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“Return” of Last Dean of Theological School of Halki



CONSTANTINOPLE – A Memorial Service was held at the cemetery of the Monastery of the Mother of God of Baloukli in Constantinople where the relics of the last Dean of the Theological School of Halki, Metropolitan Maximos of Stavroupolis, were buried in the presence of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

The late Metropolitan Maximos of Stavroupolis, who died in 1991, was originally buried in Athens, and recently at the initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew his relics were transferred to Constantinople. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew said that “I made this decision after the repatriation and burial of former Dean of Halki Metropolitan Iakovos of Iconium and then of my predecessor, Ecumenical Patriarch Constantine VII, who was expelled by the Turkish authorities and died in Athens, where he was also buried. Many years later his relics were transferred here at this historic Monastery of our fathers, where other Ecumenical Patriarchs are buried as well.”

The Ecumenical Patriarch was especially moved when he spoke of the last Dean of the Theological School of Halki. He said, “he was a kind human being, who was not petty or spiteful. On the contrary, he was known for his wit, philanthropy, kindness, and hospitality…He loved his students like a real father. At the time when he was preparing to move to Athens, he reposed in the Lord. He should have been buried here from the beginning and stayed with us, close to the other Hierarchs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. However, his sisters wanted him to be buried in Athens. As Ecumenical Patriarch in 1999 I performed the Trisagion Service at the tombs of my predecessor, Constantine II, and of our Deans. I was blessed by God and, therefore, I was able to bring them both here to the place they belong. This is the place we all belong; the land of our fathers, where blood was shed in the past. This is the only place on Earth where we will be able to rest in peace. May his memory be eternal.”

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