



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHIEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 250/2021

Archiepiscopal Encyclical for the Commemoration of OXI Day

October 28, 2021

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.

With hardship we endured misery; we were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Alleluia.

(Doxology for October 28th, the Feast of Victory)

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, we celebrate OXI DAY – when the People of Greece echoed a resounding “No!” to fascism and tyranny, and an unmistakable “Yes!” to freedom. It was a decision that cost Hellas dearly, as the Occupation of Greece (Κατοχή) by the Nazi forces was brutal for all Greeks. Many fought back and died in the struggle for their homeland. Many starved on the streets of our cities, as a result of the awful oppression. The Jewish population of Greece was decimated. The land was ravaged by war. But in the midst of this life and death contest, the Greek People never lost their nerve. Their “No!” to oppression turned into an adamant affirmation of democracy, liberty, and self-determination.



There are still some alive in our communities who remember this time. They are fading with the years, so we must do all that we can to honor them, their heroism, and their sacrifice. That is why we commemorate OXI Day throughout our sacred Archdiocese, and we ask for our communities to celebrate the Doxology for the Day. Our collective act of memory is what connects us to this “greatest generation,” and reminds us of the price of freedom.

This year, while we are celebrating OXI Day, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is with us in the United States. His voice reminds us, as the Scripture says, that “in Christ all the promises of God are ‘Yes’” (II Corinthians 1:20). Those who said “No” to oppression, said “Yes” to liberty, and the greatest freedom that any human being can know is the liberty of the Spirit of Christ.

My beloved Christians, in this Bicentennial Year of the Greek War for Independence, let us honor the heroes of OXI day and all of Greece, for their heroism and sacrifice. May we always be blessed to realize such courage in our daily lives, and say “Yes” to our liberty in Christ Jesus.

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America