

The Archbishop Iakovos Collection



*“This collection is a recollection not only
of the life of Archbishop Iakovos but also
of the life of the Greek Orthodox
Community in the Americas.”*



Born Demetrios Athanasios Coucouzes on July 29, 1911, on the island of Imvros, Archbishop Iakovos was the fourth child of Maria and Athanasios Coucouzes. Following his elementary education on his native island (which at this time was transferred from Greece to Turkey), he enrolled at the age of fifteen in the Ecumenical Patriarchal Theological School of Halki from which he graduated with high honor in 1934. The same year he was ordained a deacon and assumed the ecclesiastical name of Iakovos (James). He served the Church of Constantinople in various capacities and at one point was prohibited from serving because of his imagined "pro-Greek and (therefore) anti-Turkish activities". Continually subjected to humiliation and verbal abuse because of his identity as a Greek Orthodox Christian, he knew he could not remain for long under the Turkish yoke.

In 1939, he accepted an assignment to serve as the Archdeacon to the then Archbishop Athenagoras and was transferred to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in New York. He was ordained a priest in 1940 at the Holy Trinity Church in Lowell (MA) and served parishes in Hartford (CT), St. Louis (MO) and for twelve years as Dean of the Boston Cathedral. In 1950, he became a citizen of the United States and in 1954 was ordained a bishop at the Patriarchal Church of St. George in Constantinople. He served as the personal representative of Patriarch Athenagoras to the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, serving two terms as President. Following the death of Archbishop Michael in 1958, he was elected Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and was enthroned on April 1, 1959. For over thirty-seven years, he was to lead the Church of the Americas, heralding a new chapter in the history of the Archdiocese and the Greek-American Community.



Displayed within the confines of this collection are the personal effects of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos. These items were either purchased by him or were personally presented to His Eminence by friends and dignitaries alike. They represent not only the unique character of this distinguished hierarch but they are also a chronicle of his life...the overwhelming majority of which has been devoted to proclaiming the loving message of the Orthodox Faith. Without a doubt, the various artifacts represent the rich tradition and heritage of Orthodoxy and attest to the accomplishment not only of Archbishop Iakovos but also of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America which he shepherded for over 37 years. It is not necessary to elaborate on the achievements of this honored churchman for the collection bears witness to his record. If it can be said that a true shepherd cannot be separated from his flock, then neither the flock from its shepherd...*therefore, this collection is a recollection not only of the life of Archbishop Iakovos but also of the life of the Greek Orthodox Community in the Americas.*



Two areas in which the Archbishop especially were in *Strengthening Interfaith Relations*

Strengthening Interfaith Relations



During the 1940's as the Dean of the Annunciation Cathedral in Boston, Archbishop Iakovos displayed his keen interest in strengthening interfaith relations by inviting speakers from other Christian as well as Jewish jurisdictions. This program would be a foretelling of a distinguished career in ecumenical affairs, a cause close to his heart and one for which the Archbishop would become world renowned.

In 1954, upon his elevation to the episcopacy, he was appointed by Patriarch Athenagoras as his personal representative to the World Council of Churches in Geneva, serving two terms as President and greatly increasing the visibility and respect for the Orthodox Church. Following his election in 1959 to the Archbishopal Throne of the Americas, he was assigned another delicate mission by the Patriarch and en route from Constantinople to New York for his enthronement made a stop in Rome. During his audience with Pope John XXIII, he delivered a short biblical message from the Patriarch which was to open the way to bridge the schism existing between the two Churches since 1054. Upon his retirement in 1996, he was acknowledged by other Faiths as the Dean of all religious leaders in the United States. The essence of his vision and that which compelled him to act was the prayer of Christ "that they all may be one in us".

"For nearly forty years, Archbishop Iakovos has been a leader in the Ecumenical movement and has traveled throughout the world to foster closer relations and understanding among all religious peoples."

Senator Paul Sarbanes



ly distinguished himself during his ministry
and in *Support of Civil and Human Rights*.



Support of Civil and Human Rights

"It began when I saw how the Greek people were oppressed in Turkey as I was growing up there."

Asked about what sparked his support of Human Rights, Archbishop Iakovos responded with the above quote. Exposed at an early age to the ugly face of prejudice and discrimination, he did his utmost to combat them regardless of personal dangers or criticisms. It has been this commitment as much as his leadership that earned him the wide respect and influence he enjoyed. In 1963, while many other religious leaders stood on the sidelines, he aligned himself with the civil rights movement in the United States, supporting the Civil Rights Act, urging his flock to fight racial segregation and personally joining civil rights marches. In the Spring of 1965, he boarded a rickety old DC3 with a handful of other religious leaders and flew to Selma, Alabama, to join Martin Luther King's historic civil rights march. Archbishop Iakovos marched next to Dr. King at the forefront of the procession, a bold act that was captured on the cover of the March 26, 1965 issue of Life Magazine.



"As we walked toward the courthouse, there were so many ugly faces staring at us", he told a New York Times reporter. "The whites' spirits were so poisoned by hate and bias but when you believe in the rightness of what you are doing, you discount fear."



The Archbishop Iakovos Library and Learning Resource Center



The Archbishop Iakovos Collection is housed within *The Archbishop Iakovos Library and Learning Resource Center* which is located on the campus of Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, MA. The facility serves the School and the greater academic and religious community by supporting the curriculum of the college and theological school and by offering research materials for scholarly work.

The Archbishop Iakovos Library and Learning Resource Center stands as a testimony to the life-long love of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos for the seminary which he served as a professor and acting Dean early in his career. In response to the dire need of the School to replace the outdated and limited Cotsidas-Tonna Library, His Eminence spearheaded an aggressive campaign to raise the necessary funds to renovate and expand the library. Many friends of the Archbishop as well as magnanimous members of the Greek-American community responded to this call and on September 12, 1999, the formal dedication service took place. His Eminence presided at this historic occasion accompanied by former President George Bush, numerous hierarchs, dignitaries, benefactors, academic representatives and over 3000 faithful who gathered from all corners of the Archdiocese to witness the event.

A four-storied brick building, the Library houses well over 100,000 monographic volumes, over 700 active serial titles, a large collection of microform material, video and audio-cassettes and numerous CD-ROM's. The public computer terminals have internet access and links to electronic databases. In addition, the holdings of the Library include a rare book collection in Orthodox, Greek and general religious studies as well as an archive of materials related to the history of the School and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Housed on the top floor of the Library is *The Archbishop Iakovos Collection* which encompasses the personal effects of His Eminence as well as antique vestments, ecclesiastical items, commemorative gifts, awards and memorabilia which the Archbishop acquired during his lifetime and which reflect the long and distinguished career of this hierarch. In addition, there is a separate Archive Room which contains the personal archives of His Eminence.





This collection portrays the vibrancy and dedication of you, the faithful members of the Greek Orthodox community of the Americas. It is the crowning glory of the life-long contributions of our people who have become an integral and valued part of the pluralistic mosaic of this great land.

The awards and memorabilia housed within the collection are a lasting tribute to a people, who within a span of eighty or so years, have been blessed to see their dreams become reality.

It is, therefore, your collection which I humbly and lovingly offer to you.

Archbishop Iakovos



The Archbishop Iakovos Collection
at
The Archbishop Iakovos Library and
Learning Resource Center
on the campus of

HELLENIC COLLEGE AND HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
50 Goddard Avenue, Brookline, MA 02445