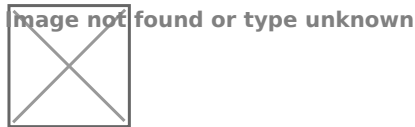


08/11/2022

Greeting by His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden to His Grace Bishop Sergei of Hamina at the Archieratical Concelebration of the Divine Liturgy at the Finnish Parish of St. Nicholas in Stockholm



Your Grace Bishop Sergei of Hamina,

Reverend Fathers,

Beloved Brethren,

Beneath the vaults of this sacred church dedicated to the great hierarch St. Nicholas Bishop of Myra in Lycia, we have gathered today to celebrate the synaxis of the saints in Karelia and at the same time, to concelebrate the Divine Liturgy with His Grace Bishop Sergei, who is newly consecrated to the highest order of priesthood and whom we thank for his brotherly love, glorifying God for making his visit possible on this auspicious occasion.

Through the person of His Grace, we convey our greetings to His Eminence Archbishop Leo of Helsinki and All Finland, and to the Church of Finland in its entirety. Through them, we greet the canonical successors to the Holy Apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors who adorned the Church of Karelia, and through whose saintly polity, wrote chapters in the history of our Church that will remain indelible.

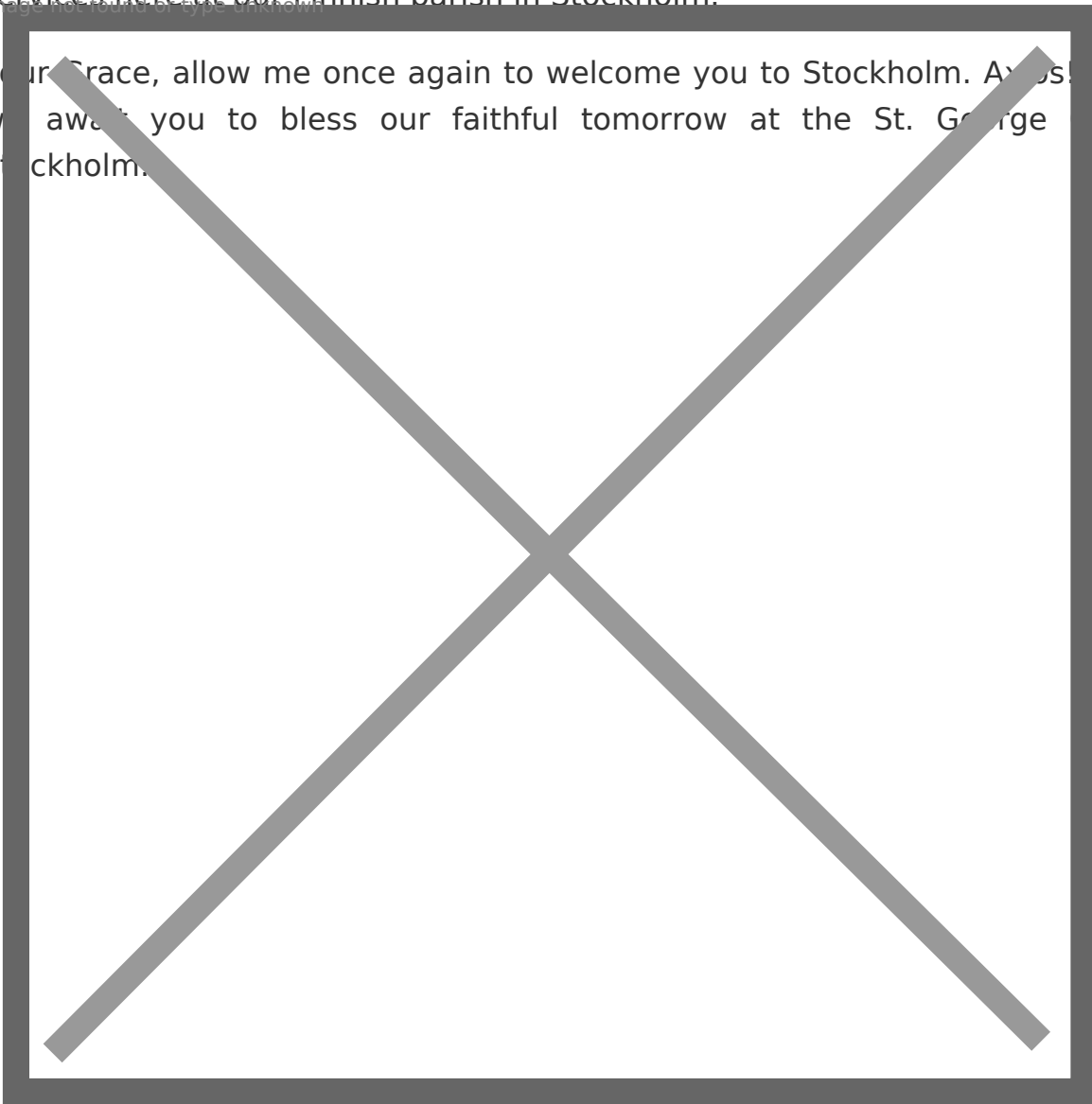
Your Grace, your presence here today confirms the indivisible nature of Orthodoxy and affirms the words of St. Paul the Apostle: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." As members of this body, we share in your joys, sorrows, and concerns, problems and challenges, just as you are conscious of ours, respectively.

Most Reverend Brother, I ask that You pray that the Grace of God that springs forth from Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre may come upon our leaders and our faithful

people. Entreat the saints of Karelia to intercede on our behalf so that we may prove ourselves worthy to carry on their faith and works for the glory of our Trinitarian God and the salvation of our souls.

I convey the paternal greetings of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and, expressing my heartfelt thanks yet again, I kindly ask that You convey my sentiments of respect, esteem, and love to His Eminence Archbishop Leo of Helsinki and All Finland, whom I thank for the invitation he sent me to concelebrate the Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross together with him and you, and the kindness His Eminence shows in sending fine clergymen to celebrate holy services here at our Finnish parish in Stockholm.

Your Grace, allow me once again to welcome you to Stockholm. As always, God willing, we await you to bless our faithful tomorrow at the St. George Cathedral of Stockholm.





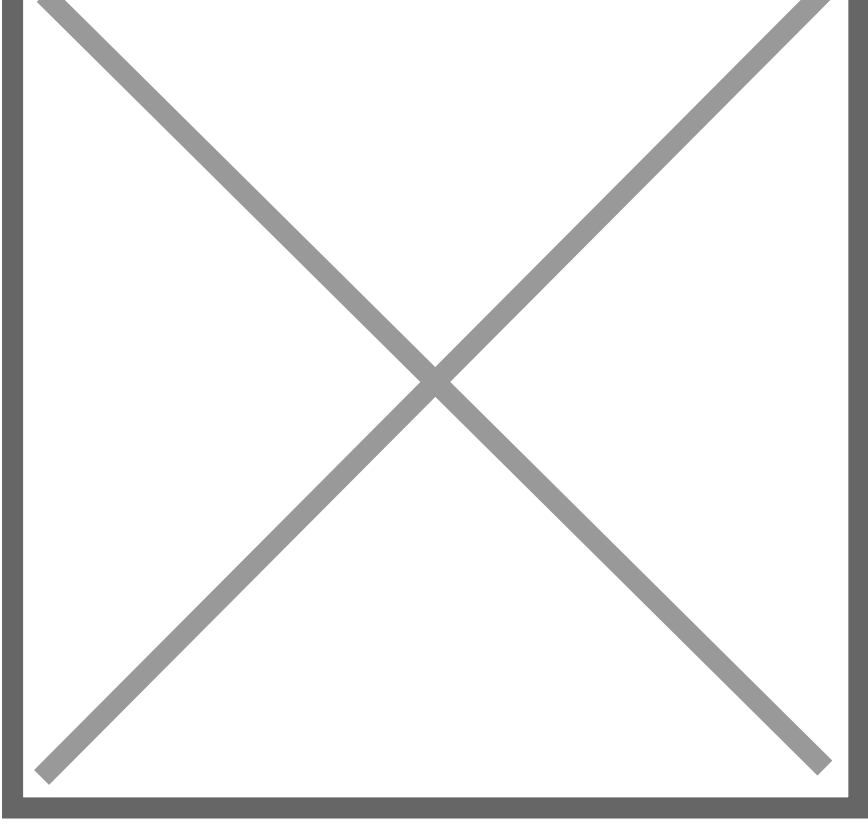
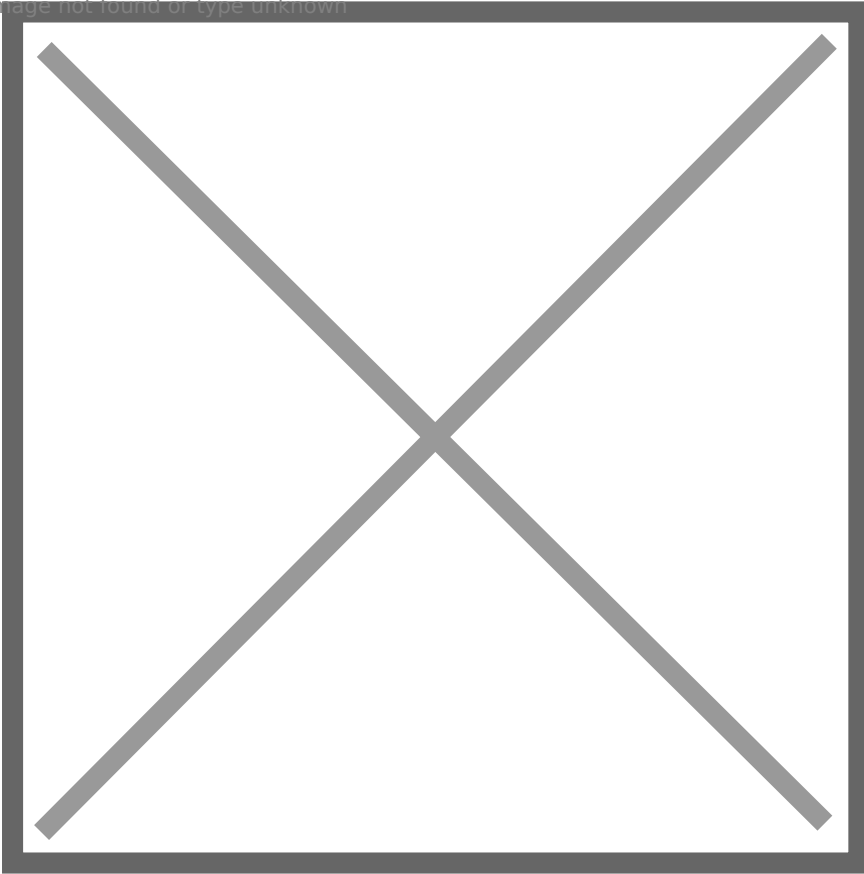




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