

Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden at the Annunciation Metropolitan Church of Oslo



During the three-day period of the third week of Great Lent, from Friday to Sunday, March 21-23, 2025, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia, made his 32nd pastoral visit to Oslo, Norway, following this schedule. On Friday, March 21st, he presided over the service of the 3rd Stanza of the Salutations to the Theotokos at the Annunciation Metropolitan Church in Oslo, Norway, delivering a related to the above services sermon.

On Saturday afternoon, March 22nd, the Bishop participated in the annual General Assembly, where he introduced and welcomed the new Priest of the Parish, Reverend Fr. George Kanakaris, and congratulated the Parish Council for the unity and excellent collaboration among its members, as well as for the parish's innovative ministries and the renovation work at the church facilities.

In the evening, he presided over the service of the Great Vespers, elaborating on the theme: "The Mystery of the Virgin Mary."

After the conclusion of the holy services, the President of the Greek Association in Norway Mr. Giannis Aleiferis offered a dinner in honor of the Metropolitan, attended

by Her Excellency the Ambassador of Greece to Norway, Mrs. Anna Korka, Fr. George, and members of the aforementioned association.

On the morning of the 3rd Sunday of Lent, March 23rd, the Metropolitan celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Annunciation Metropolitan Church in Oslo.

Before the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, the service for the veneration of the Holy Cross was held according to the liturgical tradition of the day, followed by a Doxology for the upcoming National Holiday.

The hymns were sung by the Chief Chantor Mr. Panagiotis Katsivalis, with members of the Byzantine choir of the aforementioned church.

Her Excellency, the Ambassador of Greece to Norway, Mrs. Anna Korka, read the festive message of His Excellency the President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Konstantinos Tasoulas.

Then, the Metropolitan addressed the congregation in both Greek and English, referring to the significance of the day: "Today, we celebrate our deep religious devotion and our enduring national pride.

March 25th, 1821, marks the birth of a new era for Greece. After centuries of oppression and suffering under the Ottoman Empire, the Greek people rose up in a heroic struggle for freedom.

The call to arms sounded across the land, inspired by the unyielding desire for independence, and guided by the spirit of faith and resilience. It was a cry for justice, for the right to live in dignity, and for the preservation of faith, culture, and heritage.

The courage of those who fought for liberty on this day echoes the spirit of the Annunciation; a moment of transformation, of stepping forward with faith to change the course of history.

The Archangel's message to the Virgin Mary is a proclamation of Christ's coming and an invitation to each of us to embrace God's will in our lives, just as Mary did with her humble response.

Just as Mary brought Christ into the world, the Greek people brought new life to their homeland on this day in 1821. Let the Annunciation and the Revolution of 1821 guide us as we march forward into the future, and let us renew our commitment to the values that have guided us for centuries: faith, unity, and the pursuit of justice and freedom.

Zito i Ellas! Long live Greece!"

After the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy and the Doxology, all those present moved to the lower-level facilities of the Metropolitan Church, where, on the occasion of the completion of the second phase of the fellowship hall restoration, the service of the water blessing was held.

Mrs. Nicole Konstante was honored for her voluntary contribution, and traditional

hospitality was offered by parish member Mr. Petros Arapis.

Immediately after, the Metropolitan met with a group of catechumens at the church premises, where he spoke to them in English about the meaning of the Holy and Great Lent.

On the afternoon of the same day, His Eminence visited members of the community, offering them his heartfelt wishes for the upcoming Easter, and late in the afternoon, he returned to the Headquarters of his Metropolis in Stockholm.

The photographic material is courtesy of the Holy Metropolis of Sweden, Fr. George Kanakaris, Mrs. Nicole Konstante and Mr. Michael Bikoulis.

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