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**The Lonely Path of Integrity  
Spyridon, Archbishop of America (1996-1999)**

by Justine Frangouli -Argyris

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**The biography of former Archbishop Spyridon of America  
Exantas Publishing Company, 2001**

**By George Matsoukas, reviewer**

Anyone interested in the chaos of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese (GOA) these past 10 years must read this book to get an insight into the period. I remember reading it when it first came out, and it read like a mystery novel. I could not put it down, and I could not stop reading it until I finished it.

Two important points the former archbishop makes in relating his side of the saga are:

- Just before his appointment was announced to the world, he and the Patriarch had a private meeting in which the patriarch shared with the new archbishop his vision for the American Church. He laid out a plan to divide and conquer the Archdiocese of America by separating it into entities. He did this by appointing presiding hierarchs who were titular Metropolitans. Finally, in 2003, he made them Metropolitans of the American cities in which they preside. Until this day, no one knows who they report to. In the liturgical commemorations, the Archbishop is not mentioned. The Archdiocese is broken up into separate entities. Recently naming the Archbishop as an occasional member of the Patriarchal Synod raises a whole new set of questions. Some believe this establishes total control of the Archdiocese by the Patriarchate.
- The titular metropolitans opposed Spyridon's appointment, and even before the new Archbishop was enthroned, they decided that they would not cooperate with him. The three-year strained relationship of the former Archbishop and the American synod reached a climax when the synod which undermined him from his first day of office banded together and requested that the Patriarch remove him from office.

Nevertheless, the interests of the bishops of the GOA and the Patriarch converged after Archbishop Spyridon was retired. We now have a situation in which clericalism dominates, and the balance between the clergy and laity for the good order of the governance of the Church is diminished.

This unstable period in the history of the Archdiocese is outlined in this must read book. It gives us a perspective on the ongoing crisis of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The former Archbishop continues to speak out on the issues of the day. The Patriarchate seems to be reacting to some of his suggestions and criticisms.

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