



**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL**

Prot. No. 548/2025

Archepiscopal Encyclical for Thanksgiving

November 27, 2025

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Sacred Archdiocese of America:

“ ... fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it ... to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and union.

(Abraham Lincoln’s Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, October 3, 1863)

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

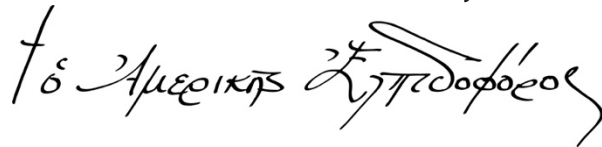
The Thanksgiving Day Proclamation of President Lincoln was given in the midst of the Civil War that almost destroyed our Nation. It was a time of great sacrifice of far too many lives — when the total casualties, those slain and those wounded, may have reached one and a half million Americans, a number unimaginable even in our own day. And yet, in the midst of the horrors of war, President Lincoln called all citizens to turn to God, that He might “heal the wounds of the nation.”

This Thanksgiving Day, a National Holiday that invites us to gather with family, friends and loved ones to share in the abundant blessings of God and to express our gratitude to our Creator, Lincoln’s words may have a special meaning for all Americans. Our Country may be deeply divided in many ways, but we are certainly not at war with one another. And though there might be some rare voices that actually wish to incite violence, Americans at their heart are a People who cherish peace and prosperity, knowing that the one is always dependent upon the other.

Nevertheless, we still tend to have some strong personal opinions from time to time that can elicit equally firm responses in return or even bitter divisions among us. Against our own better judgment, we might employ incendiary language to describe an opposing viewpoint, and thus a feeling of degradation begins to seep ever so slowly and deeply into our societal norms. But in remembering the words of Lincoln, which remind us to turn to the Lord and seek His ways, we have the possibility to experience “the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and union.” And this is because acting with generosity and gratitude softens even the hardest of hearts, and reminds us that we are so much more than our differing opinions or opposing points of view. We are all fellow American compatriots and beloved brothers and sisters — created in the image and likeness of God, and made for communion with one another.

Therefore, on this Thanksgiving Day, let us tend to the wounds of our Homeland, of our neighbors, and of our own selves, with gratitude and compassion, lovingly binding up one another with the “oil and wine” the Samaritan offered (Luke 10:34), so that we may be a united American People that is blessed to know jubilation in the midst of the world (Psalm 88:15 LXX). Happy Thanksgiving to all!

In the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, written in a cursive style. The signature appears to be "+ ELPIDOPHOROS" with a stylized flourish at the end.

+ ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America