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The New Archbishop of Finland Visits the Stockholm Cathedral



During the three-day period of October 31st, November 1st and 2nd, 2025, His Eminence Archbishop Elia of Helsinki and All Finland visited Stockholm on the occasion of the feast of the Synaxis of the Saints of Karelia.

Specifically, at midday on Friday, October 31st, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia, accompanied by the Very Reverend Archimandrite Bartholomew Iatridis, welcomed at Stockholm’s Arlanda Airport the new Archbishop of Helsinki and All Finland, His Eminence Elia, who was accompanied by the Reverend Protopresbyter Mikael Sundkvist and the Reverend Archdeacon Andreas Salminen. They then attended a luncheon graciously offered by businessman Mr. Konstantinos Zisis.

In the afternoon of the same day, the Hierarchs of the Mother Church and the

above-mentioned Clergy were received by the Ambassador of Finland to Sweden, His Excellency Mr. Olli Kantanen, with whom they exchanged views on ecclesiastical and current matters affecting both countries.

The Shepherd of the Scandinavian Lands offered His Excellency his published study in English regarding the Patriarchal Visit of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Stockholm, in 2019.

That evening, Metropolitan Cleopas hosted a dinner in honor of the Archbishop and his accompanying Clergy, at a local restaurant.

On the morning of Saturday, November 1st, 2025, Archbishop Elia presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Finnish Parish of Saint Nicholas in Stockholm, at which Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia participated in prayer. He was accompanied by the chief Legal Advisor of the Metropolis, Mr. Rafail Poumeyrau.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Cleopas addressed Archbishop Elias appropriately.

That evening, Metropolitan Cleopas again offered a dinner in honor of the Archbishop and his Entourage.

On the morning of Sunday, November 2nd, 2025, Metropolitan Cleopas welcomed Archbishop Elia and his clergy at the Saint George Cathedral of Stockholm.
A concelebration of the Hierarchs followed. At its conclusion, Metropolitan Cleopas welcomed Archbishop Elia for the second time, following the Patriarchal Visit last August, expressing his gratitude for his honored presence and his overall support of the Finnish Parish of Saint Nicholas.

He offered him a Hierarchical medalion/Engolpion, as well as his latest study on the first Metropolitan of Sweden, the late Polyefktos.

Then, Archbishop Elia thanked Metropolitan Cleopas for his generous hospitality and bestowed upon him the Cross of the Order of the Archdiocese of Finland, together with its accompanying insignia.

He also expressed his joy for the brotherly relations between the two Churches, for the benefit of the Mother Church of Constantinople. He spoke about the venerable Head of Orthodoxy, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and expressed his admiration for the restoration work of the Cathedral, which he remembered from his student years.

In his address, delivered in Greek and English, Metropolitan Cleopas stated:

“Today, in our worship Synaxis, we welcome His Eminence Archbishop Elia of Helsinki and All Finland, together with his companions, Father Mikael and Archdeacon Andreas, who have been in Stockholm since the day before yesterday on the occasion of the celebration of the Synaxis of the Saints of Karelia, who were honored yesterday in our Finnish Parish of Saint Nicholas.

Today we have the exceptional honor and blessing to welcome His Eminence with his esteemed Entourage for the second time, after the Patriarchal Chorostasia here of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, on August 24th of this year, in order to reaffirm our fraternal relationship and to thank him, because he grants canonical permission to distinguished Clergy of his Archdiocese to visit and offer the Holy Sacraments to our Finnish Parish, for which we are deeply grateful for his unwavering support.

We wish you, Your Eminence, health, strength, and the abundant blessing of God in your Archpastoral ministry, and may you enjoy the fruits of your labors! Welcome!

Today we heard the Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus. It is not simply a narrative, but a calling; a signpost for our spiritual life.
In the parable, we discern the rich man who lives in luxury and self-indulgence, and Lazarus who is in poverty and pain, silent and patient, near the gate of the rich man.
The two figures represent two familiar ways of life. The rich man is not condemned because he possesses wealth, but because he does not see his brother, does not recognize his social responsibility, and does not glorify God through his blessings.

Lazarus, although poor, has a name: ‘Lazarus,’ which means ‘God is my help.’

The parable then moves to the afterlife. Lazarus is carried to the bosom of Abraham, while the rich man descends into Hades. The reversal is clear: our life on earth determines the soul’s condition after death. This is not merely a warning, but a call to transformation now.

Greed and avarice isolate the human being; covetousness becomes idolatry. Compassion toward our neighbor is an expression of faith.
Let us escape indifference and become active. Let us make the decision to show mercy, with our eyes fixed on the Lord, who loves the humble and justifies the repentant, so that when the day comes that we stand before Him, we may hear His blessed words: ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’”

Your Eminence,
Fr. Mikael & Archdeacon Andreas,

With profound reverence and sincere joy, we welcome You today at our Cathedral.

Your presence among us this day is not only a blessing, but also a visible sign of the living unity of the Church of Christ, which transcends boundaries of geography and culture, binding us together in one common faith, prayer, and Eucharist, under the Mother Church of Constantinople.

We express our profound gratitude for the consistent and generous support that the Autonomous Church of Finland provides to our beloved St. Nicholas Finnish Orthodox Parish of Stockholm.

The regular sending of clergy—who travel from Finland to Stockholm, to serve the Divine Liturgy, to offer the Holy Sacraments, to provide guidance, comfort, and encouragement—this is not a small gift. It is a sacrifice of time, energy, and resources.

Your Eminence, your concern for our pastoral life reflects the care of the Good Shepherd.

Today, your second official visit as Archbishop reminds us that we are not alone. We are part of the one Orthodox Church—united in faith, in prayer, in apostolic tradition.

At this point, please allow me to offer you these two small gifts; an engolpion & my latest book on the first Metropolitan of Sweden the late Polyefktos Finfinis.
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always and with your Esteemed Entourage, Fr. Mikael & Protodeacon Andreas. Thank you.”

After the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence Archbishop Elia, together with the clergy accompanying him, the President of the Finnish Parish of Saint Nicholas in Stockholm and the Director of the Parish Choir, Mr. Jukka Aminoff, the Chief Legal Adviser to the Holy Metropolis of Sweden Mr. Rafail Poumeyrau, Mr. and Mrs. Benedict Svendberg, and His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas, attended a luncheon offered in honor of the visiting delegation by the Cathedral Philoptochos Ladies Society, under the gracious care of its President Mrs. Fotini Batsela, and Mrs. Tania Svendberg, held on the premises of the Museum of Hellenic-Christian Heritage, within the Cathedral grounds.

Thereafter, Metropolitan Cleopas accompanied Archbishop Elia and his honorable

entourage to Stockholm’s Arlanda Airport, where he bid farewell to them, once again expressing his gratitude for their distinguished visit and for the reaffirmation of their mutual fraternal relations and fruitful cooperation.

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