



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

Veterans Day 2018

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy

Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 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 Greek Orthodox Communities of our Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

Few have given so much of themselves and few have sacrificed what Abraham Lincoln called, “the last full measure of devotion” as veterans have. Their love and devotion for their country highlights a selflessness which is centered around their country and their fellow countrymen. What is more is that their struggles and sacrifices help to wholly preserve our nation complete with our unmatched freedoms which we often take for granted, but are the envy of the rest of the world.

In no other country do we find so many freedoms. We live in a society where the freedom of speech, press, religion, and assembly are fundamental; where the majority may rule, but not without the minority having rights; where equal protection and due process are considered sacrosanct; and where even those who would want to seek to harm our country from within are entitled to the same rights and protections under our Constitution.

These freedoms, however, came at a price. Hundreds of thousands of American patriots, some veterans in the armed forces, others veterans in intelligence agencies, died in the formation of this nation and the preservation of its freedoms. Through their sacrifice, our nation was able to gain its independence. When the nation faced one of its most challenging ethical and political dilemmas less than a century later, it was the blood of patriots that preserved the Union. When the world faced its first global war, American soldiers solidified our country’s position as a defender of that which is right. When just one generation later another global war erupted at the hands of fascists, our military fought on two fronts to drive back these unparalleled evils the world had ever seen. It was with the selfless commitment of our soldiers that ensured the North Koreans have never crossed the 38th parallel. It was through with the persistence of our military and intelligence agents that prevented the Soviets from

crossing the Elbe. Every generation has seen conflict; some more than others, yet every generation has paid some price.

It is for this reason we honor and thank our veterans for their service as we recognize their sacrifice to our nation, both those who engaged in battle and those who stood at the ready to defend their nation. We acknowledge those who fought and returned, but we also keep the memory of those who gave *“the last full measure of devotion”*. All of these people are heroes who would die for their country, but would much rather love for it. Let us keep their memory and honor those who have served, continually praying to God that our country be kept from all evil so that we need not send the members of the military into harm’s way.

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Evangelos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The word "Metropolitan" is written in a smaller, more compact script, while "Evangelos" is larger and more prominent. The signature is centered on the page.

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