

Metropolitan Elpidophoros of Bursa was elected Archbishop of America on Saturday, May 11.

Shortly after his unanimous election in Constantinople by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Metropolitan Elpidophoros made the following exclusive statement to The National Herald: “I am deeply touched because the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Synod honored me with their vote and confidence. I express my feelings of gratitude to our Patriarch and the Holy Synod. I glorify God, and with His Grace I will serve the superb people of the Holy Archdiocese of America, a people whom I love and who love the Church, who are faithful to its traditions and respect our Ecumenical Patriarchate. I greet my beloved brother members of the Holy Synod and the other brother hierarchs and bless from my heart the reverend clergy and the People of God. I am looking forward to meeting our People. We have many things to do together. All together. Christ is risen.”

The Ecumenical Patriarchate issued the following announcement:

“Today, Saturday May 11 2019, the Holy and Sacred Synod, continuing its work, proceeded to fill the vacated seat of the Archdiocese of America following the voluntary resignation of its shepherd, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios Geron of America.

Therefore, following the suggestion, permission and exhortation of His-All Holiness, the holy synodical members dully casting their votes unanimously elected as Archbishop of America His Eminence Metropolitan Elpidophoros of Bursa, Abbott of the Holy Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Halki and Professor of the Theological School of the Aristoteleian University of Thessaloniki.

From the Secretariat of the Holy and Sacred Synod.”

His Eminence Archbishop-elect Elpidophoros Lampryniadis was born in 1967 in Bakirköy, Istanbul. He studied at the Department of Pastoral Theology, Theological School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, from which he graduated in 1991. In 1993, he finished his postgraduate studies at the Philosophical School of the University of Bonn, Germany submitting a dissertation entitled, “The Brothers Nicholas and John Mesarites”.

He was ordained a Deacon in 1994 at the Patriarchal Cathedral and was appointed as the Codecographer of the Holy and Sacred Synod. In 1995, he was appointed Deputy Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod. From 1996-1997 he studied at the Theological School of St. John the Damascene in Balamand, Lebanon, where he improved his knowledge of the Arabic language.

In 2001, he presented a doctoral dissertation at the Theological School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki under the title: “Severus of Antioch and the Council of Chalcedon” proclaiming him a Doctor of Theology. In 2004, he was invited to Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Boston, where he taught as a visiting professor for one semester. In March 2005, at the proposal of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, he was promoted by the Holy and Sacred Synod to the position of Chief Secretary and was ordained to the priesthood by the Ecumenical Patriarch in the Patriarchal Cathedral.

In 2009, he submitted two dissertations to the Theological School of Thessaloniki and was unanimously elected Assistant Professor of Symbolics, Inter-Orthodox Relations and the Ecumenical Movement. The dissertations are entitled: “The Synaxis’s of the Hierarchy of the Ecumenical Throne (1951-2004)” and “Luther’s Ninety-five Thesis. Historical and Theological aspects. Text – Translation – Commentary “.

In March 2011, he was elected Metropolitan of Bursa and in August of the same year was appointed Abbot of the Holy Patriarchal and Stavropegial Monastery of the Holy Trinity on the island of Chalki. He has served as the Orthodox Secretary of the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Lutheran World Federation and as a member of the Patriarchal delegations to the General Assemblies of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

He was the Secretary of the Pan-Orthodox Synods in Sofia (1998), Istanbul (2005), Geneva (2006), and Istanbul (2008). He has been a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches since 1996.

A. As Metropolitan of Bursa (2011-present)

- He conducted a worldwide fundraiser and bought two byzantine-era churches: a. Panagia Pantovassilissa of Triglia (13th century), and b. Taxiarchs Michael and Gabriel of Sigi (9th century). The contribution of the Christians of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America was notable.
- Assigned a permanent priest to serve the needs of the Orthodox Christians.
- Bought a residence for the permanent priest.
- Established a fund for the Metropolis of Bursa, thus making it financially independent.
- Organized the refugees originating from the areas within the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Bursa and are now living in Greece: the “Gathering” of the Bursalites, where all the people originating in Bursa participate, takes place every year.

B. As Abbot of the Theological School of Halki (2011-present).

- For the first time in the modern history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, he established a monastic brotherhood, with monks from Constantinople, Greece, Finland, and Mexico.
- For the first time in the history of the Theological School of Halki, he began publishing books under the “Halki Theological School Press” imprint.
- For the first time, the building of the Theological School of Halki was mapped, in collaboration with the School of Engineering of the University of Thessaloniki.
- The garden of the Theological School of Halki was improved and put to good use.
- The computer cataloguing of the Library of the School began, and has now been completed. Currently, the digitization of the entire library collection is well underway, in collaboration with the Library of the Greek Parliament, and with OPAP as the grand sponsor.
- Established collaborations with universities in Greece, Germany, and Cyprus, so that students from these countries can come and work at the Theological School of Halki, with funding from the European Union (“Erasmus” exchange program).
- Works inside the Monastery to emphasize its monastic character: a. two new wood carved and gold-plated special shrines (proskynetaria), b. A new wood candle stand carved in Mount Athos, c. decoration of the monastery’s refectory with murals, and d. decoration of the conch of the Prothesis with mosaic.
- Other works: a. the radical makeover of the Monastery’s kitchen b. the creation of the new Synodal Hall for the summer sessions of the Holy Synod.

C. As professor at the Theological School of Thessaloniki (2011-present).

- Wrote the following theological and ecclesiastical books:
The stance of Severus of Antioch on the Council of Chalcedon (doctoral dissertation, 2001)
Luther’s 95 Theses (2009).
Proceedings of the Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches (2008).
The institution of the Synaxis of the Hierarchs of the Ecumenical Throne (2015).
The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Ukraine: 2008 (2018).
The Patriarchs of Halki. Volume A’: 1844-1901 (2018).
The witness and the theology of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (2018).
- Written many articles published in scientific and theological journals.
- He is Professor of Symbolic Theology, Interorthodox and Interchristian Relations.
He has studied in Greece, Germany and Lebanon, and has either taught or given lectures at universities in Greece, Cyprus, the USA, Germany, Turkey, and France.
He has been awarded the first class Ukrainian Order of Merit by Presidents Viktor Yushchenko (2008) and Petro Poroshenko (2018)