

20/11/2023

Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden Visits the Rizareios Seminary and Aegina



With the blessings and encouragement of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the canonical permission of His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia accepted the honorary invitation of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Rizareios Seminary Mr. Panagiotis Tsakiris and traveled to Athens on the occasion of the recent publication of his latest two-volume study entitled *The Unpublished Letters of St. Nectarios of Pentapolis* by the Church of Greece's publishing house Apostoliki Diakonia.

On Tuesday November 7, 2023, Metropolitan Cleopas visited the headquarters of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's representative office in Athens and offered the aforementioned publication of the office's Director His Eminence Metropolitan Theodoretos of Laodicea.

On Wednesday November 8, 2023, Metropolitan Cleopas visited the Imvros Association in Nea Smyrni, Athens and met with the president of the organization Mr. Georgios Papatheodorou and board members. During the meeting, the Metropolitan fondly recalled his recent trip to Imvros, during which he accompanied

the Ecumenical Patriarch to his birthplace.

On Thursday November 9, 2023, the feast day of St. Nectarios of Pentapolis, he celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the St. George Church, located at the Rizareios Seminary in Halandri, where he was assisted by the Very Rev. Archimandrites Frs. Anthimos, Alexandros, and Nikodimos, and the Rev. Protopresbyters Frs. Lambros and Sotirios. The Very Rev. Archimandrite Fr. Vasilios Emmanuel, a retired military chaplain, also participated, joining in prayer from the Holy Altar.

The Chairman of the Rizareios Seminary Board of Trustees Mr. Panagiotis Tsakiris and the Rizareios Seminary Director Mr. Nikolaos Giannis addressed the Metropolitan of Sweden. Metropolitan Cleopas spoke to the seminarians, discussing his recently published book and the multifaceted ministry of the former Director of the Rizareios Seminary St. Nectarios of Pentapolis, while also offering Mr. Giannis a copy of the newly released book.

On Saturday November 11, 2023, Metropolitan Cleopas visited the Holy Trinity Convent in Aegina, where he venerated the gracious relics, skull, and tomb of its founder, Saint Nectarios. Afterward, he met with the Abbess of the Convent Nun Timothei, along with members of the convent's sisterhood, to whom he offered a copy of his book and expressed his gratitude toward his patron saint for the successful completion of the writing and publication of this new study.

The sisters of the convent offered a luncheon to the Metropolitan and his entourage, which consisted of the Very Rev. Archimandrites Frs. Alexander Loukatos and Damaskinos Mourtzis, in addition to offering him copies of the volumes containing the complete works of St. Nectarios which have been published until now.

Prior to visiting the convent, Metropolitan Cleopas met briefly with His Eminence Metropolitan Ephraim of Hydra, Spetses, and Aegina at Aegina harbor.

On Sunday November 12, 2023, Metropolitan Cleopas celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the St. George Church located at the original campus of the Rizareios Seminary in Athens, assisted by the Very Rev. Archimandrite Fr. Alexandros Loukatos and the local parish priest Rev. Protopresbyter Fr. Nikolaos Ladas. They were joined by the Very Rev. Fr. Kallinikos Maroulis, a retired military chaplain, who participated in prayer from the Holy Altar.

Fr. Nikolaos Ladas and Mr. Panagiotis Tsakiris addressed the Metropolitan. Together with university professor and Rizareios Foundation board member Dr. Demetrios Anagnostopoulos, Mr. Tsakiris bestowed the award and medal of St. Nectarios upon

Metropolitan Cleopas.

The Metropolitan thanked them for this great honor and spoke about the miraculous support St. Nectarios has provided to him throughout his 35 years of service as a priest and bishop, while offering Mr. Tsakiris a copy of his new book, which was published with the technical and editing assistance of the Director General of the Apostoliki Diakonia His Excellency Metropolitan Agathangelos of Fanarion and his able associates.

On Monday November 13, 2023, Metropolitan Cleopas returned to the see of his eparchy in Stockholm.

Photos courtesy of the Rizareios Foundation, the Imvros Association, the Holy Metropolis of Sweden, Fr. Vasileios Emmanuel, Fr. Alexandra's Loukatos & Mr. Konstantinos Gregoriades.

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