



ST. NICHOLAS NATIONAL SHRINE RESTARTS CONSTRUCTION

**AUG
2020**

stnicholaswtc.org

ARCHBISHOP'S MESSAGE

Remarks to Governor Cuomo and Friends at the Rebuilding Recommencement

Today, after a hiatus of more than two and one half years, and thanks to the truly extraordinary generosity of the Friends of Saint Nicholas and the dedication and devotion of a few noble families, we begin again the construction to complete, to finish, and to bestow the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at the World Trade Center. We have heard the Voice of the Lord, and we are rebuilding His Church!



We are here today to give thanks: to Almighty God Whose Providence has seen us through to consummate the course of our journey; to the Holy Wonderworker Nicholas and his constant intercession on our behalf; to our Governor Andrew Cuomo and the People of New York, who have stood by our side through a long night to now witness the dawn; to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, whose Chairman, Kevin O'Toole is with us, as is Executive Director Rick Cotton and our dear friend, WTC Construction Director, Steve Plate who is with us today, who never lost faith in us – I cannot say enough for the Port Authority, who lost so many brothers and sisters on 9/11; to Skanska Construction and all those around the world whose patience and efforts are finally coming to fruition; to our Architect Santiago Calatrava, and his love for Hagia Sophia that will be eternally present in this National Shrine; To the good and faithful parishioners and Trustees of the Saint Nicholas Parish who have prayed for

this day to come; And to the Friends of Saint Nicholas who have bridged the gap, kept the faith, and made all the difference.

A little over a year ago, I said: "It is our duty and our responsibility as Orthodox Christians – but also our obligation and commitment to God and His people – to complete and open the doors of the Saint Nicholas National Shrine."

Today, we begin to fulfill that promise to God, to Saint Nicholas, to the Parish, to our Church, to the good people of the City of New York, to America, and to the world.

As construction recommences, I would offer just this final word before praying for the safety and good health of all those construction workers who are blessed to rebuild this monument of faith and love.

Ten days ago, the greatest Church ever built – not the very largest but indeed

the greatest by far – was taken away from the world in an act of domination and chauvinism. Our Hagia Sophia, the Great Church of Christ, the Queen of all Churches, reduced to the status of a pawn.

Nearly twenty years ago, our Saint Nicholas fell with the thousands of our fellow human beings lost in the ashes of 9/11, and numberless more wounded in body, heart, and soul by a savage act of hatred and terror.

We cannot, we must not, and we shall not let this stand. We are going to open the Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine as a sign of love, not hate, a sign of reconciliation, not of prejudice, and a sign of the ideals that exist in this great American Nation, where one's religious liberty and freedom of conscience never excludes, but only embraces.

Τὸ Ἀμερικανὸν Ἐκκλησιολογικόν



Remarks at Ground Zero of Gov. Cuomo

"Kalimera to all who are here today. Good morning!

Your Eminence, I cannot thank you enough on behalf of the People of the State of New York. His Eminence has only been here about one year when he took over. He came from Istanbul.

We met and talked about Saint Nicholas and how important it was. And His Eminence said that he would make it a priority to get it done and we are here today, not just blessing, but opening our hearts and opening our minds and feeling the spirit of love and faith that Saint Nicholas will bring to this entire State. Let's give His Eminence a big round of applause and thank him very much for his leadership and his accomplishment.

To Father Alex, to Dennis Mehiel, and to John Catsimatidis, and to Michael Psaros, let's give them all a big round of applause for everything they did.

We have the leadership of the Port Authority whom I am so proud of, Chairman Kevin O'Toole who is originally from the State of New Jersey - he's also an honorary New Yorker, Your Eminence. Kevin O'Toole, Mr. Chairman; thank you very much.

Rick Cotton, the extraordinary Executive Director of the Port Authority, Steve Plate, all the people of the Port Authority: Congratula-

tions to all of you for what you have done today.

And to all the members of the Greek community, who rallied together to address this issue and make sure that Saint Nicholas was actually embodied on this magnificent site, which is truly going to be a landmark in New York: thank you for your generosity, for your philanthropy, for your citizenship. To the Greek Community!

Your Eminence, I know that this has been a long coming, and it's taken much work for many many people: all the people who are building this site, all the government officials who have been involved. But the Lord works in strange ways.

And that this should be happening now I think is so powerful and so symbolic. We do have issues and challenges in this country. We are dealing with the Covid crisis which is one of the worst things we've dealt with in modern history. But today makes the over-arching message: we are going to build back. The way we built back from 9/11. And when we build back we are going to build better and stronger with more solidarity, and more faith, and more spirit of community than ever before.

This Saint Nicholas is going to be more splendid and more inviting than the Saint Nicholas that was here before. Yes, we went through 9/11, but we rise from the ashes and we rise stronger than ever before. That's what this Saint Nicholas will stand for, and it is a powerful message to all New Yorkers and all Americans.

Now is not the time to worry about the current circumstance. Now is the time to rally together to find our strength, to find our solidarity, and to say we're going to build back better, and brighter, and stronger together. Saint Nicholas could not be happening at a better time for this State and Nation, and we thank all of you. God bless you!

**PRAYER OF
 ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS**

I would now ask that you all please bow your heads in reverence and remembrance for all those who perished that fateful day of September Eleventh, in honor for the heroes who rushed in where even Angels fear to tread, and in respect for and solidarity with for the families who grieve still;

And let us pray:

Almighty and Ever-Merciful God, Who through Your Son Jesus Christ showed us the way of love, we ask You to bless us as we rebuild this Temple as an act of love, which is dedicated to Your precious Saint Nicholas.

Protect the workers who have returned to this holy place to rebuild in safety and peace.

Guide their hands aright, shield their eyes from harm, grant unto them and all who contribute to this Holy Work every blessing of body and soul.

And may we all know the same joy in our rebuilding that was known by the Children of Israel when they started to rebuild the Temple of Solomon.

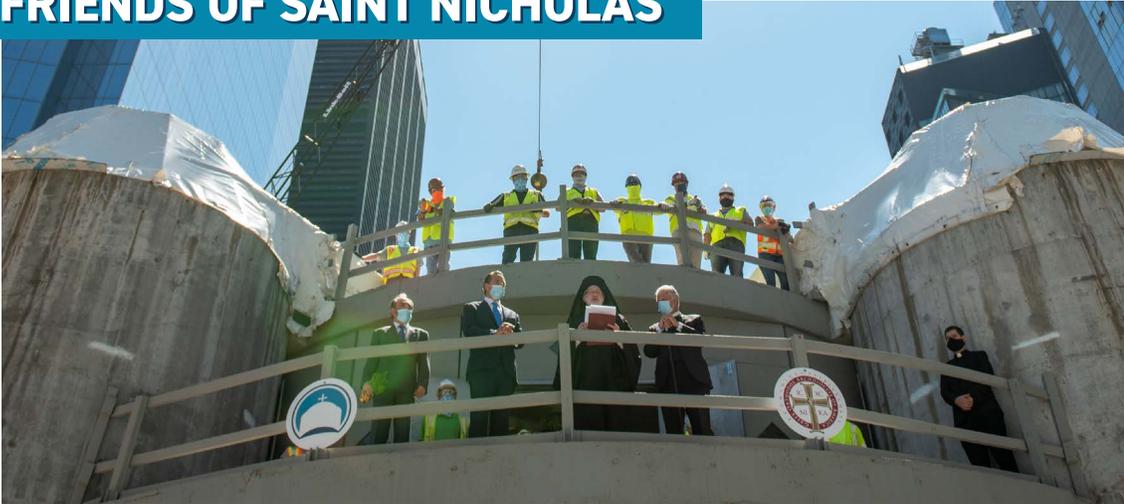
As the Scripture says:

*And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord ... they sang together in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; "for He is good, and His mercy endures for ever." But many of those who had seen the first Temple, when the foundation of this Second Temple was laid before their eyes, they wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: So that the people could not tell the difference between the shouts of joy and the weeping.*¹

Let us, O God, shout for joy and weep as we rebuild this Holy Place, which will welcome All People into a House of Prayer, this Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine that we raise in Your glorious and all-magnified Name, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, worshiped and glorified unto ages of ages. Amen!

¹ Esdras II 3:10-13.

FRIENDS OF SAINT NICHOLAS



Archbishop Elpidophoros and Governor Andrew Cuomo Preside at Ceremony to Resume Construction

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, with the leadership of the Friends of St. Nicholas and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, today visited the World Trade Center to witness the resumption of construction of the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine, the only house of worship destroyed in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Once rebuilt, the Church and National Shrine will serve as a powerful symbol of resilience and a beacon of hope, welcoming people of all faiths to honor the lives lost on 9/11.

In his remarks, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America stated, "Nearly twenty years ago, our Saint Nicholas fell with thousands of our fellow human beings lost in the ashes of 9/11, and countless others wounded in body, heart, and soul by a savage act of hatred and terror. We cannot, we must not, and we shall not let this stand. We are going to open the Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine as a sign of love, not hate; a sign of reconciliation, not of prejudice; and a sign of the ideals that exist in this great American Nation, where one's religious liberty and freedom of conscience never excludes, but only embraces."

The Archbishop blessed the construction workers, praying that God might "protect the workers who have returned to this holy place to rebuild in safety and peace. Guide their hands aright, shield their eyes from harm, grant unto them and all who contribute to

this Holy Work every blessing of body and soul."

Governor Cuomo stated, "In the face of tragedy and destruction on 9/11, the St. Nicholas community literally held its ground against what was an inconceivable tragedy inspired by hate, instead relying on the power of love to restore what was lost and create a symbolism of faith and tolerance." Governor Cuomo continued, "In New York, we know from experience that rebuilding after a crisis means more than just restoring bricks and mortar or reviving an economy; it also requires healing a broken spirit. This church helps achieve that healing, and it will be a national shrine, rising on a place made sacred by the suffering that took place here and will send a powerful message to the world that New York is a state made stronger by tolerance and our respect for one another."

Rick Cotton, Executive Director of the Port Authority said, "Today marks a new chapter in the historic rebuild of Lower Manhattan. The new St. Nicholas Church and National Shrine will be a source of inspiration and peace, while also helping to share the historical contributions of the Greek-Orthodox community to all who visit and worship. The Port Authority is proud to have worked alongside Governor Cuomo to bring us to this important milestone and today, we are pleased to see construction resume. I commend the work of the Archdiocese and Friends of St. Nicholas

as they have worked hard to ensure that this project honors the strength and resolve of our World Trade Center Campus."

Kevin J. O'Toole, Chairman of the Port Authority said, "In a world filled with so much uncertainty, this restart brings hope that we are closer to restoring St. Nicholas as a solemn place for parishioners and visitors to worship, reflect, and honor the innumerable sacrifices made after the September 11th attacks. The church is a symbol of the continued resilience that has helped bring a rebirth to the World Trade Center campus, and today is a day to recognize those hard-fought achievements."

The election of Archbishop Elpidophoros in May 2019 reset the stage for a new, transparent approach to complete the Saint Nicholas reconstruction, which had been abruptly halted in December 2017 due to a series of managerial and financial crises in the Archdiocese. With the encouragement of Governor Cuomo, the non-profit Friends of St. Nicholas was formed to oversee the project. This group of prominent Greek Orthodox Christians, under the guidance of Archbishop Elpidophoros and Fr. Alexander Karloutsos, and the leadership of Dennis Mehiel, Michael Psaros and John Catsimatidis, raised the funds required to

- Board of Trustees
- Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, *Honorary Chairman*
- Fr. Alexander Karloutsos, *Vicar General (Advisor)*
- Dennis Mehiel, *Chairman*
- Michael Psaros, *Vice Chairman*
- John Payiavlas, *Treasurer*
- Chrysa Demos, *Secretary*
- Maria Allwin
- John Calamos
- John Catsimatidis
- John Georges
- George Marcus
- C. Dean Metropoulos
- George Mihaltses
- Dean Spanos
- George Stamboulidis

complete the construction of the Church and National Shrine.

At the conclusion of the event, Archbishop Elpidophoros, Governor Cuomo and those in attendance at the event observed the placement of the first skylight in the dome of the Church. Dennis Mehiel, Chairman of the Friends of St. Nicholas, remarked, "We have just witnessed the placement of the

first piece of glass that what will eventually become a beacon of light at Ground Zero, shining brightly as a symbol of good versus evil and providing a peaceful and prayerful place for people of all faiths who visit the 9/11 Memorial."

The Church is slated to be completed in the fall of 2021.



Visit the **LIVE EarthCam**

stnicholaswtc.org/webcam



ROW 1

1. Archbishop Elpidophoros offers a blessing
2. Archbishop Elpidophoros and Governor Cuomo inside Saint Nicholas Shrine

ROW 2

1. Archbishop Elpidophoros and Governor Cuomo inscribe the wall of Saint Nicholas
2. Archdiocese Council Vice Chair and Friends Member, John Catsimatidis with Chairman of Friends of St. Nicholas, Dennis Mehiel

ROW 3

1. Vice Chairman of Friends of St. Nicholas Michael Psaros
2. Father Alexander Karloutsos, Vicar General of the GOAA



FOR ADDITIONAL NEWS COVERAGE, CLICK LOGO BELOW....





- ROW 1
 1. View of Saint Nicholas from Liberty Park
 2. Construction Crew atop the Shrine
- ROW 2
 1. Archbishop Elpidophoros with leadership of the Port Authority and the Friends of St Nicholas
 2. Governor Cuomo addresses the Archbishop atop the balcony
- ROW 3
 1. Installation of skylight
 2. Interior view of dome and skylight

Cost to Complete (Phase II)

Remediation Costs:	\$250,000
Pre-construction Costs:	\$96,000
Construction Costs:	\$38,260,025
Soft Costs (consulting):	\$2,121,500
Owner-direct Costs (icons, seating, AV, etc.):	\$1,010,000
Subtotal:	\$41,737,525
Project Contingency:	\$3,233,225
Total Project Budget:	\$44,970,750

PHASE II - SINCE JANUARY 2020

Total Fundraising Goal.....	\$45 Million	Cash on Hand.....	\$19.3 Million
Contingency Reserve.....	\$3 Million	Outstanding Pledges	\$18.8 Million
Net Fundraising Goal	\$42 Million	Funds Required	
Cash Received	\$25 Million	To Achieve Goal	\$920,000
Cash Spent	\$6 Million		
(\$5.750M to the curtain wall manufacturer)			