



## GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

### ARCHIEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 46/2022

#### Archiepiscopal Encyclical on the Feast of the Annunciation and Greek Independence Day

March 25, 2022

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America.

*To You the Champion, I your City dedicate a feast of victory and thanksgiving,  
as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos. (Kontakion of the Theotokos)*

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, as we chant our hymn of “victory and thanksgiving,” we remember our sisters and brothers struggling in Ukraine at this very hour, who are under a brutal and inhuman attack by their neighbor, even their fellow Orthodox Christians. We remember that last year, as we celebrated the Bicentennial of the Greek Revolution, that in those early days of the struggle for independence, many Greeks came home from abroad – from Odessa and Kyiv and other regions of the Slavic world to fight for the freedom of Greece. And today, we hold dear in our hearts not only our Ukrainian brethren, but our fellow Greeks who are still in Mariupol, holding on with bare threads against the evil thrust against them. And we remember with pity the Russian people who are deceived by their leaders, and those poor soldiers being sent to kill their own flesh and blood.

This day, the Day of the Annunciation and the Day of the commencement of the Liberation of Greece, is a day when we direct all our love and all our compassion to those



who are still fighting for democracy, for freedom, for truth. Like the Heroes of 1821, they too are willing to die for something greater than themselves, for a greater good.

Let us hold fast in prayer and supplication. Let us honor their struggle by living every day in gratitude and rejoicing for the freedom that we enjoy both in America and in Greece. Let us join our minds and hearts with that of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, whose icon rises over six meters high in the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kyiv – where she has raised her hands in mighty intercessions for over one thousand years. She is the Ὑπέρομαχος who watched over the Heroes of 1821, and she will watch over the heroes of Ukraine, and grant them victory over their unjust and fratricidal enemy.

Long live Greece! Long Ukraine!

With paternal love in the Lord Jesus Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America