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The Ecumenical Patriarch on the late Archbishop of Albania



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew referred to the personality and work of the late Archbishop Anastasios of Albania on Saturday, 25 January 2025, in his address during his visit to the Holy Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Bischwiller, France, where he performed a trisagion memorial service for the repose of the soul of the late Hierarch.

His All-Holiness described the late Archbishop Anastasios as “a great personality of our Orthodox Church” and referred to his long, arduous and fruitful ministry.

“A great personality, as I said, because in the many years that God bestowed upon him, he carried out missionary work in Africa where he was a Missionary, academic work in Athens, where he taught Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Athens, and ecclesiastical work in Albania for thirty years and a little more, in Albania, where the Mother Church of Constantinople sent him, when the atheist regime collapsed and chose him as an educated, dynamic, worthy Hierarch to

resurrect, to reborn from the ashes the Church of Albania, of which almost nothing was left.

I was telling my colleagues that I remember those early years of the revival of the Church of Albania when the late Archbishop Anastasios, had just been installed in Albania, and brought to the Phanar two or three elderly priests, weakened, exhausted by hardships and suffering. They were not allowed to officiate, they did other, manual, work in their homeland, they were monitored day and night by the police organisations of the regime, and they received the blessing of the Mother Church, our Patriarchate, first Archbishop Anastasios, whom our Synod elected and appointed there, and his colleagues, those few who were left.

Of course, later, Archbishop Anastasios ordained new priests, opened a seminary, founded churches, orphanages, charitable institutions, a hospital, a university, he did many things with the grace of God, with the good coworkers he chose, with the financial support of many institutions, foundations and individuals who believed in his sincerity and in his hard work and in his mission, and he did all these works that I mentioned. Now the time has come for the Lord to call him to himself, to give him rest from the many labours of his life and ministry. He was ill recently, he was admitted to the Evangelismos Hospital in Athens, where he gave up his spirit to our Creator and God. May his memory be eternal. May we have his blessing.”

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