"We gather as a family on this day"

Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and a handful of families at the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine, deduce the memorial platform today in honor of the 19th anniversary of 9/11. The Metropolitan presided over the commissioning of the dome to be illuminated tonight, shining light into the darkness. In his remarks to the families who were present, Archbishop Elpidophoros offered the following: "Today, in this day of unspeakable sorrow for you, I want all of you to know that we stand with you, we pray with you, and we remember with you. We have gathered here in front of the Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine, which is once again under construction, in order to offer unto our Heavenly Father – the names, the souls, and the memories of those who perished nineteen years ago, this very day. … We will never forget; we will never allow the world to forget. The rebuilt Saint Nicholas Church will be an everlasting memorial to their lives. It will also be both a spiritual home and a spiritual hospital for you, the survivors, to come and find healing and fellowship.”

In past years, the Friends of Saint Nicholas have been pictured illuminating the dome with lights "Light on the Hill" in honor and memory of those who perished that fateful day. This was but a foreshadowing of the eventual dome to be illuminated tonight. The dome, this sacred "Light on the Hill," gleaming through the same marble from which the Parthenon was built nearly two and a half millennia ago.

The dome today is just the first step in the reconstruction of the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox & National Shrine at the World Trade Center, under the leadership of Archbishop Elpidophoros and the Friends of St. Nicholas is now well under construction. In the following: “Today, in this day of unspeakable sorrow for you, I want all of you to know that we stand with you, we pray with you, and we remember with you. We have gathered here in front of the Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine, which is once again under construction, in order to offer unto our Heavenly Father – the names, the souls, and the memories of those who perished nineteen years ago, this very day. … We will never forget; we will never allow the world to forget. The rebuilt Saint Nicholas Church will be an everlasting memorial to their lives. It will also be both a spiritual home and a spiritual hospital for you, the survivors, to come and find healing and fellowship.”

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