23/09/2024

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew honored as an Honorary Citizen of Kilkis



At a special ceremony held at city hall, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was declared an honorary citizen of the Municipality of Kilkis.

Earlier, the Ecumenical Patriarch was welcomed at the Metropolitan Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, where a doxology was performed in the presence of His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens All Greece. The service was attended by representatives of the political, military, and ecclesiastical leadership, as well as security forces and many faithful.

“We pray that the merciful Lord will strengthen you in your daily struggles, and we urge you not to forget that true societal support and genuine progress are rooted in the cultivation of spiritual values. These values, in the tradition of our Nation, are closely tied to the Orthodox Church and our Christian identity,” said Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew during his reception in the courtyard of the Metropolitan Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour.

He added: “We should be proud because we belong to a luminous spiritual tradition, bearers of a rich civilization with a universal and deeply human impact. Orthodoxy is, as has been noted, inseparably intertwined with the morals, character, and family life of our people.”



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is on a four-day visit to Kilkis, following the joint official invitation of Metropolitan Bartholomew of Polyana and Kilkis and Mayor Dimitris Kyriakidis. The visit coincides with the centenary celebration of the elevation of the Diocese of Polyana to the Holy Metropolis of Polyana and Kilkis.

After being received at the Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, in the presence of His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew highlighted the close connection between the local church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He emphasised that “its first three metropolitans, Photios, Kyrillos, and Ioakeim, were all alumni of the Holy Theological School of Halki, which not only underscores the school’s positive impact

on ecclesiastical continuity but also reflects how deeply imbued this holy metropolis is with the education and spirit of the Mother Church.”

He emphasised that the Ecumenical Patriarchate had supported the Nation in its struggles to preserve its identity during very difficult times. He also expressed his gratitude to Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, stating:

“We are grateful to him for his efforts in upholding the common witness of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the sanctity of the Church of Greece.”

During the reception of the Ecumenical Patriarch in the courtyard of the church, Mayor of Kilkis, Dimitris Kyriakidis, and Metropolitan Bartholomew of Polyana and Kilkis also addressed the Ecumenical Patriarch.



Ceremony for the Proclamation of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as an Honorary Citizen of Kilkis
Immediately afterward, the Ecumenical Patriarch was declared an honorary citizen of the Municipality of Kilkis during a ceremony in the municipal council meeting room.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew remarked that the refugees from Pontus and Asia Minor built churches, preserved their customs and traditions, and kept alive the longing to return to their ancestral lands. After highlighting the close relationship between the local church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, he

addressed the local authorities, adding:

“Do everything and leave nothing undone for the progress and prosperity of our beloved fellow citizens, and especially for the benefit of the youth, as it is through them that the wealth and culture of this region will be preserved. We place great trust in the power of young people—in their sense of responsibility, dedication, and their noble, charitable mission to safeguard and spread our country’s cultural heritage. May the Lord bless the efforts of the young, granting them progress and enlightenment.”

The resolution was read by Ioannis Chatziapostolou, president of the municipal council of Kilkis.

The ceremony was attended by His Eminence Metropolitan Ignatios of Demetrias and Almyros, representing His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece; Deputy Minister of Interior (Macedonia-Thrace) Kostas Gioulekas, representing the government; Minister of Justice Giorgos Floridis; Vice President of the Greek Parliament Georgios Georgantas; Syriza MP Petros Pappas; PASOK/KINAL MP Stefanos Parastatidis; Honorary President of the Court of Auditors and former acting Prime Minister Ioannis Sarmas; Deputy Regional Governor of Kilkis Andreas Vergidis; Political Governor of Mount Athos Alkiviadis Stefanis; Deputy Governor Aristos Kasmiroglou; Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff, General Dimitrios Choupis; Commander of the 1st Army, Lieutenant General Demokritos Konstantakos; Inspector General of Police of Northern Greece, Lieutenant General Christos Bouloumpasis; General Regional Director of Police of Central Macedonia, Brigadier General Spyridon Digoris; former Minister Savvas Tsitouridis; and Their Eminences, Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, Metropolitan Barnabas of Neapolis and Stavroupolis, Metropolitan Ioustinos of Nea Krini and Kalamaria, Metropolitan Dimitrios of Goumenissa, Axioupolis and Polykastro, Metropolitan Nikodimos of Kassandria, Metropolitan Stefanos of Philippi, Neapolis and Thassos, Kallinikos of Arta, Metropolitan Panteleimon of Maroneia and Komotini, Metropolitan Ierotheos of Lemnos and Agios Efstratios, Metropolitan Kallinikos of Kastoria, Metropolitan Dimitrios of Irinoupolis, Metropolitan David of Grevena, Metropolitan Joel of Edessa, Pella and Almopia, and Metropolitan Apostolos of Miletus.














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