

## Reception of the Miraculous Icon of Panagia Soumela in Kifisia, Attica



On Tuesday afternoon, 26 May, His Eminence Metropolitan Kyrillos of Kifissia, together with His Eminence Metropolitan Theodoritos of Laodicea, representative in Athens of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the clergy, the Deputy Prime Minister of Greece Mr. Konstantinos Hatzidakis, numerous Ministers, local authorities, and the faithful people of Nea Kifisia, received before the Church of the Holy Trinity the miraculous Icon of Panagia Soumela.

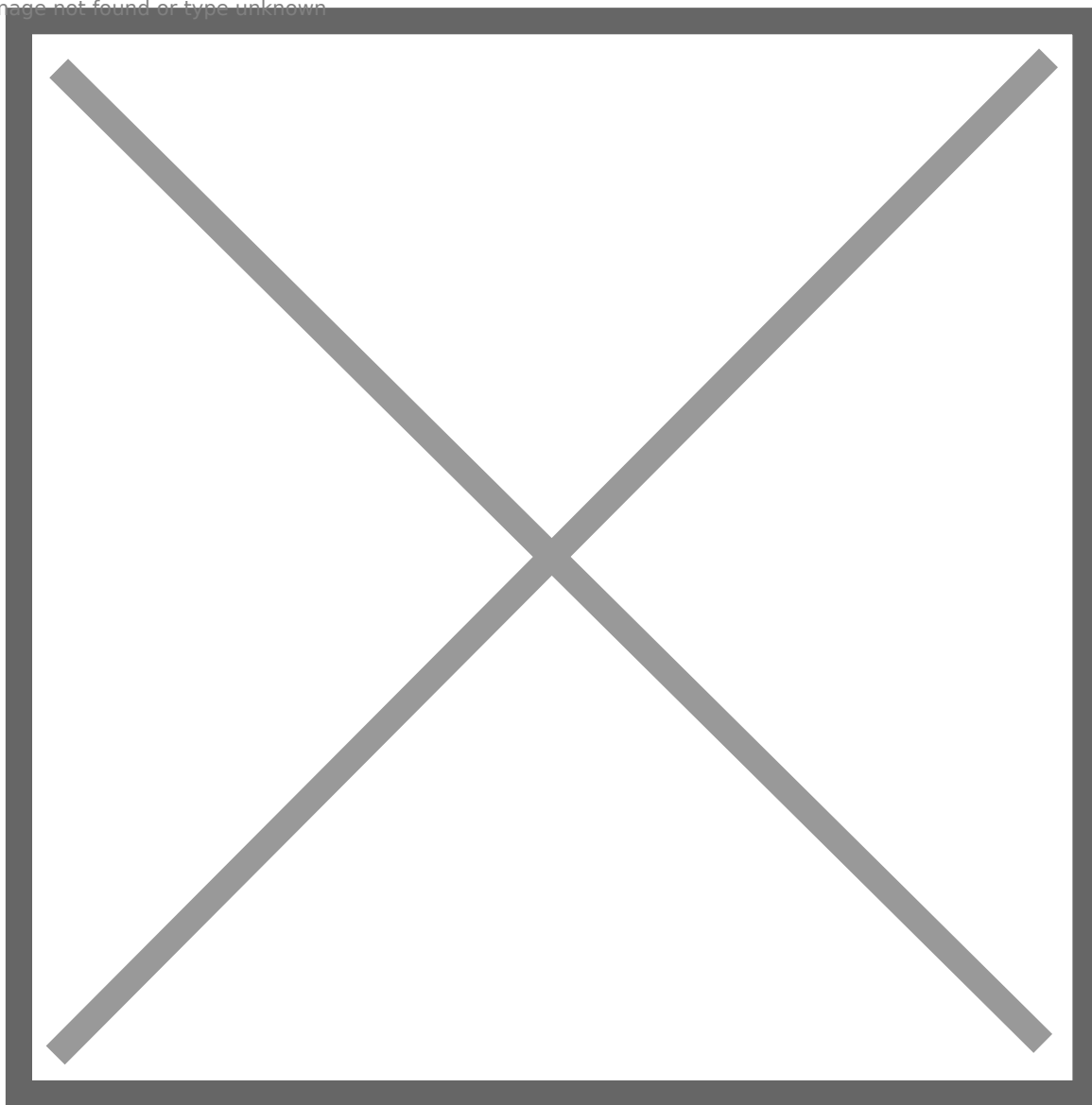
The sacred Icon was brought by His Eminence Metropolitan Panteleimon of Veria, Naousa and Kampania, the Abbot of Panagia Soumela, Archimandrite Panteleimon Papaemmanouil, and the President of the “Panagia Soumela” Association, Mr Georgios Tanimanidis, together with other clergy and lay members of the Association’s Board of Directors.

A concelebrated Hierarchical Vespers followed, at which Metropolitan Panteleimon of Veria presided and delivered the homily. Concelebrating with him were

Metropolitan Theodoritos of Laodicea and the local Hierarch, Metropolitan Kyrillos of Kifisia, who at the conclusion of the service addressed words of welcome and gratitude to the Hierarchs and to Mr Georgios Tanimanidis, President of the “Panagia Soumela” Association, for granting the request to bring the sacred Icon of Panagia Soumela to Kifisia.

In his address, Metropolitan Panteleimon of Veria stated: “Responding with great love to the devout request of your Reverend Shepherd and beloved brother in Christ, Metropolitan Kyrillos of Kifissia, Amarousion, Oropos and Marathon, and of the presiding priest of this splendid Holy Church of the Holy Trinity of Nea Kifisia, representing not only the faithful parishioners but also the entire people of the great and historic Municipality of Kifisia and the Pontian associations, we have today brought with deep emotion the revered and miraculous Icon of the Mother of God of Pontos, Panagia Soumela, for the first time to your region.

Image not found or type unknown



And it was impossible not to respond, since the request concerned the Lady Theotokos herself, Panagia Soumeliotissa, who always hastens to fulfil the petitions of her faithful children, especially those who honour and venerate her.

This profound devotion was also expressed years ago by your Metropolitan, who honoured with his presence and participation the great feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos at the Sacred Pilgrimage of Panagia Soumela. The historic and grace-filled Icon of Panagia Soumeliotissa now reciprocates with her maternal love and presence in Kifisia his filial devotion, as well as the respect and love of all of you who have filled this holy church today to welcome and venerate her.

It is truly moving, but at the same time comforting and hopeful, that in the heart of such a bustling city, and in an age when most people are 'anxious and troubled about many things,' striving to meet the many demands and obligations of life, family, and profession, there remain so many of our brethren who have not forgotten that life consists not only of material needs, human obligations, and worldly concerns that captivate the soul.

Thanks be to God, there are many who know that all these things, though natural and necessary, are temporary and fleeting, and cannot bear the weight of their hopes. Therefore, they care not only for material goods and achievements, nor merely for influential patrons and benefactors. They also care for spiritual treasures, for love and solidarity, for piety and faith in God, in the Most Holy Theotokos, and in the Saints, knowing that faith is 'a sure and steadfast anchor,' indispensable for every person who feels shaken in a world where uncertainty daily increases and evil abounds, a world in which love is often counterfeit and trust dangerous.

Yet it is not necessity that causes us to turn to our Panagia. It is not necessity that leads the thousands of pilgrims to the Sacred Pilgrimage of Panagia Soumela on Mount Vermion in Imathia, to venerate the grace-filled and historic Icon of Panagia Soumeliotissa, the sacred treasure, boast, and glory of the ancient Monastery on Mount Mela in Pontos, where the Icon arrived from Athens in the fourth century. It is not merely necessity that causes them to entrust their petitions to the Mother of God and seek her help. It is love. For without love there is no trust, and without trust the soul of man cannot find rest.

Image not found or type unknown



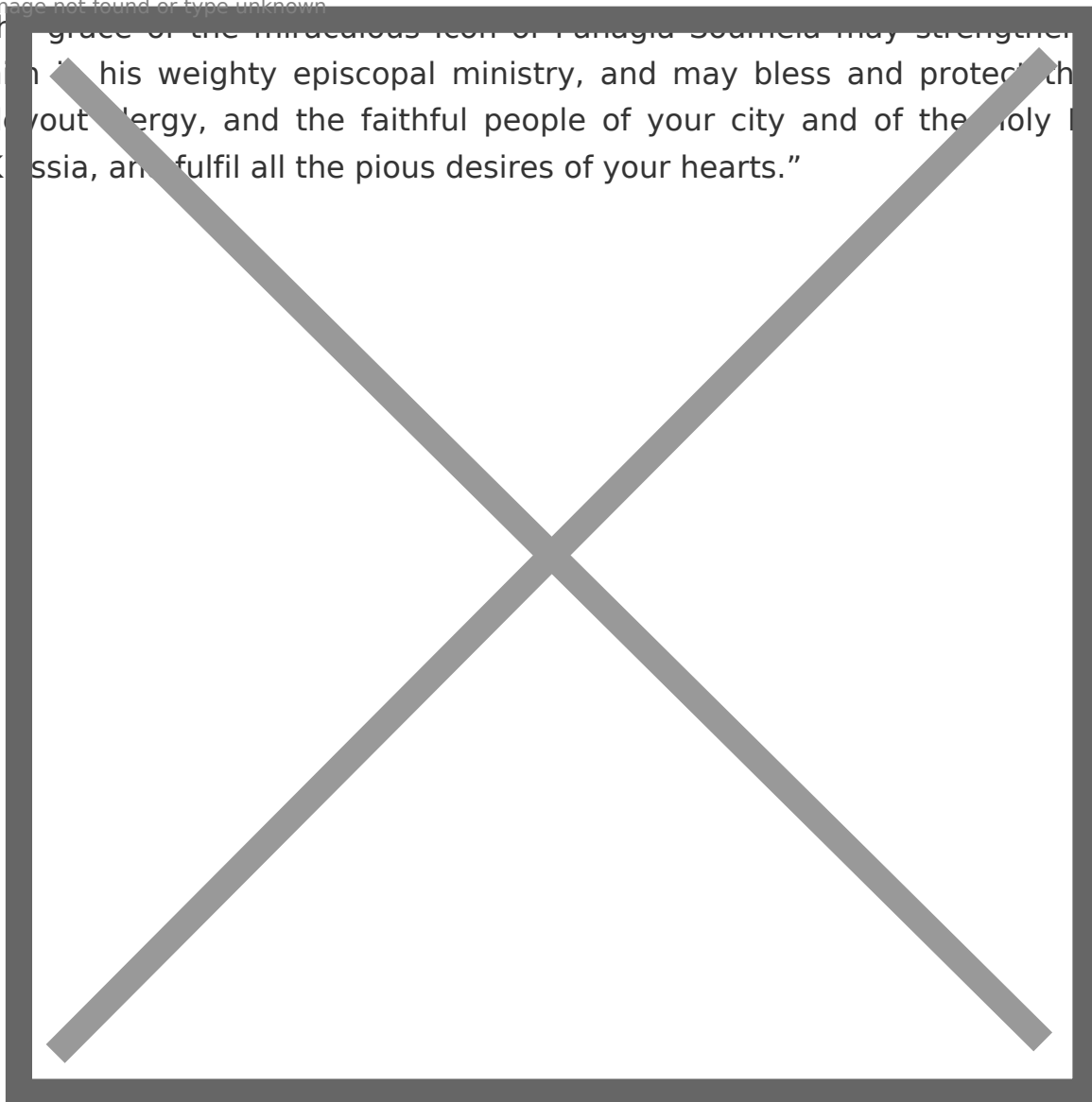
This love for the Most Holy Theotokos has gathered you here today, and your love has also become the motivating force for us, the President and members of the Board of the 'Panagia Soumela' Association, the faithful guardians of her sacred Icon, and the clergy who have the blessing to serve her. At the same time, through Panagia Soumeliotissa, the Mother of the Pontians, we also serve the unity of Pontic Hellenism, which continues its struggle for justice and for the recognition of the Pontic Genocide, which we commemorated only a few days ago. For only through unity can we claim and achieve our goals. Only united can we receive the grace and help of the Most Holy Theotokos, for she too desires unity from us, not only among Pontic Hellenism, but throughout all Ecumenical Hellenism, which has unfortunately experienced the bitter consequences of divisions and discord throughout history.

May the Most Holy Theotokos inspire all of us toward this unity, she whose historic

sacred Icon, known as Panagia Soumeliotissa, you welcomed today with deep emotion and reverence, and who has now 'visited' this Holy Church of the Holy Trinity in Nea Kifisia only days before our Church celebrates, on Pentecost Sunday, the descent of the All-Holy Spirit, who, according to the sacred hymnographer, 'has called all people into unity.'

And I humbly and wholeheartedly pray, while warmly thanking your venerable Shepherd, Metropolitan Kyrillos of Kifissia, Amaroussion, Oropos and Marathon, that

Image not found or type unknown  
the grace of the miraculous Icon of Panagia Soumeliotissa may strengthen and uphold him in his weighty episcopal ministry, and may bless and protect the rulers, the devout clergy, and the faithful people of your city and of the Holy Metropolis of Kifissia, and fulfil all the pious desires of your hearts."

























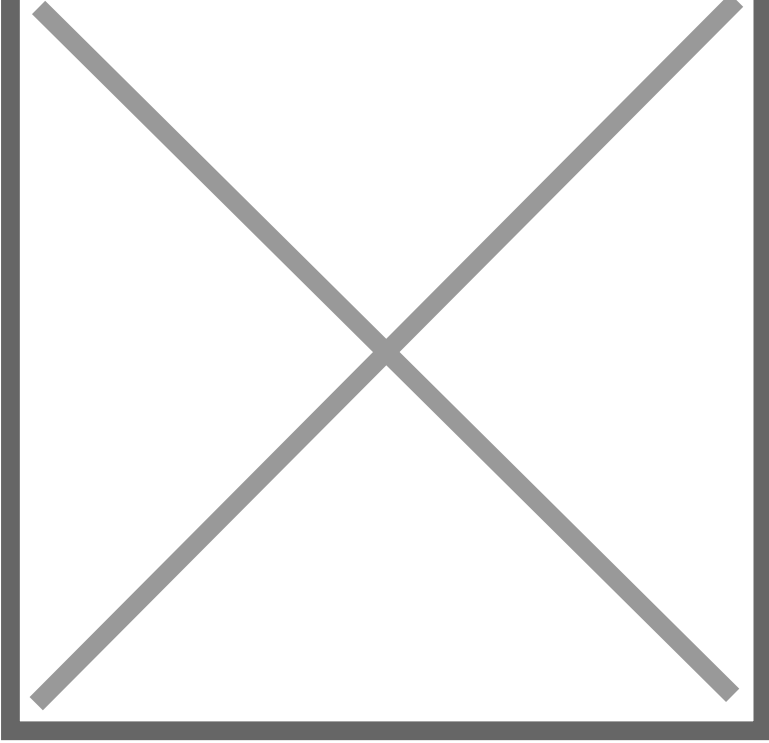










Image not found or type unknown

