



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

## ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

### Pontian Greek Genocide Remembrance

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy

Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Communities of our Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

This year we remember the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pontian Greek Genocide, a dark event in the history of the world which has not nor shall it ever fade from the memory of humanity. We keep this remembrance as a means of paying tribute to the hundreds of thousands of victims who were brutalized, tortured, and murdered by the Turkish Government due to their ethnic and religious identity. It is of the utmost importance that the world recognizes and acknowledges as fact the atrocities that took place against the Pontian Greeks. The genocide of Pontian Greeks was nothing short of a systematic extermination. As such, we also pledge to guard against any travesty such as this from ever taking place again.

Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance that we educate others as to the history and culture of Pontian Greeks. By cultivating a deeper appreciation for the history and culture of Pontus among our youth and in the greater community at-large, we do justice to a people who have suffered much for their religious and cultural identity. Therefore, I implore you to teach your communities about Pontian Greek history and culture with a particular emphasis on the tragic events that took place a century ago. **Furthermore, I ask for all of our parishes to hold a Memorial Service for the repose of the souls of those who had lost their lives in the Pontian Greek Genocide, on Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the date designated by the Greek Parliament as the day of remembrance for the victims of the Pontian Greek Genocide.**

It is my sincerest hope and prayer that through our continued educational efforts we will be able to adequately inform both friends and neighbors as to the trials and tribulations suffered by Pontian Greeks with the goal of the Pontian Greek Genocide receiving worldwide recognition as a crime against humanity. Let us never forget those who lost their lives in this senseless slaughter, but let us also look towards the future in building a vibrant appreciation for Pontic Greek history and culture both within and outside of our own Hellenic communities.

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† E V A N G E L O S

Metropolitan of New Jersey