



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS ^{OF} ATLANTA

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΤΛΑΝΤΑΣ

My Beloved Ones,

I greet you with love and joy in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I pray, as we arrive at the end of our Lenten journey, that the remainder of this holy season will be a spiritually fruitful period in your lives.

Coming, as we are to the end of the Great Compline, the Pre-Sanctified Liturgies and the final Salutation to the Theotokos with the Akathist Hymn, I hope that you took the opportunity to attend these beautiful services, which serve as vital connections to our Creator, and will give us the strength needed to embark upon our journey with Jesus Christ through Holy Week.

For Holy Week, my beloved, is not simply a historical commemoration of Christ's life-saving Passion and His loving sacrifice. However ornate and theatrical our rituals may seem to some, we are not audience members or observers—we are meant to be equal participants! How then can we truly feel connected to our fellow members of the Body of Christ, if we are not present to take part in the λειτουργία, the work of the people?

I thank God that, here in America, we have been blessed with a new, modern translation of the Holy Week services, which allows us—every night—to join with the priest and the chanters, so that we can truly understand and *feel* the meaning of the words.

Every service of Holy Week exists for a unique reason, and I pray that you will find time and not miss any of these spiritually renewing moments. Who knows, after all, if we are going to be blessed with another year to celebrate the services of Holy Week? I thank God therefore, that he has given us all another year of health, to join our brothers and sisters in Church.

The end of this special week will bear witness to the Crucifixion and Burial of Lord; and on a solemn Saturday night, the Resurrection! In order for us to truly experience the depths of this joy, we must be in the church, in addition to fasting and prayer. In this way, we can truly celebrate the joy, worship and fellowship of Pascha with all our bodies, minds and souls!

Looking forward to this Paschal spirit of love and fellowship, I would like once again to thank you all for your loving-kindness towards the clergy, and your brothers and sisters, as we are all members of the Metropolis of Atlanta family.

Know that I pray for you all, and I ask for your prayers and forgiveness as I travel to various communities during Holy Week to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God bless us all, and Καλό Πάσχα!

+ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta