



**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA  
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL**

Prot. No. 22/2025

**Archepiscopal Encyclical on the Feast of the Three Hierarchs and the Day of Greek Letters**

January 30, 2025

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

*... philosophy more especially was given to the Greeks, as a covenant peculiar to them — being, as it is, a stepping-stone to the philosophy according to Christ....*

*(Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, 6:viii.)*

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

As we celebrate the Feast of the Three Holy Hierarchs and the Day of Greek Letters, let us consider the implications of this profound observation of a Christian writer who flourished 150 years before these Great Church Fathers, Clement of Alexandria. When he speaks of philosophy as a “covenant peculiar” to Greeks, he recognizes a fundamental truth that is the foundation for the celebrations of January 30. The revelation and salvific actions that the Lord Jesus Christ manifested in the Holy Land were not only for the local populace. Through the incredible educational labors and philosophical agility of the Church Fathers, the Gospel of our Lord was made intelligible to the pagan Roman Empire, which would eventually be transformed by the Great Constantine three centuries after the Resurrection. Greek, the lingua franca of the Mediterranean environs, would power the Message — the Logos of the Gospel — to find purchase throughout the entire Western World.

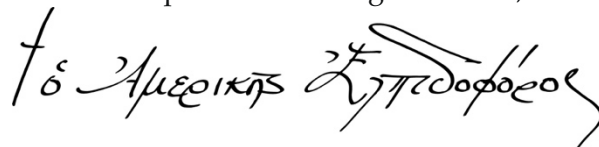
Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom are perhaps the greatest examples of the innovation and adaptation of that “covenant peculiar.” They combine in themselves the fruition of the Greek philosophical mind with the faith and understanding of the

Gospel of our Lord. All were Hierarchs (two virtually against their own desires), and all are revered throughout the entirety of Christendom as some of the greatest Christian minds ever to flourish. Their writings remain a testament to the genius of the marriage of the highest mental achievements of the Hellenic spirit with the Message — the Logos that was carried by the Apostles “to the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The Three Holy Hierarchs understood that faith and reason are not opposed, but rather, are in service to one another. In our current age, where we are faced with the challenges of Artificial Intelligence and increasingly disconnected interpretations of what is factually true, the example of the Three Hierarchs is much more than a mere reminiscence of past attainments. Now, more than ever, the methodology of the Three Hierarchs is needed to regain a well-founded and well-rounded approach to science, philosophy and their roles with faith. Their legacy of the “covenant peculiar ... a stepping-stone to the philosophy according to Christ” is a guarantee that we shall abide a people of the truth, even as the Lord Jesus Christ revealed that He came to our world “to bear witness to the truth” (John 18:37b).

Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, let us honor this day by reclaiming the wisdom of reason and knowledge — exemplified by the “covenant peculiar” to the Greeks — and put it in the service of the Gospel in order to share the blessing of our heritage and faith with the world.

With paternal blessings in Christ,



† ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America