



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS <sup>OF</sup> NEW JERSEY

## ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

### Pontian Greek Genocide Remembrance 2020

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy

Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Communities of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

This year marks the 101-year commemoration of the Pontian Greek Genocide in which hundreds of thousands of Pontian Greeks were murdered, more than a million more were forced to seek refuge in Greece, homes were confiscated, and countless Greek Orthodox churches and monasteries were destroyed. This is a dark period in the history of the world, one that will forever be a blight on the Turkish nation which perpetrated these heinous acts. Though the Turks tried to systematically exterminate entire populations, they can never exterminate the truth of these crimes. Though they attempted to eradicate the Orthodox faith, they will never be able to silence our people and our fervent prayers. Though they endeavored to destroy our history, culture, and language, they will never be able to do so because our identity is engrained in Pontos and all of Turkey.

Still, the events that took place just over one hundred years ago should forever serve as a reminder to each of us that evil persists and it should always serve as a reason for us to be vigilant against the dark forces of the world. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we teach the world of the atrocities perpetrated against the Pontian Greeks so that the rest of the world may recognize and acknowledges as fact the crimes that took place against the Pontian Greeks.

In addition, we must endeavor to educate our youth concerning these terrible events since they constitute part of our history. We should also cultivate in them a love

and appreciation for their faith, history, culture, language, and traditions. This is the most fitting and surest way in which we may honor those who lost their lives and commemorate the efforts of those who heroically struggled to save others during those bleak days. Therefore, I implore you to teach your communities about Pontian Greek history and culture with a particular emphasis on the tragic events that took place a century ago, never forgetting that our identity is tied to the past, but our destiny is rooted in the future with our youth. **Furthermore, I ask that our parishes hold a memorial service on Sunday, May 17, 2020 for the repose of the souls of those who had lost their lives in the Pontian Greek Genocide.**

It is my sincerest hope and prayer that through our continued educational efforts we will be able to adequately inform both friends and neighbors as to the trials and tribulations suffered by Pontian Greeks with the goal of the Pontian Greek Genocide receiving worldwide recognition as a crime against humanity. Let us never forget those who lost their lives in this senseless slaughter, but let us also look towards the future in building a vibrant appreciation for Pontic Greek history and culture both within and outside of our own Hellenic communities.

With Paternal Love and Blessings in the Risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Evangelos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

† E V A N G E L O S  
Metropolitan of New Jersey