



**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA  
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL**

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**Archiepiscopal Encyclical for the Commemoration of OXI Day**

October 28, 2026

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Presvyteres and Diakonisses, 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

*“When the entire world had lost all hope, the Greek people dared to question the invincibility of the German menace, raising against it the proud spirit of freedom.”  
(President Franklin Roosevelt, U.S. Congress, June 10, 1943)*

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Even as the number of those who remain among us with a living memory of World War II diminishes, let us make the commitment never to forget the brave heroes of October 28, 1940, who took a seemingly hopeless stand against the Axis powers of evil and oppression. Indeed, as President Roosevelt noted, even as the whole world was losing hope, the Greek people stood upright – as we say in every Divine Liturgy: Στῶμεν καλῶς! Let us stand aright!

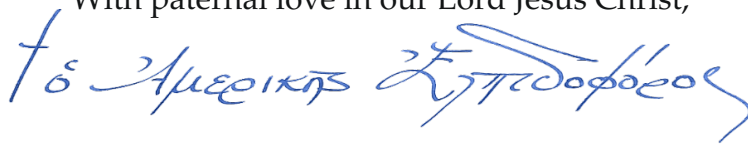
The courage of Hellenes is famous throughout history – from the Spartans at Thermopylae to the heroes of Marathon, Salamis, Plataea, and, of course, 1821. Like the hoplites of antiquity, the Greeks went forward, never retreating or turning back. Saint

Paul speaks of such a warrior of the spirit in his Letter to the Ephesians (6:13–17); note that there is no covering on the back:

*Therefore, take up the hoplite's full armor of God, that you may be able to stand in battle, holding the line on the evil day, and when you have prevailed in all things – to stand! Stand, therefore, with your loins girt about by truth. And put on the breastplate of righteousness. And have your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Above all else, take up the shield of faith, by which you will be able to extinguish the fiery arrows of the Evil One. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

Therefore, on this OXI Day, when we remember their bravery, their love of liberty, and the subsequent enormous suffering that Greece endured during her cruel and unjust occupation (Κατοχή), let us pause in deep gratitude and reflect on their offering of love for God and country. OXI Day abides forever in our hearts, where we pray that the memory of these heroes will be not only eternal but also inspiring to every generation that remembers their courage and sacrifice.

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,



+ ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America