

## March 25th Celebration at the St. George Cathedral of Stockholm



On the 4th Sunday of Lent, March 30, 2025, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the St. George Cathedral of Stockholm, assisted by the V. Rev. Archimandrite Bartholomew Iatridis, the parish priest of the aforementioned Cathedral.

After the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, a Doxology was performed, attended by Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Greece and Cyprus, Mrs. Ekaterini Fountoulaki and Mr. Solon Savva, the President of the Greek School of Stockholm Mr. Dimitrios Siotis, a large number of children, and an enthusiastic congregation. At the end of the Doxology, the Ambassador of Greece read the message from the President of the Hellenic Republic Mr. Konstantinos Tasoulas, addressed to the Greek Diaspora.

At the conclusion, the Metropolitan gave his address, in both Greek and English,

reflecting on the multiple messages of the day and the National Holiday, stating the following:

“As we continue our journey of repentance, we ask the Virgin Mary and the saints, who emerged victorious in this very same struggle, to strengthen us with their intercessions.

In the liturgical time of the Church, everything belongs to the present, even the future is experienced as the present. We live, that is, in an ongoing present, and therefore we eternally celebrate, as we do today, the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary.

The ‘hail’ of the Archangel turned into successive greetings and became the Akathist Hymn to the Virgin Mary. ‘Behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people.’ The cause of this joy is Christ Himself! The Son of God becomes the Son of Man (according to the Old Testament term Ben Adam בן אדם), and man becomes the Son of God and ‘god by grace.’

On March 25, 1821, the dream of four centuries is summarized and incarnated. The silent bells of Hagia Sophia, the Kryfo Scholeio, the Hymn of Rigas, the Filiki Society, all the persons and events associated with this period kept the national consciousness alive and kept the flame of freedom burning in the hearts of the Greeks, who wove, with the loom of patience, the banner of revolt.

The historical past is an opportunity for spiritual reflection and a path to the future, guided by the principles of our historical past. Peoples who suffer from historical amnesia and do not learn from the past cease to exist.

The Greeks of 1821 were initiates of a ‘national liturgy,’ carrying the ideal of freedom to the entire world, and their spirit was and will be timeless.

The heroes, the ‘saints of our nation,’ teach us to co-vision and collaborate, as unity and harmonious coexistence are both necessity and virtue.

Let us today take the oath given by the brave heroes of our suffering Nation and loudly proclaim, with a resounding voice: Long live March 25, 1821! Long live Greece! Long live our Greek Community in Scandinavia!”

His Eminence also congratulated the children, who, through their participation and traditional costumes, conveyed the spirit and message of the celebrations.

He especially thanked Mrs. Alexandra Zorpidou, who always takes care of the traditional attire for both children and adults, as well as the Greek Women’s Lyceum of Stockholm, which actively participated in the event.

A reception followed at the “Museum of Hellenic-Christian Heritage,” located in the premises of the Cathedral, in honor of the distinguished guests and the congregation.

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