

# APOSTLES OF PEACE



**Pope Benedict XVI, the 265th successor of the St. Peter, joining hands in solidarity with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the 269th successor of St. Andrew, the first called Apostle and the older brother of St. Peter, at the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George, Istanbul, Turkey, November 30, 2006 during the historic Papal Visitation to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.**

## **THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS OF AMERICA THANK POPE BENEDICT XVI FOR THE CONTINUED SUPPORT OF HIS FELLOW APOSTLE OF PEACE, ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW.**

In this season of goodwill, we are thankful that two of the most revered spiritual leaders of the Christian world, Pope Benedict XVI and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, at their historic meeting last month in Istanbul provided such a moving and powerful demonstration of the desperate need for peace and understanding in the world today.

Their efforts to bring Christians closer together, to reach out to Moslems and to show that violence in the name of religion is violence against religion itself, proved that they are vital forces for peace and reconciliation between different faiths and cultures.

We appreciate the support the Pope declared for Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the spiritual leader of the second largest Christian communion in the world. The efforts the Pontiff made to relieve painful pressures on the Ecumenical Patriarchate exerted by misguided forces in Turkey who do not understand the great asset the Ecumenical Patriarchate is in the efforts of the Turkish people to achieve a place in the family of European nations.

We call on the leaders of Turkey, our NATO ally, to prove that their country deserves recognition as an enlightened and compassionate nation - by ending the harassment of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, by recognizing his ecumenical status (as do all other countries), by recognizing with legal personality the Orthodox Church, as well as the Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian communions and Jewish community, by returning confiscated church property belonging to the Patriarchate, by respecting the right of Apostolic succession in the Orthodox Church and ending all interference in the selection of future Patriarchs, and by allowing the reopening of the Halki seminary, which has trained Orthodox clergy and religious leaders in Turkey and around the world for generations.

We call on the President of the United States to show his commitment to religious freedom by doing everything in his power to convince the leaders of Turkey that it is in their country's best interests to end the discriminatory restrictions on the spiritual leader of 300 million Christians, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. We call on you, Mr. President, to join Pope Benedict and many other religious and political leaders throughout the world who have raised their voices in support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which stands at the crossroads between the Christian West and the Moslem East and can be a crucial bridge between these two great faiths.

## **WE THANK THE FOLLOWING 73 U.S. SENATORS WHO DEMONSTRATED, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS, THEIR SUPPORT OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE & FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN TURKEY:**

Daniel Akaka (HI)	Lincoln Chafee (RI)	Richard Durbin (IL)	Ted Kennedy (MA)	Bill Nelson (FL)	Olympia Snowe (ME)*
George Allen (VA)*	Hillary Clinton (NY)	Mike Enzi (WY)	Herbert Kohl (WI)	Barack Obama (IL)	Arlen Specter (PA)
Max Baucus (MT)	Norm Coleman (MN)	Russ Feingold (WI)	Mary Landrieu (LA)	Mark Pryor (AR)	Debbie Stabenow (MI)
Evan Bayh (IN)	Susan Collins (ME)	Dianne Feinstein (CA)	Frank Lautenberg (NJ)	Jack Reed (RI)	John Sununu (NH)
Robert Bennett (UT)	Kent Conrad (ND)	Lindsey Graham (SC)	Patrick Leahy (VT)	Harry Reid (NV)	Craig Thomas (WY)
Joe Biden (DE)*	John Cornyn (TX)	Chuck Grassley (IA)	Carl Levin (MI)	Pat Roberts (KS)	David Vitter (LA)
Jeff Bingaman (NM)	Mike Crapo (ID)	Judd Gregg (NH)	Joe Lieberman (CT)	Jay Rockefeller (WV)	George Voinovich (OH)
Barbara Boxer (CA)	Mark Dayton (MN)	Chuck Hagel (NE)	Blanche Lincoln (AR)	Ken Salazar (CO)	John Warner (VA)
Sam Brownback (KS)	Mike DeWine (OH)	Tom Harkin (IA)	Mel Martinez (FL)	Rick Santorum (PA)	Ron Wyden (OR)
Norm Coleman (MN)	Chris Dodd (CT)	James Inhofe (OK)	Bob Menendez (NJ)	Paul Sarbanes (MD)*	
Richard Burr (NC)	Elizabeth Dole (NC)	Daniel Inouye (HI)	Barbara Mikulski (MD)	Charles Schumer (NY)	* Letter originators
Maria Cantwell (WA)	Pete Domenici (NM)	Tim Johnson (SD)	Patty Murray (WA)	Jeff Sessions (AL)	
Thomas Carper (DE)	Byron Dorgan (ND)	John Kerry (MA)	Ben Nelson (NE)	Gordon Smith (OR)	

**SINCE 1936, 7,000 ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PROPERTIES HAVE BEEN CONFISCATED BY THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING CHURCHES, ORPHANAGES, CEMETERIES AND SCHOOLS, 1,500 IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS.**

## **THE 300 MILLION ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD ASK WHY THE FOLLOWING 27 UNITED STATES SENATORS HAVE NOT SIGNED ON FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, AND URGE THEM TO RECONSIDER THEIR POSITION:**

Lamar Alexander (TN)	Robert Byrd (WV)	Jim DeMint (SC)	John Isakson (GA)	John McCain (AZ)	Jim Talent (MO)
Wayne Allard (CO)	Saxby Chambliss (GE)	John Ensign (NV)	Jim Jeffords (VT)	Mitch McConnell (KY)	John Thune (SD)
Christopher Bond (MO)	Tom Coburn (OK)	Bill Frist (TN)	Jon Kyl (AZ)	Lisa Murkowski (AK)	
Jim Bunning (KY)	Thad Cochran (MS)	Orrin Hatch (UT)	Trent Lott (MS)	Richard Shelby (AL)	
Conrad Burns (MT)	Larry Craig (ID)	Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX)	Richard Lugar (IN)	Ted Stevens (AK)	

**TURKEY MUST UNDERSTAND RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AND ADMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION GO HAND IN HAND. ONE CANNOT OCCUR WITHOUT THE OTHER.**

**Archon Anthony J. Limberakis, MD**  
National Commander



ORDER OF  
SAINT ANDREW  
the apostle  
ARCHONS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

**Archon John A. Catsimatidis**  
Chairman, Religious Freedom Committee

The Order of St. Andrew / Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America is comprised of the leading Orthodox Christians in the United States whose mission is to support and defend the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the first See of the Orthodox Christian Church comprised of 300 million faithful worldwide.  
[www.archons.org](http://www.archons.org)