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Metropolitan of Sweden discusses missionary work in Scandinavia at Church of Greece Event



On Saturday afternoon, February 19, 2022, Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden, delivered an online presentation entitled “Missionary work in the Northern Lands” at a Catechetical Conference hosted by the Church of Greece’s missionary arm Apostoliki Diakonia. Fr. Bartholomew Iatridis, Parish Priest of the St. George Cathedral of Stockholm, participated.

Metropolitan Cleopas began his presentation by thanking Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, with whose permission, clergymen from Metropolises all throughout Greece are placed on loan to support the pastoral ministry of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s missionary Metropolis in Scandinavia.

He also thanked the Director-General of Apostoliki Diakonia Metropolitan Agathangelos of Phanarion for his unwavering and touching support of the ministry being provided by the parishes of the Holy Metropolis of Sweden, through the publication of liturgical and theological texts, as well as Catechetical resources, while also expressing his thanks to the organizer of the afternoon’s Catechetical conference Ioannis Vidalis.

Afterwards, Metropolitan Cleopas spoke about the venerable head of Orthodoxy, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, whose paternal care was displayed through his two Patriarchal Visits to Reykjavik, Iceland in 2017 on the occasion of the Arctic Circle International Assembly, and Stockholm in 2019, on the occasion of the celebrations commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Holy Metropolis of Sweden.

The Metropolitan of Sweden subsequently made reference to the recent repose of his ever-memorable predecessor Metropolitan Pavlos formerly of Amaseia, under whose forty-year archpastoral oversight the Holy Metropolis of Sweden was able to acquire four churches.

Speaking about his eight years of ministry in Scandinavia, Metropolitan Cleopas noted that, by the Grace of God, ten parish communities have been established (five in Sweden, three in Norway, one in Denmark, and one in Iceland), thus more than doubling the existing number of parishes and raising to a number of active clergymen serving in the Metropolis from one to twelve.

Metropolitan Cleopas also pointed out that Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's visit to Stockholm coincided with the first-ever Clergy-Laity Conference in his Eparchy, which was attended by 250 clergy and lay delegates from the parishes operating across the four nations spiritually comprising the Holy Metropolis of Sweden.

Another topic that the Metropolitan touched upon was the complete renovation of the Hermitage founded by the ever-memorable Fr. Eusevios Vittis, which is named in honor of St. Nicholas and located in Rättvik, Sweden, the gifting to the Metropolis of a church dedicated to St. George of Ioannina the New Martyr, located in Roskilde, Denmark, the purchase of a Metropolis residence, and the complete restoration of the St. George Cathedral of Stockholm and the Metropolitan Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Oslo.

Concluding his presentation, Metropolitan Cleopas noted that the local Church of Scandinavia aims at upgrading its ministries and augmenting its facilities, referring to his vision for the establishment of a cultural center, the advancement of necessary reforms and administrative changes, the adoption of innovative ideas and modern organizational practices, as well as an outreach-oriented developmental approach to achieve viability and progress for the Metropolis' parishes.

Ending his speech, the Metropolitan said that "we aim to carry out our vision for

our local Church’s next fifty years with an emphasis on benevolent works for the public benefit that will be supported by and feature the entire community as stakeholders and possess a common mission that is genuinely missionary, academic, communal, philanthropic, and cultural.”

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