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# The funeral service of the blessed Archbishop Anastasios of Albania, Durrens, and all Albania



On Wednesday, 16/29 January 2025, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos, along with the Elder Archbishop of Constantine, Aristarchos, and Archdeacon Mark, travelled by air to Tirana, to take part in the funeral service of the blessed Archbishop Anastasios of Albania, and to honour his extensive, multifaceted, and exemplary pastoral work, which was filled with holiness and wisdom.

On Wednesday evening, the eve of the Funeral Service, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos, along with His Beatitude the Archbishop George of Cyprus, held a Trisagion at the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Tirana for the repose of the blessed Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana.

On Thursday, 17/30 January 2025, the feast of the Three Hierarchs and great luminaries of the Holy Trinity (new cal.), the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the Holy Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ. The Divine Liturgy was led by the Locum Tenens of the Throne, His Eminence Metropolitan Ioannis of Korça, with His Eminence Metropolitan Demetrios of Gjirokastër, along with the Elder Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Church of Albania, His Eminence Metropolitan Nathaniel of Amantia as concelebrants.

The Funeral Service was led by His All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, with the Locum Tenens of the Throne, His Eminence Metropolitan Ioannis of Korça, concelebrating.

After the conclusion of the Service, the obituary was delivered in honour of the departed Hierarch, by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos, and is as follows:

“Your Eminence, Metropolitan John of Korça, Locum Tenens of the Archiepiscopal Throne of the Church of Albania
Your Beatitude, Most Blessed Primates
of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches,
Beloved brothers in Christ,

The Primates of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches united in Christ in the bond of peace, offer their condolences today to the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania in its Christ-like mourning, following the departure to the Lord of its Shepherd, the blessed Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës and all Albania, His Eminence Archbishop Anastasios. We grieve, joining in the funeral service, gathered around his venerable body, and praying for the repose of his soul in the land of the living. “Sorrowing as is fitting at the separation,” we find comfort in the words of the boundless mercy shown to us by our incarnate, crucified, and risen Lord Jesus Christ, for He said, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:25).

In our prayers, it is fitting and just that we mention with praise that the Giver of all gifts endowed him with many talents, entrusting him with much, which he, “being a good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:21), cultivated, increased, and multiplied.

First and foremost, as a pioneering missionary, he spread the Orthodox Christian faith to the continent of Africa. As a professor of the History of Religions at the Theological School of the University of Athens, he had a multitude of students, among whom our Mediocrity had the privilege to be taught by him, as did other Fathers of our Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood.

However, the qualities of his talented personality, enjoying international recognition, were dedicated for thirty-three continuous years to the service of the Church of Albania, a task entrusted to him by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In this role, he carried out truly unparalleled missionary work, emulating the great Fathers of the Church. He healed this Church from the wounds of the harsh persecution of the anti-Christian atheist regime and resurrected and reorganised it from the

ashes. He built hundreds of churches, ordained and trained priests, and founded hospitals, medical centres, educational university institutions, and numerous charitable foundations, which have provided assistance and relief to all people in need, regardless of social class, religion, or nationality. Through the Synodical System, he organised the Church of Albania concerning the Ecumenical Patriarchate, always striving and fighting for the unity of the Orthodox Church. He adorned the city of Tirana with the Cathedral of the Resurrection, a structure of exquisite architectural beauty in its centre, as a powerful preacher of the Orthodox faith. The consecration of this cathedral took place in 2014, with the participation of Orthodox representatives, to which the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was warmly invited, and our Mediocrity participated, placing a stone from the Holy and Life-giving Tomb.

The departure to the Lord of the Archbishop of Albania, Anastasios, has deprived the Church of Albania and the entire Orthodox Church of his living presence. However, his good works remain a strong legacy, especially for the Church of Albania. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, in sympathy, prays that through his example and prayers, it may continue to walk the path he paved for it. One might say of him that by fulfilling his name, he lived a resurrected life before his repose and the common Resurrection.

“Time would fail us to tell” (Hebrews 11:32) of his good works, and so, leaving these to the conscience of the Church in Christ, we beseech God to forgive him, if in any way he has sinned, whether knowingly or unknowingly, and to place him in the land of the living, with the saints and the righteous, since “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7-8). So be it.

May his memory be eternal!”

The final farewell to the body followed, with each of the Primates giving their individual parting embrace.

The Hierarch was buried beneath the Holy Table of the magnificent and vast Sacred Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ, which he founded.

From the General Secretariat



















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