

Installation of New Frescoes at the Annunciation Metropolitan Church in Oslo



OSLO, Norway – Under the leadership and oversight of His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia, along with the diligent efforts of the parish priests of the Metropolitan Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Oslo Very Rev. Archimandrite Fr. Alexandros Loukatos and Rev. Ekonomos Fr. Maxime Lesage, and the members of the parish council, the iconography in the Holy Altar and the apse of the aforementioned church, located in central Oslo, was completed.

Iconographers Michail Androutsos, Demetrios Androutsos, and Spyridon Metsis traveled from Ioannina to Oslo, where they stayed for one week to install the second part of the iconography in the Holy Altar of the Metropolitan Church.

Specifically, from March 3 to 9, 2024, the following twenty iconographic scenes were installed: the Preparation of the Throne, the Annunciation of the Theotokos,

the Hospitality of Abraham, the Burning Bush, the Three Youths in the Furnace, the Sacrifice of Abraham, the Four Evangelists, the Saints Deacons Timon, Parmenas, Alexander, Stephen, Prochoros, and Achilleios, medals depicting Saints Porphyrios the Kausokalyvite, Paisios of the Holy Mountain, Cosmas the Aetolian, and Iakovos of Euboea, along with ornate Byzantine décor.

Previously, on November 22, 2022, the same iconographers had installed the first part of the iconography, featuring the Theotokos Enthroned, medals of six prophets, the Holy Eucharist, and Christ Enthroned, encircled by eight Hierarchs.

The iconography in the Metropolitan Church took place following the installation of 46 frescoes at the St. George Cathedral in Stockholm and the St. Nicholas Hermitage in Rättvik, Sweden, during Metropolitan Cleopas' ten-year archpastoral tenure.

On the afternoon of Saturday, March 9, 2024, Metropolitan Cleopas traveled to Oslo to personally oversee the installation of the frescoes, met with the aforementioned iconographers, and viewed the work taking place for the complete renovation of the church hall.

Later that afternoon, the Metropolitan met with the new members of the Metropolitan Church parish council and a representative of the Ukrainian Community in Oslo.

On Sunday morning March 10, 2024, Metropolitan Cleopas presided over the Divine Liturgy, which was streamed live on the Facebook pages of the Holy Metropols and the parish and celebrated in Greek, Norwegian, Swedish, French, and English, assisted by the parish priest Fr. Maxime. Mr. Theologos Halle Bakke also assisted by serving in the Holy Altar.

In his address, the Metropolitan spoke about the Gospel passage of the Last Judgment. He also spoke to the Sunday School students, and at the end he thanked the iconographers, those who donated toward the iconography project, and all those who contributed to this historic achievement by expanding the iconography of the Metropolitan Church with new frescoes.

Metropolitan Cleopas also expressed his satisfaction over the progress being attained by the local Greek Community, offering the former parish council president Mr. Michail Bikoulis a copy of his new two-volume work on the correspondence of St. Nectarios of Pentapolis.

Afterwards, he joined all those in attendance for a luncheon offered by the Ladies Philoptochos Society in a near by function hall.

The Consul General of Greece Hon. Mr. Constantinos Danassis was also on hand for the Divine Liturgy and the luncheon, together with a colleague from the Greek Embassy in Oslo.

The hymns were chanted in Greek and Norwegian by Messrs. Panagiotis Katsivalis, head chanter of the parish, and Messrs. Kosmas Plakou and Porphyrios Erik Hasner. That same afternoon, Metropolitan Cleopas attended a concert featuring traditional music from ancient and Byzantine times, offered by choir director Mrs. Marilena Zlatanou.

He returned to his see in Stockholm the following day.

Photo credit: Holy Metropolis of Sweden, Mr. Michail Bikoulis & Ms. Anastasia Gkolfi.

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