

03/12/2024

## **Homily by His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden, on the 14th Sunday of Luke Annunciation Cathedral of New England, Boston**



Reverend Fr. George Dragas,  
Esteemed Members of the Parish Council,  
Esteemed Members of the Choir,

Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With the canonical permission of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston, under whose jurisdiction the Cathedral of New England operates, I am once again among you, ten years after assuming my archpastoral duties in Scandinavia, recalling with emotion and gratitude my priestly ministry here.

As the Lord headed up toward Jerusalem, He passed through Jericho. Outside this

city, a blind man sat, seeking the help of passersby.

No one knows how long he had been blind. Due to the nature of his ailment and the difficulties it created for him, he lived in poverty.

He lacked the means to support himself or the ability to earn a living of his own. He lived off the alms of passersby. "He sat by the roadside begging," the Holy Evangelist recounts. He sat on a busy road, entreating whoever crossed his path to offer him charity.

This daily hardship and the sorrow it brought did not diminish his spirit; on the contrary, it nurtured and intensified his longing to meet Christ and seek His healing mercy.

One day, he heard the loud commotion of a crowd accompanying the Lord. He asked what was happening and was told that Jesus was passing by. Unable to see, he "cried out" with all the strength of his soul: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."

What good would faith do without the essential blessing of perseverance? Though his fellow townsfolk told him to be quiet, "he cried out all the more, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.'"

The Lord asked him what he wanted, and he answered, "I want to see again." The merciful and almighty Lord replied, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well."

The much-desired miracle occurred, and the formerly blind man "followed the Lord, glorifying God," while "all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God."

Let us consider, my beloved Brethren, that every affliction aims to draw us closer to God, strengthen our faith, make our prayer more fervent, and direct us toward our Father, the Provider of all good things.

During this period of the great nationwide Thanksgiving celebration, I have come here from the Northern Lands, not for rest but for spiritual rejuvenation and to share with you a significant project which is preoccupying my attention and concern. This relates to the Parish of the Holy Trinity in Gothenburg, Sweden, the country's second-largest city, which is home to its second-largest Greek community after Stockholm.

Two years ago, just before Christmas, our wooden church suffered great damage due to a flood and was deemed unsafe for public use until it could be fully restored. Today, with all the necessary arrangements in place and having the final cost estimate, I stand before you, aware of your sensitivity and generosity, and request

your financial support for a project requiring over one million dollars.

Once again, I thank His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston for his understanding and support, and I appeal to the family of our Cathedral, where I faithfully served for five years, to strengthen this effort. May the blessings of the Trinitarian God, worshiped in unity, be upon you, your families, and all your endeavors.

Amen!

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