



50th Anniversary of Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle



The Order of St. Andrew of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was organized on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 10, 1966 when His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos conferred

upon thirty outstanding laymen of the Church the various *Offikia* or Offices of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on behalf of His All Holiness Patriarch Athenagoras of blessed memory. They were honored because of their love, loyalty and support of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The [Offikia](#) for the Order of St. Andrew derive from some of the most prestigious offices of the ancient world. Originating in the Ancient Greek City-States, these civic offices were transformed when the Roman Empire embraced the Christian faith during the fourth century. As a consequence of this transition, not only were the office-holders important leaders of the Christian community, the offices themselves took on specific religious responsibilities for the service and promotion of the faith in the Roman Empire. The ancient order of Archons is, in fact, the oldest and most prestigious honor that can be bestowed upon a layman in the entire Christian world. The Order, under the supervision of its historian will be publishing an official, scholarly academic reference book on the Archon *Offikia*, including their derivation and historical development which will be released during Archon Weekend, October 14 ~ 16, 2016.

On the occasion of our 50th Anniversary, we take this opportunity to recommit ourselves as *Defenders of the Faith* to the Spiritual Center of world Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate under the extraordinary leadership of His All-Holiness Bartholomew, who observes his 25th Anniversary as Ecumenical Patriarch on November 2, 2016. We recommit ourselves to fighting for religious

freedom and the vitality of Saint Andrew's See, notwithstanding the oppressive environment where it is located and where religious freedom does not exist in that entire part of the world.

The Order is looking forward to support the efforts of His All-Holiness as he convenes the Holy and Great Council this June in Crete, the first such assembly of Orthodox prelates since 787 AD, the Seventh Ecumenical Council that took place in Nicaea, as well as all his initiatives from protecting the environment to promoting reconciliation among warring factions to unity among all Christians.

On this our 50th Anniversary, the Archons of America under the inspired leadership of His Eminence Geron Archbishop Demetrios of America, express our profound love and respect to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, our worldwide spiritual father, now for 25 years and with the anticipation that he will continue for many, many more years his pious, intrepid and Christ-like spiritual leadership.

In the Service of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,



Anthony J. Limberakis, MD
Archon Aktouarios
National Commander



The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle is comprised of Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate who have been honored for their outstanding service to The Orthodox Church by having a Patriarchal title, or "offikion," bestowed upon them by His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. Those upon whom this title of the Mother Church has been conferred are known as "Archons of the Great Church of Christ," and the titles are personally conferred by the Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios.

The Order of St. Andrew's fundamental goal and mission is to promote the religious freedom, wellbeing and advancement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is headquartered in Istanbul, Turkey.

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