

The Twenty-Ninth Anniversary of the Elevation to the Episcopacy of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian

ON THE SUNDAY of the Prodigal Son, February 11, 2008 (Old Style), the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina celebrated, by the Grace of God, the twenty-ninth anniversary of the Consecration to the Episcopacy of our ailing Father, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian.



Bad weather conditions did not allow us to celebrate a festal *Agrypnia*, as planned, on February 7 (when St. Parthenios of Lampsakos is commemorated), the actual day of this anniversary.

His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod,

was the principal celebrant at the Resurrectional Divine Liturgy, with the participation of Their Graces, Bishop Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis and Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, and numerous Priests, Hierodeacons, and Subdeacons, who were accompanied by the particularly beautiful chanting of the monastery choir. A large crowd of the faithful—both laypeople and monastics—were in attendance.

Bishop Klemes delivered a homily before Holy Communion and, before the dismissal, Bishop Cyprian read a brief address for the occasion, published below.

Upon leaving the Church, the faithful received, as a blessing, a sweet cake and a photograph of our Most Reverend Metropolitan on his sickbed. They were





then invited to the large monastery reception hall, and a number of them had the especial joy of visiting His Eminence and receiving his blessing in the room where he is convalescing.

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■ On the occasion of the twenty-ninth anniversary of the Elevation to the Episcopacy of our Most Reverend Metropolitan

A Commemoration of Gratitude in Gladsome Voice

My Christ-loving brothers and sisters; Right Reverend Holy Hierarchs and concelebrants; Reverend Fathers and Venerable Mothers; Light-wrought children of Orthodoxy; God-pleasing company of the faithful:

The Grace of the Holy Spirit has assembled us together today.

Our gathering is one of gratitude.

Our commemoration of the twenty-nine years of our Much-Revered Elder and Guide, Metropolitan Cyprian, in the Episcopacy is a commemoration of gratitude.

Our commemoration, in gladsome voice, is one of gratitude!

The Oak still stands... No envious usurper awaits his moment...

Our Elder lies serenely. Having couched, he lies sleeping (cf. Gen 49:9-10]). And his ephemeral rest has proved to be vivifying for all of us.

In the two and a half months of our Divinely-Graced Metropolitan's illness, we have experienced, **in a mysterious and astonishing manner**, his living presence in our midst.

He continues to be our Father, our Guide, and our Good Shepherd, who has sacrificed, and ever sacrifices, his life for his sheep.

And he will continue to be so even when he awakens, opening his wings and ascending to that place wherein there is no pain, sorrow, or sighing, but life eternal.

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*“Lo, three monks were standing by the sea. And a voice came to them from the other side, saying ‘Receive ye wings of fire and come to me!’ And two of them received such wings and flew to the other side. The third remained alone, weeping bitterly and calling out. Wings were then also given to him; **not of fire, however, but fragile and weak ones.** Only with great toil, sinking and resurfacing, and with much affliction, did he reach the other side.”*

(The Great Gerontikon, Vol IV, Ch. 8, § 14)



To our Guide and Elder were given fiery wings: the wings of **love** and **self-sacrifice**.

He received wings of fire and flew to the other side, to Him, the Peerless One, the One and Only, the Beloved, the Bridegroom.

We also, observing this illuminating and deifying flight across the sea with gladdening compunction, have been given wings; not fiery ones, but fragile and weak ones.

In deed, wings without might, as worldly reckoning would have it, but, in fact, Divine and theanthropic, drenched with the Blood of the Immaculate Lamb on the life-giving hill of Golgotha.

Our Metropolitan, sealed by Christ, gave us wings of **compassion** and **empathy** for our neighbor, who suffers in sundry ways.

I feel this, his **sacred paternal legacy** engraved in my innermost being and unceasingly hear his blessed voice: “Have compassion in your heart and win upon your neighbor.”

A compassionate, sympathetic, and forbearing attitude toward the lost sheep, the Prodigal son, who returns to his Father’s House, will unerringly instruct and guide you in all else.

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Christ-yearning and Divinely-sealed brothers and sisters:

Today, on the occasion of the anniversary of the elevation to the Episcopacy of our Much-Revered Metropolitan, let us thank the Great High Priest, Christ our Savior, for granting us a Shepherd of such great glory and worth.

Let us thank our Divinely-graced Elder and Father in gladsome voice; for he has proved to be, by the Grace of God, a perpetual source of benefactions for all of us who belong to the extended family of the Brotherhood of St. Cyprian.

What shall we render unto the Lord and our spiritual Father for all that they have rendered unto us?

Let us thank the Immaculate Mother of God, our *Theotokos*, the bestower of maternal affection, for her provident love unceasingly reminds us of the **sacred legacy** of our God-yearning Elder and fervently exhorts us:

“Receive ye wings of compassion and come to me, that I may lead you into the place of unwaning Light, wherein is the pure sound of those celebrating and glorifying the Lamb Who was slain.”

To Whom is due all honor, worship, and thanksgiving, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen!

†**Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi**
Acting President of the Holy Synod

†Sunday of the Prodigal Son
February 11, 2008 (Old Style)