



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

August 27, 2009

HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN ALEXIOS ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE ICON OF THE PANAGIA SOUMELA

My dearly beloved in the Lord,

“In everything you do, put God first and He will direct you and crown your efforts with success. Proverbs 3:6

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we look forward to the beginning of a new Ecclesiastical year, I fervently pray that you and your Parish family will enjoy a peaceful, blessed, healthy and safe new year.

As you know, we have gone out of our way to contact the Metropolitans in Greece for replicas of the miracle-working icons from different monasteries. When the Faithful venerate these icons, they receive blessings.

As you know, we did this for the first time for the Monastery of the Panagia Prousiotissa in Troy, North Carolina, and Father Michael Varvarelis organized a beautiful celebration. Now the Monastery of the Paracletos in Antreville, South Carolina will be receiving a replica of the icon of the Panagia Soumela. I have appointed Father Tom Pistolis, Coastal Conference Vicar, and Dean of St. George Cathedral in Greenville, SC, assisted by Father Michael Varvarelis, Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Charlotte, NC, to work diligently and hand in hand with Gerontissa Pavlina and the sisters, to organize and communicate

information about this event so that we will have people there to receive the blessings on this beautiful and special occasion.

In November, during the celebration of the Archangel Michael Feast Day and Honors, the icon of the Panagia Soumela will come from Veroia to the Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta, GA where it will remain, for veneration by the Faithful, until Sunday, November 8. On that day, we will leave after the Divine Liturgy for the Monastery, where at 5:00 p.m. we will be outside the gate, waiting to receive the precious gift of the icon of the Mother of God, the Panagia Soumela. We will then proceed to the Chapel, where we will have a Doxology welcoming an esteemed visitor, the grace of the Panagia, followed by Vespers with hymns of the Panagia Soumela. Afterward there will be a reception. The parish communities in the surrounding area should assist by bringing refreshments to the monastery so that the Abbess and the sisters will not have responsibilities except to help in organizing the event. For further information and discussion, please contact Father Tom.

I pray that all the Faithful may have the opportunity not only just to attend an historical event but more importantly to receive the grace of the Virgin Mary, and the hope that we so desperately need in today's difficult times.

May the Lord grant abundant joy in fellowship and strength in service as you work toward the hope and vision of His Glory in the New Ecclesiastical Year! Looking forward to seeing you there, I remain

Prayerfully yours with paternal love in Christ,

+ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta