

23/01/2019

## **The Ecumenical Patriarch performs the Blessing of the Waters in Triglia for the first time since 1922 (VIDEOS)**



For the first time in history, an Ecumenical Patriarch celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Triglia (Tirilye), in the Province of Bursa, and the ceremony of the Blessing of the Waters with the diving for the Cross in the Sea of Marmara.

It was the first time for 97 years that a diving for the Cross took place in the Asia Minor city, the Ecumenical Patriarchate reports.

Today, Saturday, January 19, the day on which Holy Theophany is celebrated according to the Julian calendar, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the old Holy Church of St. Basil, which was restored by the local community and used as cultural center.

Also celebrating with His All-Holiness were Elpidophoros, the Metropolitan of Bursa, and Adrianos, the Bishop of Alikarnassos, as well as numerous clergymen from the city and Greece.



Present were the Consul Generals of Greece and Ukraine in the City, Georgia Sultanopoulou and Oleksandr Gaman; the Consuls of Bulgaria in Bursa, Veselin Bojilov and Alexandur Aleksandrov; the Consul of Ukraine in the city, Maksim Vdovychenko; official Archons of the Holy Great Church of Christ, clergy and the monks; the Parliamentarian of Thessaloniki, Mr. George Lazaridis; the Mayor of Nea Propontida (Chalkidiki), Mr. Emmanouil Karras; representatives of the Municipality of Rafina (Attica); the presidents of the Triglian Associations, along with many Triglians who traveled from Greece and other foreign countries to participate in this historic moment; and faithful from Istanbul and Bursa.

It should be noted that the event was granted a special permit by the Bursa Prefecture, while the ceremony of the Diving for the Cross was attended by the Mayor of Mudanya, Hayri Turkeyilmaz, and representatives of local authorities.





It was recalled that Triglia was the home town of Chysostomos the Metropolitan of Smyrna. During the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the Triglions were rescued without loss of life due to their compatriot, Filippos Kavounidis, who carried them with his ships in time to safe areas. Today the descendants of Triglions reside mainly in Nea Triglia, Chalkidiki and Rafina, Attica.

In his address, the Ecumenical Patriarch stated:

*We praise the merciful God, who today calls us to celebrate the Divine Liturgy and the Diving for the Holy Cross in historic Triglia. Celebrating with us on this historic day is Basil the Great, the Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, shining with heavenly light, the high eagle of theology, the pole and the foundation of truth, the pioneer and leader of organized philanthropy and social welfare, the symbol of sacrificial love. And the souls of our ancestors, who rested in these lands, also stand with us. Everyone is with us on this day.*

*We thank all the Triglions who are with us today, and all the other worthy pilgrims. Visiting the holy places of Asia Minor always causes intense emotion and existential shock, which we would not comprehend if we did not find ourselves in this holy land.*

*We congratulate the chief priest of this province, the Metropolitan Bishop Elpidophoros, for the initiative of organizing today's feast day of worship, and we*

*urge him to continue his blessed work of ecclesiastical, pastoral, and theological writing.*

*This is the first time since January 1922 that the Diving for the Holy Cross and the Blessing of the Waters has taken place in Triglia, on the beautiful south coast of the Sea of Marmara.*

Addressing the Triglians, who traveled to the birthplace of their ancestors to experience this historic moment, His All-Holiness emphasized:

*The Patriarch advises you and asks you not to forget your roots. To transmit to your children the precious value of our tradition and the high culture of your ancestors. Help them to accept their Asia Minor origin as a central element of their identity. Keep your fatherland constantly in your thoughts and hearts, and visit your unforgettable homeland, where, of course, you are not just a visitor, but flesh of our flesh. We must not speak of “past grandeur,” “telling us to weep,” as the poet does, but for the “past grandeur” that tells “do not weep,” as did our courageous predecessor to the Ecumenical Throne Patriarch Athenagoras. Everywhere there is the seal of the Orthodox way of life, the sacrifice of the martyrs of the faith, the silent grace of ruined churches, chapels, sacred monasteries, cemeteries and other silent shrines of this kind, the “God-built” homes before our very eyes, the wonderful schools, all the remains of the cultural elaboration of piety and intelligence, the cherished history and the crucifixion of Orthodox believers.*

*Throughout the course of our Patriarchate, which is in the grace and blessing of Almighty God, in its 28th year, we struggled to hear again, after many decades of silence in Asia Minor, Pontus and Eastern Thrace, the “Blessed be the Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,” and “Christ is Risen,” to rejoice in the souls of the dead and the expectation of the resurrection of the dead, the Gospel of the salvation of man and the praise of the name of God.*

In his address, Metropolitan Elpidophoros, welcoming the Ecumenical Patriarch, referred to the work of the Metropolis of Bursa, which, inspired by the spirit of his All-Holiness, has already managed to rebuild a desolate post-1923 ecclesiastical province and buy two old Byzantine churches and a residence for a priest.

*We are living, my dear Christians, through a day, here in Triglia, which our descendants and later generations will refer to as a historical event, as an important milestone in the history of Triglia, in the history of Hellenism and this sacred Metropolis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate [ ...]*

*We are all the generation that you have raised. You are our father. From you we have learned to work tirelessly for our Church. To sow in the hearts of our people good seeds of love, peace, mutual respect, sorrow, holiness. From you, we have*

*seen in practice how it is to love all people without discriminating between religions, nations, languages, colors. But from you, we also learned another great lesson, which for today is so timely. And this is the love for our origin, the respect for the birthplaces of our ancestors. To honor the memory of our fathers who left their last breath in the holy lands of Asia Minor, Bithynia and Triglia.*

*And all this, Your All-Holiness, you delivered us in a way that had no trace of hostility and negative feelings to anyone. On the contrary, love for the unforgettable homelands of our ancestors has always been expressed as a peace-loving bridge of love and cooperation among the peoples, because only in this way can we all continue our common life with creativity, progress, and coexistence.*

*In this action and in this spirit of the Patriarch, we owe, among other things, the climate of confidence that has been established so that it is possible to revive, step by step, the sacred Metropolises that had been deserted after the exchange of the populations of 1923.*

Concluding, he expressed his thanks and gratitude both to the local authorities for their willingness to provide the necessary licenses and to the people of the region for their always hospitable attitude to the pilgrims and the tourists and for the support they give to the work of the Holy Metropolis of Bursa.

After the end of the Divine Liturgy, the Ecumenical Patriarch, the hierarchs, the officials and the faithful, with the accompaniment of the local community's marching band, made a procession and traveled to the square of Triglia, where His All-Holiness presided at the ceremony of the Blessing of the Waters and the Diving for the Holy Cross.

Many young people from New Orestiada, Volos and Nea Triglia, as well as Ukrainians, jumped into the icy waters of the Sea of Marmara; the Ecumenical Patriarch offered them holy mementos as a blessing.

<https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/video-1547884632.mp4>

















