

Metropolitan Gregorios of Ankara visits Locris and Lamia



On Friday, 21 August, His Eminence Metropolitan Symeon of Fthiotida welcomed His Eminence Metropolitan Gregorios of Ankara, Protosyncellus of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. His Eminence Metropolitan Gregorios was received, following his arrival from the Queen of Cities and First Throne of Orthodoxy, at the Episcopal Residence of Talantion and Locris, the seat of this historic Diocese under the ecclesiastical and canonical jurisdiction of the Holy Metropolis of Fthiotida. The throne of the Holy Diocese of Talantion and Locris had also been adorned by his predecessor, Metropolitan Agathangelos, who served first as Metropolitan of Ankara and subsequently as Metropolitan of Locris.

Metropolitan Gregory of Ankara was briefed on the activities of the Episcopal Residence of Talantion and Locris by its Director and Parish Priest of the Metropolitan Church of Saints Theodore in Atalanti, Archimandrite Dimitrios Zelianaos, who also serves as the Hierarchical Vicar of Atalanti, and by the Secretary of the Episcopal Residence, seconded theology teacher Mr Vasileios

Makedos.

As part of His Eminence's visit to Locris, the two Hierarchs visited the Parish of Saint Kyriaki in Livanates and subsequently the tenth branch of the "Germanos the Melodist" Conservatory of the Holy Metropolis of Fthiotida, located at Livanates Beach. During the previous academic year, the branch enrolled 32 students. The Parish Priest, Protopresbyter Dimitrios Romantzas, and his associates informed Metropolitan Gregory about the work being undertaken by the seaside parish of Livanates.

In the afternoon, Metropolitan Gregory of Ankara and the local Shepherd, Metropolitan Symeon of Fthiotida, received a public welcome at the Holy Monastery of Saint George in Malesina. They were welcomed by the Abbot of the Monastery, Archimandrite Agathonikos, who was celebrating his name day; the Chancellor of the Holy Metropolis of Fthiotida and Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne, Ephraim Triantafyllopoulos; the Hierarchical Vicar of Opountia and Malesina, Protopresbyter Athanasios Latsoudis; and a multitude of clergy and laity from Locris and other regions.

Among them was a large delegation from the Parish of Saint Athanasios in Galaneika, Lamia, headed by the Parish Priest, Protopresbyter Dimitrios Atmatzidis. Also present at Vespers were Member of Parliament for Fthiotida Mr Georgios Kotronias; the Mayor of Lokroi, Mr Athanasios Zekentes; and the representative of the Region of Central Greece, Mr Apostolis Angelakopoulos.



The Metropolitan of Ankara presided at Great Festal Hierarchical Vespers and was formally welcomed by His Eminence Metropolitan Symeon, who stated, among other things: “The love of God has deemed us worthy this evening to experience this unique, unrepeatable and historic presiding at Vespers by His Eminence Metropolitan Gregorios of Ankara, Protosyncellus of our Ecumenical Patriarchate.

“Fthiotida has very costly tolls—the tolls of love and hospitality. Through this love, we express first and foremost our love and gratitude towards the First of Orthodoxy, the First of the Nation, the First in every respect: first in Orthodox witness, but also first in martyrdom. I ask you to convey the filial wishes, love, respect and gratitude of all the clergy and people of the Holy Metropolis of Fthiotida.

“Here today, at this historic Monastery of Saint George the Trophy-Bearer, you are welcomed first and foremost by Saint Nikephoros the Confessor, Patriarch of Constantinople, whose Precious Skull is preserved in this Monastery.”

In his response, His Eminence Metropolitan Gregorios of Ankara stated, among other things: “During these days, the person of the Most Holy Theotokos, since the Feast of her Dormition has not yet reached its liturgical Leave-taking, continues to bestow ever more blessings upon us. Above all, through her own example and exhortation, she calls us always to heed whatever her Son and our God, her good Son and our God, tells us. Thus, the Panagia becomes our authentic guide towards

the good, that good which, since the most ancient times, the human soul has always sought.

“Fthiotida is a place of passage, and God so ordained that along this passage I should encounter the many ‘tolls’ of your abundant love. Throughout Vespers, I looked upon the icon of Saint Agathonikos and wondered what this victory of the good ultimately means, when the world sees evil continually prevailing and good always being pushed aside. Yet this victory of the good is an interior victory. It is a victory that may not be visible at present, but which abides within the silence of the Dormition of the Theotokos and within the divine cloud of the Transfiguration, always firmly embracing truth and love.”

The splendid service concluded with the chanting of the Polychronion for the venerable Head of Orthodoxy, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. It was rendered according to the precise patriarchal melody by Archon Maistor of the Great Church of Christ Dr Andreas Ioakeim, Director of the “Germanos the Melodist” Conservatory.



The second stop on the two Hierarchs’ tour was within the district of the Episcopal Residence of Thermopylae and Mendenitsa, at the “Saint Catherine” Camping Centre in Kainourgio, Locris. There, the Metropolitan of Ankara was enthusiastically welcomed by participants in the educational programme for families organised by the Youth and Family Foundation of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens, headed by

Protopresbyter Antonios Kalligeris, as well as by the Centre's Administrative Committee and the senior clergy of the Youth Office of the Holy Metropolis of Fthiotida.

The pilgrimage visit of His Eminence Metropolitan Gregorios of Ankara concluded at the Spiritual and Administrative Centre of the Holy Metropolis of Fthiotida in Nea Ambliani, Lamia.



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Παροτρύνει καὶ ἀνίστατο βίαι'
ἐν τῷ κλέῳ καὶ ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ Λιβανῶν
ἐν τῇ κλέῃ ἐδικκοῦται Ταραντίς καὶ Λοκοῖς
τῆς κλέῃς Μιτρούχως φθινοῦρος

Gregorius

Ο ΑΓΚΥΡΑΣ ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ







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