

“Thanksgiving 2004”

The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Episcopacy of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, Our Spiritual Father

THE TWENTY-FIFTH anniversary of the Episcopacy of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian (1979-2004) lent a special spiritual splendor to this year’s “Thanksgiving” celebration, in a very carefully planned and well-prepared program that lasted for two and a half hours.

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AS IS WELL KNOWN, these “Thanksgiving” celebrations are the Nameday tribute organized every year by the monastic Brotherhood of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Fili, in honor of its spiritual Father and Abbot, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian.



The purpose of such “Thanksgiving” celebrations, which were inaugurated in 1976, is to express more formally our heartfelt wishes to our much-revered Elder; they are also an occasion for us to explore in greater depth the mystery of God-given obedience, on the basis of Patristic teaching.

Over time, these celebrations have assumed wider dimensions, and we have deemed it appropriate that, without losing their fundamental character, they should be incorporated into the pastoral

program of our Metropolis. The result is that, today, they represent a wonderful opportunity for a fruitful inter-Orthodox gathering of faith and love in Christ, which expresses, and at the same time profoundly fosters, the conciliarity of the Church at a broader level.

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THIS YEAR'S NAMEDAY TRIBUTE, which took place on Sunday 4/17 October 2004, was held, as in previous years, in the main auditorium of the Novotel Convention Center in downtown Athens. It attracted an unprecedented crowd of His Eminence's spiritual children, clergy, monastics, brothers and sisters in Christ, friends, and supporters of our monastery.

Needless to say, all of the Hierarchs of the Holy Synod in Resistance were present, with the exception of His Eminence, Bishop Chrysostomos of Sydney, who is ill. The delegation from Romania, under His Eminence, Metropolitan Vlasie, was larger than usual, as was the delegation from Bulgaria, under His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza, and there was also a size-



able delegation of clergy, monastics, and lay people from America, under His Eminence, Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna.

The program, enhanced and enriched by several new features, was comprised of six parts, which succeeded one another so harmoniously and smoothly that the large number of people in attendance watched the successive series of “surprises” with unflagging interest and persistent attentiveness.

A special team translated all of the audio content of the program, so that the numerous visitors from abroad could participate in this spiritual banquet without any difficulty.

The master of ceremonies was His Grace, Bishop Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis.

Part I (fifteen minutes). The monastery’s Byzantine choir (augmented for this occasion) chanted the following hymns magnificently: • the *Apolytikion* of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, in the Third Tone; •



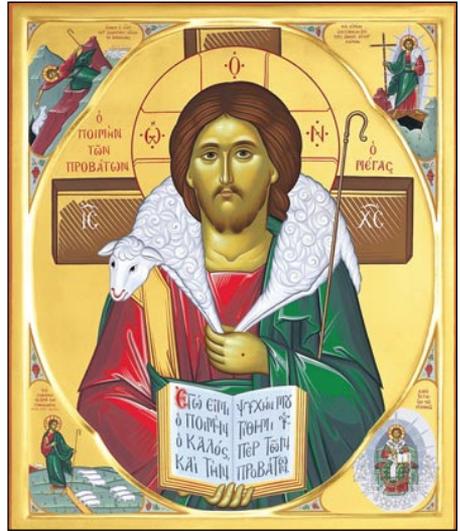
verses from the Great Doxology in the Grave Tone (*tetraphonos*), by Gregory the Protopsaltis. • “In thee, O Full of Grace, rejoiceth all creation,” in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone, by Father Dositheos of Katounakia. • Three festive *Troparia*, in the Plagal of the Fourth

Tone, after the *Heirmos* “The Children of the Hebrews”: “Rejoice, O pair of Martyrs,” “The Brotherhood rejoiceth now,” and “O Mother of God who art glorified” (composed by our Brotherhood as a gift for the Metropolitan’s twenty-fifth anniversary). • A Supplicatory *Prosonoion*, in the Second Tone, after the special melody “When from the Tree,” “O Mother, do thou ever protect” (composed by our Brotherhood).



Part II (forty-three minutes).

- His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone delivered the festal address, entitled “The Good Shepherd: A Calling and a Spiritual Gift” (fifteen minutes), in which he described in a simple and engaging way the principal characteristics of a Bishop and Shepherd, who has Christ, the Chief Shepherd, for his model.
- The first audio document (from the Consecration of Metropolitan Cyprian, twenty-five years ago).
- The second audio document (from a sermon by the ever-memorable Elder Philotheos [Zervakos], His Eminence’s spiritual Father).
- Mrs. Irene Archontouli, President of the St. Philaret the Merciful Orthodox Women’s Guild (Metropolis of Oropos and Fili), delivered a “message of gratitude” (six minutes) to His Eminence on behalf of his lay spiritual children in Christ, which was full of enthusiasm, vibrant, lyrical, and dignified.
- The third audio document (the voice of the ever-memorable Eldress Myrtidiotissa, from Klissoura, Macedonia).
- The fourth audio document (the voice of the anti-Papist and anti-Modernist Photios Kontoglou).
- Hieromonk Klemes presented the traditional gift from



our Brotherhood to our spiritual Father on the occasion of his Nameday, an Icon from our Icon studio: this year, it was a superb depiction of “The Great Shepherd of the Sheep,” with four miniatures around the edges (50 x 60 cm).



Part III (eleven minutes). • “Rejoice, O Hieromartyr Cyprian,” a beautiful and original “festal canticle,” with verses by the philologist and musicologist, Mr. Demetrios Maratsolas (composed specially for the anniversary), to a melody by the ever-memorable maestros Vasilios Kamarados and Michael Hatzathanasiou, in the Plagal of the First Tone, which was superbly rendered by the chorus and instrumental ensemble “Ελληνορθόδοξη Κληρονομιά” (“Orthodox Heritage”). • The Holy Convent of the Holy Angels in Aphidnai, Attika, bestowed a very valuable and noteworthy gift on our spiritual Father, which was presented by Father Klemes: a magnificent gold-embroidered banner, with symbols of the work and goals of the Holy Synod in Resistance (the Icon of Pentecost, doves, clusters of grapes, ears of corn, and a Cross).

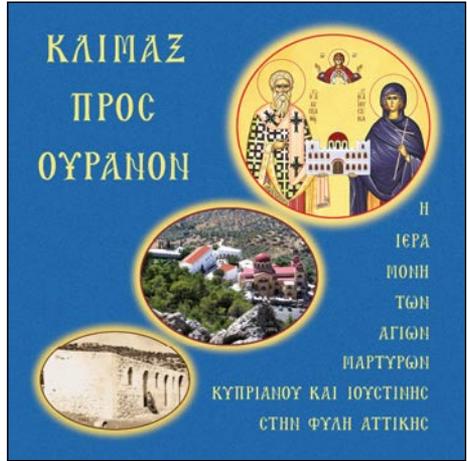
Part IV (seventeen minutes). The chorus and instrumental ensemble “Ελληνορθόδοξη Κληρονομιά” performed the following very beautiful folk songs and instrumental pieces: • “Καράβι άνοίγει τά φτερά” [“A Ship Unfurls Its Sails”], a song composed by the émigré Ioannis Polemis, to a melody by the maestro Panagiotis Papas, in the First Tone. • A Thracian *mantelatos* (instrumental). • “Ούλλες οί χώρες χαίρουνται” [“All of the Lands Rejoice”], a historic folk song from Monemvasia, in the Fourth Tone, in the

tempo of the *Kalamatiano* [one of the national dances of Greece—*Trans.*], • A Cretan *pentozali* (instrumental), from the region of Seteia.

Part V (thirty minutes). •

The physician and surgeon, Dr. Loukas Pallis, recited a poem, “Πορεία μέσα στο Φῶς” [“A Journey Amid the Light”] (a compunction-evoking sketch of the Metropolitan’s twenty-five-year Episcopal ministry).

• Father Cyprian presented the third—and truly momentous—gift from our Brotherhood to its spiritual Father: a very aesthetically pleasing album entitled *Κλίμαξ πρὸς Οὐρανόν–Ἡ Ἱερά Μονὴ τῶν Ἁγίων Κυπριανοῦ καὶ Ἰουστίνης στὴν Φυλὴ Ἀττικῆς* [*Ladder to Heaven: The Holy Monastery of Saints Cyprian and Justina in Fili, Attica*], which includes 670 photographs in its 272 full-color pages (25 x 25 cm). The album is in two languages (Greek and English) and is divided into twenty-five sections. Its publication coincides with the seventeen hundredth anniversary of the Martyrdom of Sts. Cyprian and Justina (†304). • A very interesting film, *Κλίμαξ πρὸς Οὐρανόν* [*Ladder to Heaven*] was shown (fifteen minutes).



Based on the first chapter of the aforementioned album, it provides a poetic and compunction-evoking introduction to the forty-three-year history of our monastery, as set forth in the book.

Part VI (seven minutes).

This truly historic Nameday tribute concluded with • an expression of gratitude to all in attendance, • the blessing of sweetmeats by Metropolitan

Cyprian, who also gave some closing remarks, • the *Polychronion*,
• and the distribution of sweetmeats and *εὐλογίαι* (special souvenirs given as a blessing).

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BY THE GRACE OF GOD, “Thanksgiving 2004” was a veritable spiritual banquet! A fruit and labor of love, prayer, and gratitude, it was yet another powerful incentive for us to ascend the Ladder to Heaven with hope!

Glory and thanks be to God, the Giver of all that is good! ◻