My Beloved Ones,

This coming Sunday, we are blessed to celebrate not only the American holiday known as Father’s Day, but also the liturgical Feast of All Saints.

Throughout the earthly existence of the Church there are those who heard Christ’s words from the Gospel: "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven...” (Matthew 10:32). As we prepare to acknowledge our own earthly fathers, grandfathers, and godfathers this Sunday, we honor those also unknown souls who are now part of God’s heavenly choir, because they chose to acknowledge Christ on earth despite everything. For, as St. Paul shows us in this Sunday’s Epistle, they were willing even to be “...tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection.” (Hebrews 11:35)

Even those spiritual fathers and mothers who were not counted worthy to receive a martyr’s crown lived their earthly lives in such a humble way, that they were not glorified in their own time. This means that to this day, we do not know the names of those who, as St. Paul continues, “...went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy...” (Hebrews 11:37-38)

Though the powers of this world did their best to be sure that the name of Christ would be forgotten, we know that it is because of all God’s Saints—those who met a martyr’s end, and those who fell asleep peacefully—that the darkness has not overtaken the Gospel.

It is for this reason that the Church in her wisdom, has elected to make the Sunday after Pentecost the day during which we commemorate all the Saints. As we continue to dwell in the illumination and comfort of the Holy Spirit, I fervently pray that every one of us calls upon not only our Patron Saint, but an unknown saint, to intercede on our behalf.

Therefore, I offer blessings, not only for our fathers on this Father’s Day 2022, but also all those who celebrate their Name Day on this Feast: Χρόνια Πολλά!

+ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta