



Pastoral Visit to the Holy Diocese of Stockholm May 19-24, 2016 (Old Style)

By the Grace of our Resurrected Savior Jesus Christ, and through the intercessions of Sts. Constantine and Helen and of all of the Orthodox Saints of Scandinavia, we were vouchsafed to visit, for the fifth time as *Locum Tenens*, the lovely northern land of Sweden, which, verdant and refreshing, with its lakes and rivers, and with its tidy, multicolored rural houses, reflects the beauty of Paradise, enkindling in us a prayerful disposition and glorification of God.



* * *

On the Wednesday after the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman, May 19 (Old Style) a group of fifteen clergy, monastics, and laypeople from Greece arrived in Stockholm, in order to take part in the Patronal Feast of our Holy Diocese's Cathedral Church, dedicated to the Holy God-crowned Monarchs Constantine and Helen, Equals to the Apostles.

Following the customary ecclesiastical reception at the Episcopal residence and a few words of greeting, with



the participation of the Reverend Fathers Anders Åkerström, Stefanos Jaerpenberg, and Constantinos Terzakes (the latter from Greece), Hierodeacon Father Theochares, and a small group of faithful, we all visited His Grace, Bishop

Johannes of Makarioupolis, the founder of our mission in Sweden, at his bedside, greeting him with feelings of sincere love and profound respect and conveying to him the best wishes of Archbishop Kallinikos and our Holy Synod.

* * *

Over the course of the next four days, we celebrated the Divine Liturgy and came into contact with our clergy and Brothers and Sisters in Sweden, in a very warm climate of fraternal love and hospitality in Christ, "in simplicity of heart," embraced by the serenity of springtime nature.

On Thursday, May 20 (Old Style, commemoration of the Holy Martyr Thallelaios), we liturgized at the Convent of St.



Philothei of Athens, in Villberga, Grillby, where Mother Magdalene and Sister Lydia reside; ● **on Friday** (commemoration of Sts. Constantine and Helen),

at the Church of St. Joseph the Betrothed, in Järbo, two hours north of Uppsala, on the property of Laurence and Marjo; and ● **on Saturday**, (commemoration of the Holy Martyr Basiliskos), at the Church of the Dormition





of the *Theotokos*, in Uppsala. ●

That evening, at the Episcopal Residence, we celebrated Resurrectional Vespers in honor of Sts. Constantine and Helen, followed by the Small Compline and the Salutations (Akathist Hymn) to

the Saints being honored. ● **On the Sunday of the Blind Man**, the Church's Patronal Feast drew a large throng of the faithful, the majority of whom communed of the Immaculate Mysteries, and then sat down together for a festal *agape* meal.

● **On Sunday evening**, we held a parish *Synaxis*, at which we jointly read and discussed a very edifying text that touched on timely aspects of the ethos of Orthodoxy. It was truly a blessed and compunction-evoking *Synaxis*, to everyone's joy.



* * *

On Monday (commemoration of St. Symeon of the Wondrous Mountain), after receiving Bishop Johannes' blessing and singing "Christ is Risen" at his bedside, we departed for our homeland with sentiments of glorification and thanksgiving to our Resurrected Lord, Who vouchsafed us to taste of "the beginning of the everlasting life" together with our Brothers and Sisters in this lovely northern land.

This pastoral visit and pilgrimage yet again contributed, by the Grace of our





Lord, to the renewal of the vision of the Eternal Springtime of the Age to Come, where all things, having become new, will glorify the supremely glorified Holy Trinity.

“Amen. Yea, come, O Lord Jesus!”

May 26, 2016 (Old Style)

† Apodosi of Pascha

† Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle



+
**To God
be Glory and
Thanksgiving!**