13/01/2026

The Holy Metropolis of Sweden on the Election of His Grace Bishop Bartholomew of Elaia



Following the conclusion of the proceedings of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, convened on January 8 and 9, 2026 respectively, and during the first session of the first day, upon the return of His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia to his see in Stockholm, and at his request for the appointment of an auxiliary bishop, and upon the proposal of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Very Reverend Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne Bartholomew Iatridis, Parish Priest of the Saint George Cathedral of Stockholm, was elected Assistant Bishop to His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas, bearing the title of the once-renowned Diocese of Elaia.

Upon being informed of his election, His Grace Bishop-elect Bartholomew of Elaia proceeded the following day to the Sacred Center of Orthodoxy, where, on January 9, 2026, the Lesser Message (Micron Menyma) was celebrated before His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who addressed the elected Bishop of Elaia with the following words:

“Your Grace, Bishop-elect Bartholomew of Elaia,
The fullness of time has come for you, at the beginning of this new year of the goodness of our Lord who appeared to the world, to receive the third degree of the priesthood and to be established as a bishop of the Great Church of Christ, upon the proposal of your shepherd and fellow member of the Synod and by the honorable unanimous vote of his fellow hierarchs.

This certainly constitutes a supreme milestone in your life and in your ministerial journey as a cleric, but also in the life of our devout Orthodox brothers and sisters in Scandinavia, whose pastoral care and formation in Christ will henceforth be more effective, since the Most Reverend and beloved brother, the Metropolitan of Sweden, will entrust to Your Grace part of his heavy responsibilities, and you will both travel, according to his decisions, throughout the many countries of his jurisdiction, supporting and edifying the people of God. Moreover, our brother possesses long experience, both from his ministry in the New World among the Diaspora and from his more than decade-long fruitful pastoral ministry in northern Europe.

You, on the other hand, have long priestly experience from your service as Chancellor in the Holy Metropolis of Trikki and Stagoi, and later in France and in Thrace, from where you were again transplanted to the Diaspora, where the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are, unfortunately, few — and even fewer those of your worth, diligence, and education.

You are undoubtedly aware of the great honor of being from this day a bishop of the primatial Church in Orthodoxy, which, by decision of the great Ecumenical Councils, bears jurisdiction and responsibility for the Diaspora, a responsibility which it always seeks to fulfill with sacrifice, self-emptying, and love, also through the election and mission of distinguished shepherds such as the present holy Metropolitan of Sweden.

Your Grace, in order to succeed in your new mission, strive to live according to what you preach and teach the faithful, so that you may be trustworthy and that the name of the Lord may not be blasphemed because of you among the nations,

but rather that you may lead them ever closer to Christ and His Church, for their salvation and for the glory of the heavenly name of God.

All of us gathered here in this sacred place congratulate you and wish you a blessed and fruitful episcopal ministry. We also congratulate your Most Reverend shepherd and our beloved co-worker in the Lord, Metropolitan Cleopas, for his choice and for acquiring thereby a worthy and capable assistant bishop, toward whom he bears, as we well know, paternal love, esteem, and trust.

Go forth, therefore, and honor your episcopacy in deed and word, and together with it honor the Holy Mother Great Church of Christ which has thus honored you. Worthy (Axios)!"

Thereafter, His Grace the Bishop-elect responded with an address of thanksgiving and acceptance of his election, as follows:
"Your All-Holiness, most divine Father and Master,

With feelings of deepest reverence and boundless filial gratitude, I stand today before Your All-Holiness, giving thanks to Almighty God, who has deemed me worthy of the supreme honor of being elected by the Holy and Sacred Synod as a bishop of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, and indeed with the great title of the once-renowned Diocese of Elaia.

"Accepting to fulfill the command of the Church," according to Symeon of Thessaloniki (On the Sacred Ordinations, PG 155, ch. 165, 405B), I glorify the Name of our God, worshipped in Trinity and manifested in the Jordan, "for His surpassing grace upon me." Likewise, "I thank my God… for everything" (2 Cor. 9:14).

With devout emotion I find myself in the venerable Center of Orthodoxy, the martyric and renowned Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the ever-vigilant light of Orthodoxy, the ark of sacred tradition and canonical order. Here, in this sanctified place, where the psalmody of the Holy Fathers and the Ecumenical Councils still resounds, where the unity of the local Orthodox Churches is grounded, and from where proceeds the humane and peaceful voice of the Church to the contemporary world.
Faithful to the exhortation of the preacher of Christ and teacher of the Churches Apostle Paul, "Render to all their dues" (Rom. 13:7), and "as a child of obedience" (Phil. 2:12), I bow the knee of soul and body before Your deeply revered person, the pinnacle of Orthodoxy and of the God-protected Nation, for you have "fulfilled my joy" (Phil. 2:2) in my ministry within the Church. Offering my entire self beneath the protection and vaults of this Great Monastery of the Nation's dreams and legends, I

promise filial devotion and complete obedience.

Most Holy Father and Master,

The person of Your Sacred Head constitutes a sign of unity, paternal guidance, and spiritual authority for the entire Orthodox world. Your cross-bearing and resurrectional path, your unceasing concern for the protection of the environment, of human rights, and of pan-Orthodox cohesion, bear witness to the authentic church ethos and the lofty mission of Your venerable primacy, as first in Orthodoxy, and as a source of inspiration and discipleship for us all.

In repentance and obedience, accepting the command, I assume this new responsibility, promising to serve with fear of God, humility, and self-denial. I formally confess my devotion to the Mother Church, to Your All-Holiness, as well as to my venerable shepherd and fellow member of the Holy Synod during the present synodal period, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia, who has benefacted me in many ways and manifoldly. I humbly beseech you to bless this most modest beginning of my episcopal ministry, to support my steps and strengthen my prayer.

To the most reverend Synodal Hierarchs of this exalted Throne of the Ecumene, I offer grateful thanks for their holy vote, repeating St. Paul's saying: "It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart" (Phil. 1:7), and likewise that "always in every supplication of yours for us all, you make your supplication with joy" (Phil. 1:4).

"My benefaction shall remain forever inscribed in the house of the First of Orthodoxy under heaven" (Thucydides 1.129.3, Xerxes to Pausanias). Amen!"
Subsequently, His Grace the Bishop-elect of Elaia descended with the Members of the Holy and Sacred Synod to the All-Venerable Patriarchal Church of Saint George the Great Martyr, where, according to canonical order, the Great Message (Mega Menyma) was celebrated. He then received the congratulations of the holy hierarchs and the members of the Patriarchal Court.

His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas was also received in audience by His All-Holiness, to whom he expressed his gratitude for the favorable response and acceptance of his request for the election of an assistant bishop. He sought the Patriarchal blessings for the fruitful continuation of his archpastoral ministry in Scandinavia. Thereafter, he again appeared together with the elected Bishop of Elaia before His All-Holiness, where both duly addressed the Patriarch and received his inspired blessings for their ministry. The newly elected bishop additionally

received a set of episcopal vestments, an episcopal medalion (engolpion), and the Archieratikon.

By the permission and exhortation of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the ordination of His Grace Bishop-elect Bartholomew of Elaia will be celebrated by his shepherd Metropolitan Cleopas on Sunday, February 1st, 2026, at the Saint George Cathedral of Stockholm (Birger Jarlsgatan 92, 11420 Stockholm), with the participation of invited hierarchs, on the occasion of this joyful event for the local Church.

Metropolisofsweden