



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 189/2023

**Archepiscopal Encyclical on the Day of
Commemoration of the Turkish Invasion of Cyprus**

July 23, 2023

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of the 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:

*“Upon the rivers of Babylon there we sat down and marched in the memorial of Zion.”
(Psalm 136, v. 1)*

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

Forty-nine years have passed since the sad summer of 1974, when on July 20, armed Turkish soldiers — with the tolerance of the great powers and Greece’s weakness, due to military dictatorship — invaded the most beautiful island of Hellenism, our beloved Cyprus. Memories of persecution and uprooting from ancestral homes remain alive today. Many Cypriots of Kyrenia, Ammochostos and other bloodied areas recount with great sorrow the uprooting, rapes, pillaging and destruction that took place, and they rightly demand justice and liberation of their homeland, so that the island may be reunited under the flag of the Republic of Cyprus and the European Union.

We are like the Jews of the aforementioned psalm, because we weep and ache when remembering this gross injustice and invasion; when recalling the beautiful beaches of Ammochostos and Kyrenia; when worshipping the monasteries of Saint George and Saint Andrew the Apostle in Karpasia, of Saint Barnabas in Salamis and Saint Spyridon in Tremetousia; when awakening the vivid memories of celebrations and festivals, of weddings and songs, in the long-suffering villages of the occupied regions, and of the peaceful coexistence of Turkish and Greek Cypriots.



However, despite the fact that almost half a century has passed, and despite the fact that the Turkish government seems to be unyielding to the appeals and resolutions of the United Nations, we continue to believe that the pressure exerted by the Greek and Cypriot governments, the philhellenic senators and representatives in Congress and the Senate, the Greek Cypriot organizations everywhere, and all of you Orthodox Christians — together with the earnest prayers that we offer today, Sunday, July 23, in a memorial service for the fallen heroes of the Cypriot struggle in all the parishes of our Sacred Archdiocese — I am confident can bring about the desired result of a strong, united and free Cyprus!

Your fervent supplicant before the God of righteousness,

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ

ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ. 189/2023

Αρχιεπισκοπική ἐγκύκλιος γιὰ τὴν ἡμέρα μνήμης γιὰ τὴν Τουρκικὴ εἰσβολὴ στὴν Κύπρο.

23 Ἰουλίου 2023

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τοὺς Μοναχοὺς καὶ τὶς Μοναχές, τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Κοινοτικῶν Συμβουλίων, τοὺς Ἐντιμολογιωτάτους Ἄρχοντες τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου, τὰ μέλη τῆς Ἠγεσίας τῶν 100, τὰ Ἡμερήσια καὶ Απογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὶς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴ Νεολαία, τὶς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὄργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμο πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

«Ἐπὶ τῶν ποταμῶν Βαβυλῶνος ἐκεῖ ἐκαθίσαμεν καὶ ἐκλαύσαμεν ἐν τῷ μνησθῆναι ἡμᾶς τῆς
Σιών» (Ψαλμὸς 136, στ. 1).

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Κυρίῳ,

Πέρασαν σαράντα ἑννέα ὁλόκληρα χρόνια ἀπὸ τὸ θλιβερὸ ἐκεῖνο καλοκαίρι τοῦ 1974, ὅταν στὶς 20 Ἰουλίου πάνοπλοι τουρκοὶ στρατιῶτες εἰσέβαλαν μὲ τὴν ἀνοχὴ τῶν μεγάλων δυνάμεων καὶ τὴν ἀδυναμία τῆς Ἑλλάδας, λόγω τῆς στρατιωτικῆς δικτατορίας, στὸ πιὸ ὁμορφο νησὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ, στὴν Κύπρο μας. Οἱ μῆνες τῶν διωγμῶν καὶ τοῦ ξεριζωμοῦ ἀπὸ τὶς πατρογονικὲς ἐστίες εἶναι ζωντανές καὶ πολλοὶ ἀπὸ τοὺς Κυπρίους τῆς Κερύνειας, τῆς Ἀμμοχώστου ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων αἱματοβαμμένων περιοχῶν, διηγοῦνται μὲ καημὸ τὸν ξεριζωμὸ τους, τοὺς βιασμούς, τὶς λεηλασίες καὶ τὶς καταστροφές, καὶ βέβαια ἀναπέμπουν τὸ δίκαιο αἶτημα τῆς ἀπόδοσης δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἀπελευθέρωσης τῆς πατρίδας τους, ὥστε ἡ μεγαλόνησος νὰ ἐνωθεῖ ξανά, κάτω ἀπὸ τὴ σημαία τῆς Κυπριακῆς Δημοκρατίας καὶ τῆς Εὐρωπαϊκῆς Ἐνώσεως.



Μοιάζουμε σὰν τοὺς ἔβραίους τοῦ ψαλμοῦ πὺ προαναφέραμε, διότι κλαῖμε καὶ πονᾶμε ὅταν θυμούμαστε τὴν κατάφορη ἀδικία καὶ τὴν εἰσβολή, ὅταν ἀναπολοῦμε τὰ ὄμορφα ἀκρογιάλια τῆς Ἀμμοχώστου καὶ τῆς Κερύνειας, ὅταν προσκυνοῦμε νοερῶς τὰ μοναστήρια τοῦ Ἁγίου Γεωργίου καὶ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Ἀνδρέα στὴν Καρπασία, τοῦ Ἁγίου Βαρνάβα στὴ Σαλαμίνα καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Σπυριδῶνος στὴν Τρεμετουσιά, ὅταν ξυπνοῦν οἱ ζωντανὲς ἀναμνήσεις ἀπὸ τοὺς χοροὺς καὶ τὰ πανηγύρια, ἀπὸ τοὺς γάμους καὶ τα τραγούδια στὰ πολὺπαθα χωριὰ τῶν κατεχόμενων περιοχῶν, ἀπὸ τὴν εἰρηνικὴ συμβίωση τουρκοκυπρίων καὶ ἑλληνοκυπρίων.

Ὅμως, παρὰ τὸ γεγονὸς ὅτι πέρασε σχεδὸν μισὸς αἰώνας, παρὰ τὸ ὅτι ἡ Τουρκικὴ κυβέρνησις φαίνεται ἀνυποχώρητη στὶς ἐκκλήσεις καὶ τὰ ψηφίσματα τοῦ Ὄργανισμοῦ Ἑνωμένων Ἐθνῶν, συνεχίζουμε νὰ πιστεύουμε ὅτι ἡ πίεσις πὺ ἀσκοῦν ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ καὶ ἡ Κυπριακὴ Κυβέρνησις, οἱ φιλέλληνες γερουσιαστὲς καὶ βουλευτὲς στὸ Κογκρέσο καὶ στὴ Γερουσία, οἱ ἀπανταχοῦ ἑλληνοκυπριακὲς ὀργανώσεις καὶ ὅλοι ἐσεῖς οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι χριστιανοὶ μαζί μὲ τὶς θερμὲς δεήσεις πὺ ἀναπέμπουμε σήμερα, μὲ τὸ τρισάγιο γιὰ τὴν ἀνάπαυση τῶν πεσόντων τοῦ Κυπριακοῦ ἀγῶνα, κατὰ τὴν Κυριακὴ στὶς 23 Ἰουλίου, σὲ ὅλες τὶς ἐνορίες τῆς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς μας, εἶμαι σίγουρος ὅτι μποροῦν νὰ φέρουν τὸ ποθούμενο: Μία δυνατὴ, ἐνωμένη καὶ ἐλεύθερη Κύπρος!

Διάπυρος πρὸς τὸν Θεὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης εὐχέτης,

† ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος