropolis of Chicago Archons attended Vespers Services for their Patron Saint, Saint Andrew, at St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church in Chicago. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on the amount of people who can gather, only limited number of Archons could attend. This year the following Archons attended: Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos, Alex Gianaras, Tom Kanelos, Wesley Stinich and Archon Elect Judge Jeff Chrones. As per tradition, His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago led clergy and the Archons in a procession into the church prior the service. After Vespers, Archon Elect Judge Jeff Chrones gave a speech on what it means to become an Archon to all in attendance.
- 3) On November 30, 2020, the Renaissance Foundation notified the Metropolis of Chicago Archons that they were awarded a matching grant to further their mission to spread awareness of the issues facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the local level. The Renaissance Foundation Grant is similar to the Kulis Foundation Matching Grant Program that the Metropolis of Chicago Archons received in 2016.
- 4) Due to the pandemic, Metropolis of Chicago Archons participated in the first Virtual Archon Weekend hosted by the Archon National Council on December 12, 2020. The successful all-day event was comprised of two sessions. The newly selected Archon Class of 2020, the Archon Elects, participated in the morning session, which included a Boot Camp for the

newly elected Archons. During the Boot Camp, Archon John Zavitsanos, Esq. together with National Council member Archon Rocky Sisson, and Regional Commanders Archon John G. Manos and Archon Gus M. Pablecas, addressed the Archons-elect as they are about to assume the serious responsibility to defend the Holy Mother Church. The afternoon session consisted of the Archon National Council's annual meeting where all Archons were encouraged to attend. Judge Jeffrey Chrones was named Archon-Elect for the Metropolis of Chicago. He will be invested in New York on October 31, 2021 along with Archon Elect Dr. George Bovis.

- 5) As per the requirements of the matching grant program established between the Kulis Foundation and the Metropolis of Chicago Archons, Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos provided quarterly reports to the non-profit for accounting purposes. In addition, the same quarterly reports were sent to the Archons' National Office. The funds are used to further their mission to spread awareness of the issues facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the local level.
- 6) In February, Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos formally started fundraising for the two matching grant opportunities that the Metropolis of Chicago Archons are participating in: the Renaissance Fund Matching Grant and the Hellenic Foundation Matching Grant. As of May 2021, the Archons have raised \$19,450 toward the two-year \$20,000 Renaissance Fund Matching Grant; and \$19,700 toward the \$23,900 Hellenic Fund Matching Grant.
- 7) In March, two additional line-items were established through Archon National Headquarters to handle funds collected for the Renaissance Fund and the Hellenic Foundation initiatives.
- 8) Throughout the year the Regional Commanders emailed news and information about local and national Archon-related events and activities, and forwarded articles and presentations to Archons in their region. In addition, the Regional Commanders forwarded news releases and information on Archon-related matters to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago, with the request to post the information on their website and social media.

- 9) Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos continued serving as Co-Chairs, along with Archon Nicholas G. Loutsion, on the Archon Regional Commanders Liaison Committee (ARCL). In this position, they entered into dialogue with Regional Commanders throughout the United States to help facilitate ideas, programs and further involvement from the Archons in their areas. Along with the drafting assistance of Metropolis of Chicago Archon Perry Siatis, a detailed report of the committee's findings and recommendations was submitted to the Archon National Council.
- 10) The Regional Commanders participated in all National Council monthly meetings held via telephone and videoconference to share ideas and information. The Regional Commanders were also appointed to the Archon National Council.
- 11) Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the following Metropolis of Chicago Archon-related public activities were cancelled: participation in the Metropolis of Chicago Vasilopita cutting ceremony; attending Bright Friday Services at the Zoodogos Pigi chapel at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center; the Archon Annual Business Retreat at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, Wisconsin; the Archon annual pre-parade meet and greet and participation in the Greek Independence Day parade in Chicago.
- 12) Due to the pandemic, the Metropolis of Chicago Archons held a virtual business meeting via Zoom on Saturday, May 8, 2021. The event replaced this year's Annual Metropolis of Chicago Archon Business Retreat, which was scheduled for May 7 and 8 at the Saint Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, Wisconsin but cancelled for the second year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago, The Very Rev. Fr. Timothy Bakakos, Chancellor of the Metropolis of Chicago, Father Chrysanthos Kerkeres, Regional Commanders Gus Pablecas and John Manos, along with Archons Robert Buhler, Fred Chapekis, Jeff Chrones, Alex Gianaras, John Hilaris, Lou Laros, Tom Kanelos, Paul Lillios, Lou Malevitis, Perry Siatis, Wes Stinich, BJ Vranas, and Costa Zografopoulos participated. During the conference call, Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos updated

fellow Archons on Metropolis of Chicago Archon-related activities, and initiated discussion on ways to promote the Patriarchate and other Archon-related matters within the community at large. Similar to their periodic teleconferences with fellow Chicago Archons, the Regional Commanders host virtual calls with fellow Metropolis of Chicago Archons as a way to involve and update all of them on current and future initiatives.

- 13) On May 16, 2021 the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago, the Metropolis of Chicago Archons, and the Hellenic Society of Constantinople in Illinois hosted a national presentation via Zoom Webinar with the community at large titled, “Hagia Sophia 1453 and 2021: From Past Conquest to Current Captivity.” The keynote speakers were Dr. Alexandros Kyrou, Ph.D., Professor of History at Salem State University, Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou, Visiting Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution at Tufts University, Lena Argiri, Washington D.C. Correspondent for Greek Public Broadcasting ERT, and Dr. Anthony Limberakis, National Commander, Order of St. Andrew the Apostle. Bishop Timothy Bakakos offered the opening prayer and opening remarks, and the question-and-answer period was conducted by the Regional Commanders. Archon-Elect Jeff Chrones, Society of Constantinople Member Hellena Chrones, and Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos coordinated the event.
- 14) On October 8, 2021, the Metropolis of Chicago Archons held a Religious Freedom Presentation during the Metropolis of Chicago Clergy Laity Assembly in St. Louis. Nearly 400 participants attended the assembly after all the attendees provided a 48-hour negative COVID test. Regional Commanders Gus M. Pablecas and John G. Manos, accompanied by Archons John Balourdos, Stilianos Efstratiadis, John Fotopoulos, John Galanis, Alex Gianaras, John Hilaris, Tom Kanelos, Lou Laros, Johnny Mangouras, Perry Siatis, and Bill Vranas, delivered an engaging 45-minute PowerPoint presentation on the key issues facing our Patriarchate. They also highlighted the positive ministries of the Green Patriarch that His All Holiness Bartholomew has accomplished even under the difficult restrictions that have been placed upon the Patriarchate. The presentation included a question-and-answer session His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael concluded the presentation with a rallying request for the lay

community to support the Archons, noting that it is everyone's duty to support the Patriarchate.

As part of the CLA, the Metropolis Archons also held an Archon local productive business meeting with His Eminence Metropolitan National to discuss the 2022 calendar and prepare for the arrival of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at Notre Dame, Indiana on October 28. The Metropolis of Chicago Archons also donated \$3000 for the Clergy Laity Assembly.

- 15) His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew will visit the Metropolis of Chicago at Notre Dame, Indiana on October 27-28, 2021 as part of His visit to the United States. The events at Notre Dame will include many aspects such as church Services at St. Andrew's Greek Orthodox Church and culminating with His All Holiness receiving an honorary degree from the University of Notre Dame at an academic convocation and deliver an address on environmental stewardship. The Metropolis of Chicago Archon Regional Commanders along with a contingency of Metropolis of Chicago Archons will welcome and greet His All Holiness for this historic event.
- 16) The following Metropolis of Chicago Archons fell asleep in the Lord: Gus A. Chafoulas, *Hieromnimon*, on December 11, 2020; Harry M. Petrakis, *Notarios*, on February 2, 2021; Mr. George D. Danigeles, *Depoutatos*, on February 4, 2021; Anthony A. Nichols, *Notarios*, on April 1, 2021, Dr. George Korkos, *Aktouarios*, on May 27, 2021.