Leaders of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are pursuing new strategies to be more effective in service to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in a dramatically changed world situation. Following up on a historic Pilgrimage to the Mother Church in October of 2002 that included a meeting in Ankara with key Turkish officials, Archon National Commander, Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, spoke with high officials in the United States Administration concerning future actions. The result was a visit to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese by the new United States Ambassador to Turkey, Eric S. Edelman, in June and a meeting with Under Secretary of State Marc Grossman in October.

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, hosted the new ambassador at a luncheon attended by Dr. Limberakis and key Archon leaders. In a wide-ranging discussion, Ambassador Edelman spoke of a changing situation in Turkey with the end of the Cold War, the Balkan crises, critical defense issues, issues relating to Iraq and the Caspian pipeline. He also said the situation in the Middle East is no longer central in dealing with Turkey. Instead, according to the Ambassador, the United States is seeking greater cooperation on counterterrorism, cooperation on non-proliferation of weapons and political and economic reform in the Arab and Muslim world. He said Turkey could play a role here as a forerunner.

The overall goal of relations with Turkey is accession to the European Community. According to the new envoy, from the United States point of view, the place for Turkey is in Europe.

In conformity to European Union requirements, Turkey is moving ahead on basic reforms, which will eventually prove beneficial to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The meeting of Archon leaders with Ambassador Marc Grossman, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, followed his meeting in New York at the end of September with Archbishop Demetrios. Dr. Limberakis, accompanied by Andrew A. Athens, James C. Fountas, John Halecky, Jr., Dr. Spiro Macris, Andrew Manatos, Alexander Pritsos, and Christopher Stratakis, met with Ambassador Grossman at the Department of State to discuss the next pilgrimage to the Mother Church and anticipated meeting with Turkish government officials.

The discussion centered on new developments in Turkey over the past year with regard to the general world situation and the situation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, in light of several high level meetings concerning the opening of Halki and other issues.

The Archon leaders also met with Joseph A. Crapa, Executive Director of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, whose mandate is to promote religious freedom throughout the world.

The Order of St. Andrew was honored with the AHEPA Medal of Freedom on July 31st at the Grand Banquet of the 81st Annual Convention of the American Hellenic Educational-Progressive Association (AHEPA) held in Phoenix, Arizona.

National Commander of the Order, Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, received the award on behalf of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America, from Dr. James Dimitriou, Supreme President of the Order of AHEPA.

Acknowledging the significance of the award, Dr. Limberakis stated, “The Order of Saint Andrew is deeply honored to receive the AHEPA Medal of Freedom. It is an honor that acknowledges the sacred mission of the Archons to protect and defend the Holy Mother Church and to strengthen the ties of the Church in America and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. As Archons, we look forward to working together with AHEPA, side by side, to serve as 'Defenders of the Faith' seeking religious freedom and the vitality of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.”

AHEPA was founded in 1922 and has as its mission the promotion of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, individual and family excellence, and the ideals of Hellenism.

The Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, a United States organization of Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, an international group of church laymen, was recognized for outstanding service, dedication and loyalty to the Church. There are more than 800 current members of the Order in America.
AMBASSADORS FOR THE GREAT CHURCH OF CHRIST
Beloved Archons of the Order of Saint Andrew,

The task to which you have been called by the Holy and Great Church of Christ—the task of defending our precious Orthodox faith—is a challenging assignment that brings to the forefront a host of complex issues. Among these issues are the continuing commitment of the Church to international mission, ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, and the preservation of religious freedom in all places throughout our world. Across the globe, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate give selflessly of their time and talents in order to promote these and other ideals, strengthening the Body of Christ and deepening the bonds of love among persons from all walks of life.

Your Order of Saint Andrew constitutes an indispensable and valued addition to the distinguished international assembly of Archons. As Americans, you enrich and enhance the manifold ministries of our Ecumenical Patriarchate with an indomitable spirit of freedom and a distinct ethos of initiative and enterprise. In this resides one of the greatest strengths of our Mother Church—it’s ability to bring together diverse Orthodox faithful from all nations of the world into a single family reconciled to one another in Christ, sharing a fundamental belief in Him as the Risen Lord, and laboring toward one common purpose, namely, the salvation of human souls.

Throughout our nation, the parishes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America share in this sacred labor. It is within the parish, where each of you Archons of the Order of Saint Andrew live, that you have the special responsibility to be tireless advocates and promoters of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whose witness is an inspiring force within our world. By extension, your presence within your local communities carries with it a vitalizing and renewing effect, reminding Greek Orthodox faithful in even the remotest of corners of our country of their indissoluble spiritual bond with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and, hence, with all Orthodox Christians across the globe.

As you continue exercising your sacred commission as ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20) in general and, specifically, as ambassadors for the Great Church of Christ, the Mother Church, I pray that you may always live up to the worthy designation that the Ecumenical Patriarchate has bestowed upon you. As Defenders of our Orthodox Faith, you have been called to confront the contemporary challenges that face world Orthodoxy, not only in the context of high-level governmental settings, but also through your witness before all whom you encounter in your local communities and parishes. It is all the more for this reason that yours is a ministry of love that is an all-encompassing, universal, and complex undertaking. It is my heartfelt prayer that our Almighty God grant you sustained strength and encouragement in your sacred labors, so that people all throughout our world and within your local communities may grow in freedom, in understanding of one another, and in love for our gracious and merciful Lord.

† DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America

ARCHON PROFILE
Andrew A. Athens, Maestor Apostle of Hellenism

By George Schira

Andrew A. Athens is aptly named. His Triple-A achievements span many fields and we are reminded from the outset that Greece is at the heart of his life. But his Greece is larger than Athens and of Greece itself, for in truth, he is the Apostle of Hellenism, both in spirit and in reality. As President of the World Council of Hellenes, he is one of the ultimate ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20) in general and, hence, with all Orthodox Christians across the globe.

As you continue exercising your sacred commission as ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20) in general and, specifically, as ambassadors for the Great Church of Christ, the Mother Church, I pray that you may always live up to the worthy designation that the Ecumenical Patriarchate has bestowed upon you. As Defenders of our Orthodox Faith, you have been called to confront the contemporary challenges that face world Orthodoxy, not only in the context of high-level governmental settings, but also through your witness before all whom you encounter in your local communities and parishes. It is all the more for this reason that yours is a ministry of love that is an all-encompassing, universal, and complex undertaking. It is my heartfelt prayer that our Almighty God grant you sustained strength and encouragement in your sacred labors, so that people all throughout our world and within your local communities may grow in freedom, in understanding of one another, and in love for our gracious and merciful Lord.

† DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America

To give the full breadth of the achievements of Andrew A. Athens, known to everyone as “Andy”, would take more than the whole issue of this newsletter. The full list of his professional, civic and religious activities, awards and honors literally runs 11 pages. But it really all begins with his devotion to his beloved Greek Orthodox Church where he was nourished, inspired and educated in Christian and Hellenic values. You cannot separate the two in Andy’s mind and in his life. When he maneuvers the mountainous roads of the Ukraine or Armenia to survey the building of a clinic, he is also advising on and supporting the building of a church.

Andy served as a Captain in the United States Army in the Middle East and European Theatres in World War II, and was awarded the Bronze Star and Army Commendation Ribbon. As Liaison Officer, with the Belgian Government, he located not only a Greek Orthodox Church in Belgium, but also his wife and life-long partner, Louise. Of course, they were married in that church. In addition, while serving in post-war in Europe, he was decorated by the Hungarian Government for helping to restore the war-destroyed transportation facilities in that country.

In Belgium, Andy became involved in the steel business and moved on in his native Chicago to become one of our country’s foremost business owners and leaders, as President and CEO of Metron Steel Corporation and then as Chairman of the Board of Alpha Steel Corporation. There, he raised his family and his son, Paul, and daughter, Jacqueline work with him. Paul is President of Alpha
FROM THE PATRIARCHATE

A FORGOTTEN SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARY

Our nation has just marked the second anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, events that have left a deep mark on us as a people, transformed our behavior, attitudes and thinking and brought us face to face with the darkness of evil and the reality of death.

As Americans who are Orthodox Christians we are challenged to understand these events in the light of our faith and history. Our Church has faced the worst sort of persecution and oppression through the ages. Our Mother Church in Constantinople still exists in an atmosphere of intolerance that periodically erupts into inexplicable acts of hate.

Ironically, September brought another anniversary. September 5th was the 10th anniversary of the homily of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew addressed to the parishioners of the Church of Neohorion on the Bosphorus whose cemetery was desecrated. Confronting this horrific deed, His All Holiness spoke of the issues of life and death, love and faith, and courage with words that still resonate today.

These words, over the desecration of that small cemetery half way across the world, help us to reflect on the equally hallowed Ground Zero now in our midst and indelibly part of our history.

The Homily of His All Holiness follows:

Beloved children in the Lord,

We have come today as your archbishop and spiritual leader and we have presided in this holy church of the Virgin Mary Koumariotissa and we have prayed together with you for two reasons: a) the annual feast-day of this holy Church, at which time we also wished to bless in person, as is customary, the faithful of this holy Church, at which time we also wished to bless in person, as is customary, the faithful of this Church, and b) to express first to them, but also, more broadly, to our entire beloved community here, our paternal sympathy and the moral support of the Mother Church following the recent desecration of the graves of our beloved deceased, who held faith in common and who repose in the picturesque cemetery of the parish of Neohorion.

Are they reposing? – In a manner of speaking. They are reposing only euphemistically, because there are those who dared to disturb the peace even of our dead. Even in their graves they did not leave them in peace. Rather, they smashed the crosses – symbols of our expectation and faith in the Resurrection of the dead – and dug out and profaned their remains.

And the question is raised: Why? For what reason? What fault was it of our dead? To what extent did “we who are alive, who are left” (1 Thess. 4:15) insult them, if, in fact, they did this uncivilized – to use a milder expression – act in order to seek revenge against us?

see page 7

ADDRESS OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER


Your Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, our spiritual father and incomparable leader, reverend clergy, Supreme President Doctor Dimitriou, our good friend Ambassador Marcoullis and members of the Diplomatic Corp, fellow honorees, Archon Kokalis, Doctor Pantelia, and Doctor Kofos, Mr. Toastmaster and fellow Archon George Veras, distinguished leaders of AHEPA, ladies and gentlemen:

I feel I am with family, this evening. Over the years as an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, I have had the great privilege to work side by side with great Ahepans, who are also great Archons, George Gabriel, Spiro Macris, John Plumides, George Dariotis, Johny Economy, Lee Rallis, Andrew Banis, Tim Maniatis, Steve & Leo Manta, Sam Nakis, George Strike, Jim Dimitriou. It is truly an honor to be amongst you this evening. We thank you for being such exemplary Archons of the Holy Mother Church.

The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle is deeply honored to receive the AHEPA Medal of Freedom in recognition of our sacred mission to promote and protect the Holy Mother Church, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Under the inspirational leadership of Archbishop Demetrios, the order of St. Andrew has developed spiritual, educational and philanthropic initiatives to ensure the vitality of the spiritual center of world Orthodoxy and to improve the religious freedom that is so severely constricted by the Turkish government.

Last October while on our Annual Pilgrimage to Constantinople, the Archon leadership, traveled to Ankara to meet with the Turkish government to express our strong sentiments regarding the lack of religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. We let representatives of the Turkish government know that as orthodox Christians from America, under the direct jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, it is an infringement of our own religious freedom when our spiritual father, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, cannot freely, and without government interference conduct his ministry to serve his flock, a flock that spans the four corners of the word and not just the country of Turkey.

We told the Foreign Ministry that it is an infringement of our rights as American citizens when we cannot educate our clergy at the Halki School of Theology. We told them it is an infringement of our rights as American citizens when the Ecumenical Patriarchate cannot freely exercise its rights as property owners attempting to prevent the confiscation of church property by the Turkish government.

In fact, we stated publicly stated, that we were tired of a situation in which the head of world Orthodoxy is treated as a second-class citizen, calling it a true injustice that compromises democratic ideals and human rights in a country that is attempting to gain accession into the European Union.

My friends, it is so important for the Church in America to remain in unity and solidarity with the Holy Mother Church, always by her side, for she is the front of our apostolic tradition, the source of our ecumenical spirit and spiritual wisdom. We remain captives of history until she is finally free. We cannot rest until that day.

Recently, I was in Washington at the PSEKA conference and marveled at the power of our lobby on behalf of Cyprus, the respect of Senators and Representatives and high level members of our administration for our cause. We have seen the fruits of this effort. While continuing that fight, we must engage our energies on behalf of our Ecumenical Patriarchate in the corridors of power.

We welcome the efforts of our AHEPA brothers and sisters to reopen Halki, to fight for the religious freedom of the Mother Church and to promote and defend the Ecumenical Patriarchate. We look forward to working together, side by side as we confront the evils of religious persecution and discriminations and it is my hope, that during our next Pilgrimage to the Pharar in the coming months, we may journey together as brothers and sisters in Christ to safeguard the spiritual center of our Orthodox Faith.

Thank you for the great honor you have bestowed upon the Order of Saint Andrew.

God Bless You All!!

Anthony J. Littberakis, MD
National Commander
Pilgrimage 2002

Archon Arthur C. and Madeline Anton

Executive Vice-Commander Nicholas J. Bouras and United States Ambassador to Turkey Robert Pearson

(L to R) Treasurer James C. Fountas, Theofanis V. Economidis, Protopresbyter John Limberakis, Secretary John Halecky, Konstantine L. Vellios, Spiro J. Macris, Legal Counselor Christopher Stratakis, Alexander Pritsos, Fr. Alexander Karloutsos and Nicholas Manginas

(L to R) National Commander Anthony and Maria Limberakis, Julie Vingas, Andrew A. Athens, Laki Vingas and Louise Athens

View of Hagia Sofia

Metropolitan Emmanuel of France and Protopresbyter John Limberakis
National Commander Limberakis leads Archon delegation at Turkish Foreign Ministry

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archon Legal Counselor Christopher Stratakis

(L to R) Secretary John Halecky, Legal Counselor Christopher Stratakis, National Commander Anthony Limberakis and Protopresbyter John Limberakis at United States Embassy in Ankara

Archons Stephen Cherpelis and Michael Parlamis

Archons at United States Embassy September 11th Orchard in Ankara

View of Theological School of Halki
Andrew A. Athens, Maestor Apostle of Hellenism

Steel and Jacqueline coordinates the family’s many civic and charitable activities.

In fact, Andy’s numerous Church and Hellenic activities went in lock step with his business career from the very beginning. Just to name a few, besides the presidency of his own SS. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Glenview, Illinois and his more than 32 years service on the Archdiocesan Council of the Greek Orthodox Church of America where he was Chairman of the Board for more than 20 of those years, he founded and still chairs the United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC); he was a founder and for 10 years chaired the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund “...standing out among the multitude of these profound contributions and honors is conferral as an “Archon” of the Great Church of Christ, bestowed upon him by the Ecumenical Patriarch. Not only did he serve as Regional Commander of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate / Order of Saint Andrew, but was given their greatest honor, the Patriarch Athenagoras Human Rights Award.

A passionate advocate for his Church, Hellenic causes and human rights, Andrew A. Athens cannot be contained in any cause. He is larger than life. His energy knows no bounds and he brings grace to every endeavor. While the list of his achievements is boundless, it does not capture the man – a man whose true vocation is to spend his time with the refugees, the downtrodden, the persecuted and the ailing to fight for them in the halls of government; a benign man who is smiling and kind but angry and impatient at the lack of compassion and action when it comes to meeting the real needs of the world; a man who loves his own family dearly but whose love encompasses his extended family, the forgotten Hellenes and forgotten people everywhere.

By Andrew E. Manatos

I
craeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is under heavy pressure from United States Archons, under the leadership of Archbishop Demetrios and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, regarding his unwillingness to recognize the election of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Irineos.

We arranged for 156 members of the United States House of Representatives to sign a letter about this matter to President George Bush in May of 2002. More recently, 24 of the 26 Jewish United States Representatives signed an encouraging letter to Prime Minister Sharon. The member of Congress whose family is from the Jewish community of Greece, Shelly Berkley of Las Vegas, Nevada, helped the effort by circulating the letter.

By tradition, the Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem elects the Patriarch, as they did Patriarch Irineos in August of 2001. The governments of Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, again by tradition, confirm the election. However, the Government of Israel has withheld official recognition for over two years, limiting the full functioning of Patriarch Irineos.

Following the Congressional letter to President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell brought up with the Israelis the issue of the recognition of Patriarch Irineos. The government of Greece is also involved in pressing for recognition.

Following his meeting with Archbishop Demetrios, the United States Senator considered by many to be the most influential with Israel, Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut, became deeply involved in the issue. The Prime Minister’s office told the Senator some months ago that the committee stopping the recognition of the Patriarch would be replaced with one made up of people favoring recognition. However, like numerous other commitments about this issue made by the government of Israel over the last two years, it did not happen when promised.

Our effort with the American Jewish Committee (AJC) nearly two years ago, lead by Archon Andrew A. Athens, who is also President of the World Council of Hellenes, helped to develop a valuable ally on this issue.

Following our meeting with the AJC, they adopted this issue as one of their own. The leaders of the AJC, which is considered by many to be the most powerful part of the so-called Jewish lobby, brought the issue up directly with Prime Minister Sharon. Since that time, they have taken every opportunity to press for recognition. In coordination with the AJC, Andrew Athens went to Israel to press the issue forward personally.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem is the most ancient Patriarchate in Christianity and plays a key role in the relations among Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the Holy Land. The Patriarchate holds the majority of the holy sites and numerous other properties, including the land on which the Israeli Knesset stands.

This real estate is the problem behind this matter. Individuals who have a great deal of influence with Prime Minister Sharon have tried to use the recognition of Patriarch Irineos as a lever to gain an unfair advantage over some of this property.

To complicate matters further, individuals within the Orthodox community in Jerusalem publicly misrepresented Patriarch Irineos as anti-Israeli. The Israeli media publicized widely such misrepresentations, making the effort to secure recognition more difficult. The AJC and even the Israeli Mossad (their CIA), in response to our urging, played a major role in the effort to invalidate such disinformation about the Patriarch.

The government of Israel recently changed, in a favorable way, the committee that handles for the Prime Minister the issue of the recognition of the Patriarch, as they promised Senator Lieberman some time ago. Everyone is pressing Israel and hoping that this time they will keep their commitment.
Are we not, in every way, law-abiding citi-
zens of this country? Do we not perform our 
obligations towards our country to the 
best of our ability? Do we not honour the 
name of our country in which we live with 
honesty, diligent work, our high degree of 
civilization, our beautiful customs and tra-
ditions, and with our rich history? Have we 
not suffered enough without being at all 
to blame, except that we are Greek by origin 
and Orthodox in faith, and because of this 
– being a minority, that is – we are regarded 
as a negotiable crowbar in the relations 
between neighbouring and allied countries? 
Is it not enough that so few of us have 
remained here because of this last point? 
Should we be expected to endure more? 
Indeed, should this be expected of our 
deceased who “are asleep” awaiting the com-
mon resurrection?

We are certain that the official state 
authorities of the country are not in any 
way involved in this recent sorrowful 
episode. The government is aware that 
we never create instances in this land, but, 
on the contrary, we are a factor of civi-
лизация and peace. The government, 
ultimately, will apply the laws if we give cause 
and never will it resort to unacceptable 
and uncharacteristic acts, such as that 
which is being denounced today.

But those who have contrived and dared 
such acts must know that they offer the 
worst service to Turkey; that they expose 
her internationally; that her interests at 
the highest level are harmed while – per-
haps – serving their own interests; that 
they expose their own selves. Thus, we 
call on them to sober up and come to their 
senses and at least to leave in peace our 
dead, who are lying awaiting the Second 
Coming of the Lord, unable to react and 
defend themselves. Unfortunately, it is 
not the first time the dead have suffered 
such a cowardly assault.

On the other hand, we, as law-abiding citi-
zens, demand that the esteemed government 
of our country protect all we hold as 
sacred and holy, our lives and property; and 
not to allow every adventurer or every hate-
ful fanatic to release his frustrations by 
destroying Orthodox cemeteries. This 
avenue, this method, leads nowhere, but 
only to impasse and vicious circles.

If fanaticism in general blinds, religious 
fanaticism degrades man and his dignity 
and stands against freedom, a divine gift, 
as well as against democracy.

But, taking this opportunity, let us come 
to the habbie written by a part of the Press 
against us and against our Ecumenical Patri-
archate, which, allegedly, cooperates towards 
the actualization of a “terrible plan”!! Indeed! 
How easy it is for exaggerated and impressive 
adjectives to be employed! How easy it is 
for one to be fooled when maintaining things 
without basis and totally unprowable! – 
especially when speaking on behalf of a 
non-existent Church, which took over and 
unlawfully possesses and reaps the benefits 
of houses of worship which our fathers 
founded by the sweat of their brow and hard 
earned contributions. For someone to say 
or write whatever comes from his imagina-
tion – so as not to say of out of dishonesty – is 
very easy and very simple. However, funda-
mental self-respect and fundamental 
respect for truth is demanded; and it is the 
truth which will make us free (Jn. 8:32).

Not only have we not envisioned the 
Ecumenical Patriarchate as a second Vatican or 
tried to transform it into such, but, on the 
contrary, we have stated on numerous occa-
sions, that even if such an idea were pro-
posed to us we would reject it as being 
contradictory to the ecclesiology and tra-
dition of the Orthodox Church. The Ecu-
menical Patriarchate does not wish to 
become a state. It wishes to remain only a 
Church – a Church, however, which is free 
and respected by everyone – only a religious 
and spiritual institution, teaching, edify-
ing, serving pan- anthropic ideals, civiliz-
ing and preaching love and peace in every 
direction. The Ecumenical Patriarchate 
belongs to the Church which was founded 
by the God of love, whose peace “surpass-
es all understanding” (Phil. 4:7). We “ pur-
sue what makes for peace” (Rom. 14:19). 
We believe that “God is love” (1 Jn. 4:16), 
which is why we are not afraid: “perfect 
love costs out fear” (1 Jn. 4:18).
As Archons you represent and embody the oldest and greatest honor accorded in Christendom, an honor of high stature that has its roots in very ancient times. In our day you have come to the fore once again offering your time, talent and treasure in service to defend and promote our holy faith and our holy and Ecumenical Patriarchate.