

## **Metropolitan of Kastoria Seraphim reposed in the Lord**



**The Metropolitan of Kastoria Seraphim reposed in the Lord in the early morning hours of Tuesday, at the age of 61. The reposed Metropolitan had tested positive for Covid-19 in early December and was transferred to a military hospital in the northern city of Thessaloniki on Dec. 8 as a precaution. Subsequently, attending physicians recommended that he be intubated and enter an ICU ward five days before Christmas.**

Seraphim was born Ioannis Papakostas in 1959 in the central Greece prefecture of Karditsa. He studied at University of Athens' school of theology and was ordained a deacon in 1983, and as a priest presbyter in 1987.

Seraphim served as a deacon and the parish priest of the St. Nicholas cathedral in Athens' Kato Patissia district, recording prolific pastoral and ministry work, as well as tirelessly offering spiritual guidance to youth and the faithful.

He was elected the Metropolitan of Kastoria in 1996.

**The reposed hierarch had previously spoken to the Orthodoxia News Agency during the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic last spring, as well as more recently to the Pemptousia online radio station.**

Among others, Seraphim bemoaned what he called the blasphemous and insulting criticism in some quarters over the Sacrament of the Holy Communion.

**In an announcement, the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece expressed its members' very deep sadness over the loss of the Metropolitan.**

An exodios funeral service will be held in the northwest lake-side city of Kastoria on Wednesday at 11 a.m. at the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Dormition of the Theotokos — with all public health precautions and restrictions in place to prevent exposure to the Covid-19 virus.

The Metropolitan of Grevena, His Eminence David, has been appointed as the temporary vicar – or locum tenens – of the Metropolis of Kastoria, until a new Metropolitan is elected.

Finally, the Very Reverend Archimandrite Dorotheos Paparis, the First Secretary of the Church of Greece's Holy Synod, will deliver the eulogy.

Condolences poured in from government officials and office-holders in Greece, including deputy interior minister Theodoros Karaoglou, who holds the Macedonia-Thrace portfolio.

