



My Beloved Ones,

This coming Sunday we are blessed to observe what our Archdiocese has called National Leadership 100 Sunday. Many might wonder exactly what that means, for an organization like Leadership 100 is not especially well known by many of the laity in our church.

In 1984, His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos of blessed memory established a special endowment fund, then known as Leadership 100 (later named the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund, in his honor). The stated goal of this fund was and is *"...provide an opportunity for Greek Orthodox leaders to support the life-sustaining ministries of the Church."* Since its creation thirty-six years ago, Leadership 100 has distributed *"...\$60 million in grants that have ranged from providing scholarship funds for individuals studying for the priesthood at Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology to supporting a variety of National Ministries."*

In this Sunday's Gospel according to St. Luke, we hear of the Gadarene Demoniac, an exile among his own family and neighbors, until Christ casts out the man's many spiritual tormentors into a herd of swine. And what does the Physician of our souls and bodies require for this miracle? Only that the healed man, *"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.' So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him."* (Luke 8:39) Unlike the former possessed man, we are not called to declare the coming of the Kingdom of God. With His Father's will accomplished, the world knows of the great kindness of Jesus. However, like the former demoniac, who begged to become His disciple, we do also have the same responsibility to declare how much God has done for us; and Leadership 100 is one of the many ways this task is practically accomplished.

Here, in our own Metropolis of Atlanta, Leadership 100 generously provides support to our yearly St. Stephen's Summer Camp. Through their gifts, those who take part in this fund, do so, not for their own glory, but to help the Gospel take root in the hearts and minds of our young people; and so that after they return from a week of fellowship and reflection at our beloved, Diakonia Retreat Center, they are strengthened in their faith, as well as their love and devotion to Christ's Holy Church.

During challenging times such as those our world is presently experiencing, it brings me great joy to write such a message in steadfast support of Leadership 100, who are continuing to advance the cause of Orthodoxy and Hellenism, no matter the obstacles they encounter.

On this National Leadership 100 Sunday, may we offer up prayers for their good work, for continuing the legacy of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos of blessed memory, and for their unshakeable faith in the work of the Greek Orthodox Church here in the United States of America.

**+ALEXIOS**  
Metropolitan of Atlanta