



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΙΑΣ
ARCHDIOCESE OF THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN

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To the Reverend Priests and Deacons; the Honourable Chairmen of the Ecclesiastical Committees of the Communities of the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain and Ireland.

Dear beloved in the Lord,

Within a few days, starting on August 1, we will be chanting the Small and Great Supplications to the Mother of God in our churches. We do this so that through her ceaseless intercessions the Triune-worshipped God may protect us.

These days we have yet another reason to resort to the Protection of Our Lady so that she may become a steady mediator and consolation for her children. We pray especially for those who have lost their lives in the great fires that hit Greece last Monday, July 23, 2018. That is why, dear brothers, in our prayers we must pray to the Virgin to comfort all the mothers who have been so cruelly separated from their children, the children who have been deprived of their parents and those who have lost dear friends, and thus we all lament their unjust and cruel death. May the Lord give rest to those who have died and heal the souls and bodies of our brethren who are in pain and in mourning. May He also ease our own pain and sorrow over this unexpected calamity. Rarely does the distant image of a tragedy penetrate with such intensity the hearts of us who have been watching from our televisions and mobile phones the desperate attempts of firefighters and residents of Southeastern Attica to save what they could from the fiery onslaught which caught them so unawares due to the incredibly strong winds. These events that hit Greece last Monday have truly been harsh and unprecedented. The rapid and constant images that technology brings close to us make us unwitting witnesses and unexpected participants - albeit remotely - of a merciless destruction of human beings, and of unheard of damage to the natural environment.

Never has the Greek Orthodox Community of Great Britain and Ireland remained indifferent to the pains and misfortunes of our brothers back home, but has always contributed with all its might to support them in human, Christian and practical love. When fires raged through Iliia in the Peloponnese in 2007, the Community of the United Kingdom and Ireland responded generously to the Archbishop's call to raise funds.

As a first reaction to this unspeakable and overwhelming tragedy that has struck the inhabitants of Southeastern Attica, the Holy Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain has begun, together with the Community living in this country, a fundraiser for our brethren who have suffered from the fires.

With this letter, we call upon the entire Flock of our Community to show the usual generosity that has always been its characteristic so that we can all together gather a sufficient amount of money that the Archdiocese will then send to Greece for relieving and helping the victims cope with even a small part of the tremendous needs that they will now face when the harsh reality of what has happened hits them.

On Sunday, July 29, 2018, each Community will bring out a special collection tray for our brothers and sisters who have suffered so much from these fires. Each Community's Church Committee will then need to gather together the donations of the faithful and promptly send a cheque to that amount, written out to 'Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira & GB', to the Offices of the Archdiocese.

I am sure that all of us - together with prayers - will carry out this crucial and Christian task and that we will respond generously for our brethren who have suffered. Wishing you and your families health and the protection of the Triune and Blessed God through the intercessions of the Mother of God and all the Saints, with warmest wishes and love and honour in the Lord.

London, July 24, 2018

Archbishop Gregorios
of Thyateira and Great Britain

Note: This Encyclical letter is to be read, instead of a sermon, on Sunday, July 29, 2018, and the Priest is to make a fervent call for help for those who have suffered from the fires of Athens and Attica.