

12/07/2023

## **The Miracle of Saint Euphemia the Great Martyr was celebrated at the Ecumenical Patriarchate**



The miracle of the glorious Great Martyr and all-praised Saint Euphemia, whose holy relic is kept in the Venerable Patriarchal Church, was celebrated at the Venerable Centre of Orthodoxy.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew joined in prayer during the Divine Liturgy on Tuesday, 11 July 2023 on the feast day of Saint Euphemia. His Eminence Metropolitan Ieronymos of Kalavryta and Aigialeia celebrated the Divine Liturgy and also officiated at the Great Vespers on the eve of the feast.

His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of Derkoi, His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Myra, His Eminence Metropolitan Theoliptos of Iconium, His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Winnipeg, His Eminence Metropolitan Stefanos of Kallioupolis, His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos of Selyvria, and His Grace Bishop Paisios of Xanthoupolis along with clergy, monks and nuns, and many believers from Constantinople, Greece and Great Britain attended the service.

After the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, the Ecumenical Patriarch addressed the congregation, warmly welcoming pilgrims from abroad to the Patriarchal Church and the historic Centre of Orthodoxy.

“You came from various regions of Greece, Aitolokarnania, Arta, Livadia, Eratyra of Kozani and from Great Britain, the Holy Archdiocese of Thyateira. You are in our City with pious clergymen, professors, the President of the Association “Ai Markos Arta”, all of you pious pilgrims came to this holy place. We can see everywhere the signs of our civilization, the imprint of the intelligence and piety of our ancestors. Here one hears the pulse of the living history of the Nation and Orthodoxy. Here you are able to feel the eloquent silence of both our past and your past. None of all this is foreign to you, since you are not strangers here, in the ‘spiritual womb’ of the Nation. We have heard many times from pilgrims that when they are here in Constantinople they do not feel that they ‘came’, but that they ‘returned’, that they came back to where they belong spiritually.

We honour today the holy memory of Saint Euphemia, whose relics are kept in our Patriarchal Church, where we are gathered in the name of our Lord. Twice a year, on July 11, the anniversary of the great miracle of Saint Euphemia, and on September 16, the day of the martyrdom of Saint Euphemia due to her witnessing for her faith in Christ. She was persecuted under Diocletian. Her relics are laid out before us all, so that the faithful may pay their respects and venerate her sacred relics. As many of you will know, the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon, in the year 451, dogmatised and proclaimed, being against Monophysitism and Nestorianism, the union of the divine and human natures in the one person of Christ, ‘unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, and inseparably’”.

This mystery of the divine-humanity, which the blessed life of the Church embodies and expresses in all its manifestations, was sealed by the miracle of Saint Euphemia. The two tomes on Christology, the orthodox and the heretical, were written and placed inside the reliquary of the Saint, upon her chest. When they opened the reliquary, the tome of the heretics was found “cast to the feet”, thrown at the feet of the Great Martyr, while the Tomos with the stipulations of Chalcedon in her “sacred hands “. The Saint has been honoured ever since as the “Patron of the Dogma of the Holy Fathers “.



The Patriarch then pointed out that for us Orthodox, honouring the Saints belongs to the core of our identity.

“All the Saints radiate the glory and splendour of the Lord’s Resurrection and His heavenly Kingdom. Their feasts and festivals, their sacred relics and holy icons, the Synaxaria, their lives and miracles, their devotion to Christ and His Church, all these are a source of spiritual enrichment for us believers. The Saints and Martyrs are an expression of God’s love for humankind and the world. As it is written, “the Church advances in history with the footsteps of the Saints”.

We praise the God of love for what He teaches in His Church. The course of the Church in the world does not unfold, of course, outside of historical reality and its contradictions. Its mission is to function as “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14), to fight ceaselessly for its transformation in Christ. We here in the City of Cities do not measure things and developments with quantitative and external criteria. Everything is in the hands of Christ, who is “the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Rev. 2: 13). He is “the way and the truth and the life” (John 8:6). Christ is the guarantee for the present of the Church and for its blessed path towards His eternal Kingdom, “where the clear sound is unceasing of those who celebrate and cry out “Glory to You Lord”!”.

This is our joy and hope, which is experienced with particular intensity in every Divine Liturgy, which is always an experience of the resurrection. From here the unwavering certainty that the Ecumenical Patriarchate is inextricably and eternally connected to the City of cities, is nourished, and that our Churches and pilgrimages and our sacred springs will always remain a place of renovation and sanctification and will offer to all springs of eternal life.

With these thoughts and with feelings of love and honour, we welcome all of you, fellow pilgrims, and thank you for your presence and prayer in the Venerable Patriarchal Church and at the feast of Saint Euphemia, the Great Martyr, from whose holy relics everyone “draws strength that is inexhaustible.”, and “illuminated are both our souls and our intellect”. May the Triune God bless you and take care of you, grant health and all His saving gifts to you and your loved ones.”

Afterwards, His All-Holiness distributed the antidoron and small blessings to the faithful and took commemorative photos with them in the courtyard of the Patriarchate.







































Photos: Nikos Papachristou / Ecumenical Patriarchate