



■ Journey towards Salvific Pascha

## The Life and Witness of the Small Flock in Sweden

February 2015

**T**he three small centers of our Mission in Sweden work together harmoniously, with the blessing and guidance of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle—the *Locum Tenens* of the Holy Diocese of Stockholm since 2014—to bear living and shining Witness to Genuine Orthodoxy through Church services, the Internet, and printed publications.

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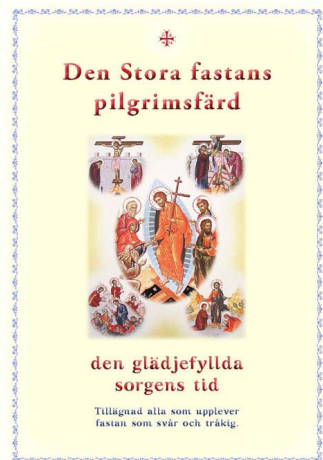
### A. The Parish of Sts. Constantine and Helen (Episcopal residence)

**On Cheesefare Sunday**, February 9, 2015 (Old Style), following the Divine Liturgy and the customary Sunday *Agape* meal, the parish celebrated the first compunctious Vespers in Great Lent, known as Forgiveness Vespers.

- During the first week of Lent, the Great Compline, with the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, was read daily.

- On the First Sunday of Lent, February 16 (Old Style), the small flock in Sweden celebrated the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

Our Mission's three Priests, Fathers Anders Åkerström, Stefanos Jaerpenberg, and Spyridon Tanous, together with Deacon Father Theochares, celebrated at the Church of Sts. Constantine and Helen.





At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, the clergy and laypeople held the customary procession with the Holy Icons around the Episcopal residence, and Father Anders read portions of the *Synodikon* of Orthodoxy.

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## B. The Convent of St. Philothei, in Villberga

On February 19 (Old Style), the *Hesychasterion* dedicated to St. Philothei of Athens, in Villberga, celebrated its Patronal Feast.

The convent's serving Priest, Father Anders, celebrated the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with the convent nuns. Since it was a work day, the faithful were not able to attend. For this reason, a Divine Liturgy in honor of the Saint was also celebrated on Saturday, February 22.

Father Anders, Father Stefanos, Hierodeacon Theochares, and some thirty faithful participated in this gladsome event.

The traditional procession with the Icon and a portion of the Relics of the Saint was then made around the convent, ending with a *Trisagion* at the grave of the convent's founder, Mother Philothei, of blessed memory († 2012).

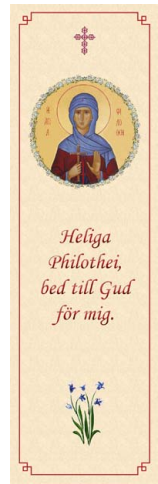
The nuns then served a monastic *Agape* meal, during which Mother Magdalene read aloud the Life of the Holy Nun-Martyr.

As a small gift, the nuns distributed bookmarks illustrated with an Icon of St. Philothei (the original painted by Mother Magda-



lene) that they had prepared for the occasion.

◆ **The presence of the *Hesychasterion* of St. Philothei, with its monastic way of life, is not only a witness to our living Tradition in a country where secularization has corroded every notion of dogma or ecclesiastical ethos. It is also a source of solace for the small flock of blessed souls, who strive to live and radiate the light of Genuine Orthodoxy amidst a people sitting in the darkness of apostasy.**



### C. Western Sweden

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**The Reverend** Father Spyridon, of Syrian origin, is developing a mission in western Sweden, where he has dedicated himself to ministering especially to our Syrian Orthodox brethren.



**With the vision of creating a parish in honor of St. Ignatios the God-bearer, he has laid the foundations of a workshop for the production of beeswax candles, in order to procure some income to that end.**

● **We exhort our faithful everywhere to assist financially in the formation of this parish, to the glory of God.**

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**Glory to God for all things!**

**May** our All-Holy Mother bless the humble seeds of our brethren in the field of Sweden.

