

The enthronement of the New Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki



On Saturday, 25 November 2023, with particular splendour and all solemnity, in the presence of His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and all Greece, a multitude of other Hierarchs, a delegation from Mount Athos, representatives of military authorities, politicians and a large crowd of believers, the enthronement of His Eminence Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, took place in the Holy Cathedral of the Wisdom of God (St. Sophia).

In his great enthronement speech, the new Metropolitan of Thessaloniki chose to start with verses from the poem by Giorgos Seferis “An elder on the banks of the river”. “I want nothing more than to speak simply, to be granted this grace. Because at times we over-load the song with so much music that it slowly loses its meaning, and we embellished our art so much that its face becomes lost to the gold and now it is time to say our few words”, he said specifically.

The new Metropolitan of Thessaloniki, addressing the young men and women who thirst for life, spoke to them with lyrics from the song “Dipsa / Thirst” by Nikos Portokaloglou, saying characteristically: “It’s not the friends, the nights out, cigarettes, drinks, the music, the music around the same fire. Your old dreams,

journeys under new sails. It is nothing compared to it all and it is all of that. It is this thirst for life that keeps us alive. Friends, young men and women, despite the ravages of the times, despite the temptations of history, the thirst and the hope for a clear sky, for that clear air of true life, that this someone who beckons you from the port far away, it is none other than Christ who calls us all to the port of the Church, to overcome the freezing loneliness, through the warmth of love and true communion”.

“I want to get to know you all. In our making acquaintance the Presbyters and Deacons of the local Church have a special place, with whom we must remain united like the strings of a guitar”, he noted. Particularly moved, he said: “At this thrice-blessed hour in which I open my heart to you, I want to thank you again for accompanying me at my entry and establishment in the local Church of Thessaloniki. Pray for me and be sure that I do the same for you.”



His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, as locum tenens of the Holy Metropolis of Thessaloniki, pointed out that his election as the new Metropolitan of Thessaloniki “was a difficult decision, as age was not the only criteria, but deeper and more substantial, mainly theological”. Archbishop Ieronymos also emphasised that through the cooperation they had between them, he appreciated “his ethical and ecclesiastical morale, his theological thinking,

education and reflection”.

His Eminence Metropolitan Barnabas of Neapolis and Stavroupolis, as deputy locum tenens, handed over to the new Metropolitan of Thessaloniki, the pastoral staff of responsibility, for his new beginning. The representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon, who as a spiritual father, offered him another blessing and wish for his new beginning, while the former Metropolitan Anthimos of Thessaloniki, was present from early on in the Church of the Wisdom of God and stood at the side of the new Metropolitan.

The Greek government was represented by State Minister Mr. Makis Vouridis, who conveyed the greeting of the Prime Minister, Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, but also his commitment to close cooperation with the new Metropolitan of Thessaloniki. Mr. Vouridis referred to the decline in population and the cooperation that the State and the Church must have. “The role of the State and the Church are distinct, but without cooperation on a number of issues the State is worse off and its goals become impossible to achieve”, he said and wished His Eminence “an effective and successful pastoral course in the work he undertakes, which is heavy and difficult”.

“Your All-Holiness, from today the Region of Central Macedonia and I personally are at your disposal, with true and deep feelings of appreciation. For the good of Thessaloniki, for the good of Macedonia, for our homeland and all our fellow citizens. Welcome”, noted the Regional Governor of Central Macedonia Mr. Apostolos Tzitzikostas.



The Mayor of Thessaloniki, Mr. Konstantinos Zervas welcomed His All-Holiness Metropolitan Filotheos to Thessaloniki and wished him from the bottom of his heart “for our Triune God to grace you and give you strength to stand worthy before the Saints and your great predecessors. May you be worthy of the Church of Thessalonians. May your work in this historic Metropolis be God-pleasing and your pastorate God-loving, as your name indicates.”

The enthronement service of His Eminence Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, was also attended by the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Mr. Christos Staikouras, the Deputy Minister of Macedonia - Thrace, Mr. Stathis Konstantinidis, the secretary of the New Democracy Parliamentary Group, Mr. Stavros Kalafatis, the president of PASOK-Movement for Change, Mr. Nikos Androulakis, the president of the SYRIZA Parliamentary Group, Mr. Sokratis Famellos, party representatives and MPs.

Co-workers of the new Metropolitan of Thessaloniki from Chalkida, Thessaloniki and Athens, as well as hundreds of faithful who attended the enthronement service, many of those who know him from his childhood and later career, exclaimed “Worthy / Axios.”

The festive events were completed on Sunday morning at 7 am, with the Matins Service and Poly-Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the pilgrimage church of Saint Dimitrios, the Patron Saint of Thessaloniki. After the end of the Divine Liturgy, the

Metropolitan received the wishes of the clergy and the people, in the Holy Church of Saint Dimitrios.



























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