

Three new Church of Greece Metropolitans elected; Church's response to gov't pending



Members of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece's permanent Holy Synod on Wednesday elected three new Metropolitans for a same-number of Metropolises, during the second day of the top ecclesiastical body's extraordinary sessions.

One of the elections, in fact, witnessed a recount, a subsequent tie and, finally, a legal opinion in order to fill the seat for the new Metropolitan of Glyfada.

Specifically, the current first secretary of the Metropolis of Glyfada, Helleniko, Voulagmeni and Vari, Archimandrite Alexios Psoi-nos, received 38 votes in the last round of voting, to 37 for the Bishop of Salonon, His Grace Antonios.

A recount, however, yielded 38 votes for Archimandrite Alexios and 38 for Bishop Antonios. The Holy Synod's senior legal adviser then issued an opinion favoring the election of Antonios, based on seniority in terms of date of ordination.

The Metropolis of Glyfada, Helleniko, Voulagmeni and Vari is a prominent ecclesiastical jurisdiction in coastal southeast Athens.

Earlier, the first secretary of the Metropolis of Kastoria, in northern Greece, Fr. Athanasios Yiannousas, was elected as the new Metropolitan of Sisanion and Siatista, also in northern Greece.

Fr. Yiannousas received 71 votes in the first round of voting.

The Bishop of Methoni, in the eastern Peloponnese of southern Greece, His Grace Klimis, was elected as the new Metropolitan of Peristeri, a major Metropolis (bishopric) in western Athens.

In a related development, members of the Holy Synod are expected to issue a decision today, based on a recommendation by the Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, His Eminence Ierotheos, regarding the Church of Greece's position on proposals by the current government – which is pushing for changes in Church-state relations in the predominately Christian Orthodox country.

His Eminence Ierotheos is the chairman of a committee of dialogue created by the Holy Synod to engage in dialogue with the Greek government.