

## **The Ecumenical Patriarch at the Church of Saint Menas in Hypsoma**



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew presided over the Divine Liturgy on Monday, 11 November 2024, on the occasion of the Feast of the Holy Martyrs Menas, Victor, and Vincent, in the Church of Saint Menas in Hypsoma, which was celebrating its feast day.

The homily was delivered by Patriarchal Deacon Father Varnavas. After the Dismissal of the Liturgy, the Ecumenical Patriarch reflected on the lessons taught by the life and martyrdom of St. Menas and the other martyrs who suffered with him, as well as St. Theodore the Confessor, the Abbot of the nearby historic Stoudion Monastery, who was also commemorated on that day. He also spoke of all the martyrs and confessors of our faith who, as he noted, have marked the history of the Church and remain as shining stars in the spiritual firmament, illuminating our path and guiding our steps “with everything good for doing his will, and what is pleasing to him”

“These good works, especially towards our brothers and sisters in need, let us also do during this period of preparation for the great feast of Christmas, which begins in a few days, as other good Samaritans, as we also heard in yesterday’s Gospel passage, as bright stars and we who will illuminate our surroundings with the light of Christ’s joy and abode and will be not only an example to be imitated, but, even more, an occasion and a reason to glorify and praise His name.

When this is the outlook of our life, then there is no room for pessimism, for disappointment, for despair. Then, beyond the temporary of this world, the fixed, the transitory, we will see the permanent and apparently invisible, for which we were shaped, towards which we were inclined. Holiness is achievable at all times and everywhere and in all places, it is not the privilege of only one era or one region only!



The case of the recently celebrated Saint Nektarios, Bishop of Pentapolis, the Miracle Worker, also proves this truth, a contemporary popular Saint, who was born in the neighbouring Silivria and fell asleep in the Lord in 1920. His annual memory and feast day was honoured again this year in his hometown last Sunday, 3 November, lead by the Shepherd of Selyvria and Supervisor of your Region, Metropolitan Maximos, who presided over the feast day Divine Liturgy, with the magnificent participation of about 700 pilgrims!

Holy brother, we warmly congratulate you for the great work you are doing both in



your God-saving Holy Eparchy and in one of the most demanding Regions of the Holy Archdiocese of Constantinople, that of Hypsomatheia, Vlaga and Kontoskalion, of which you preside as Hierarch and very successfully. They also praise you for the fact that despite the burden of your many pastoral, liturgical and administrative duties, you do not neglect your academic pursuits at all, as demonstrated by your recent in-depth presentation in the context of the international conference co-organised by the Mother Church of Constantinople in memory of one of its leading Hierarchs, the blessed Metropolitan John Zizioulas of Pergamon, of whom you were a student. Eternal be his memory!”.

His All-Holiness warmly welcomed the Roman Catholic Priest who was present. Fr Paul McPartlan, Professor Emeritus of the Catholic University of America, whose student was Metropolitan Maximos of Selyvria during his doctoral studies in the United Kingdom. His All-Holiness thanked Fr. Paul for his participation in the recent international conference on the late Metropolitan John of Pergamon and congratulated him for his contribution and paper presented at the conference.



At another point in his speech, His All-Holiness praised and blessed the dean of the Church, Presbyter Stylianos Zografidis, as well as the Church Committee, “who work with zeal and self-denial under the directives of Metropolitan Maximos of Selyvria”.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was previously addressed with warm words by

Metropolitan Maximos of Selyvria, who referred to the long-standing ties of the Community with the miraculous Saint Menas.

Photographs: Nikos Papachristou

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