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Greek bishop skips Holy Flame's arrival at military airport outside his see



A lantern carrying a flame lit in Jerusalem's Holy Sepulcher Church has been welcomed to Greece with honors reserved for visiting heads of state on the eve of Orthodox Easter.

But a senior cleric boycotted the ceremony, miffed that the holy flame wasn't arriving at the airport within his territorial jurisdiction.

Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia told Greek network Skai TV he learned Friday that the plane carrying the revered object, the flame, would land at a military airport instead of at Athens International Airport.

Nikolaos said he thought the change of airports "degraded" the reception of the light from the Holy Fire miracle which Orthodox Christians believe takes place every Easter at the site of Jesus' tomb.

He decided not to join the official delegation that traveled to Israel on Saturday to collect the flame.

The local bishop, Constantine of Megara, showed up at Elefsina military airport to welcome the flame.

The delegation arrived an hour and a half late _ 8 p.m. local instead of 6:30 p.m. _ on a military plane. From then on, it was a race to send the flame via commercial flights from Athens International Airport to cities across Greece, so the faithful attending the late night vigil celebrating the Resurrection of Christ could light their candles from the “Holy Light” distributed from the lantern

— Source: ekathimerini.com