



■ Sixth visit of Metropolitan Cyprian to the Holy Diocese of Stockholm

Pastoral Ministry in Sweden

September 16-21, 2016 (Old Style)



Glory to our All-Merciful God for all things! Glory to Thee, All-Holy Trinity!

Thoughts, feelings, and words of doxology and thanksgiving to our Lord and God well up within us and continue to overwhelm us,

for by the Grace of God we were once again vouchsafed, for the third time in 2016, to offer our humble pastoral service to the small flock of our Church in Sweden.

This lovely northern land once again hosted us (myself, as *Locum Tenens*, the Reverend Father Jiří Ján, and Subdeacon Antonios Hagiokyprianites) for five days in her autumnal—but actually spring-like—embrace.

The clear blue sky, boundless greenery, tranquil lakes, very pleasant temperatures, and the radiant smiles and unstudied graciousness of the Swedish people had, as always, an uplifting effect on us, and helped us to tackle a fairly heavy pastoral schedule, which had at its center our Epis-





copal Residence, where the Cathedral Church of the Holy God-crowned Monarchs Constantine and Helen, Equals to the Apostles, is located.

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With the blessing of the ailing and bedridden Bishop Johannes of Makarioupolis, the founder and backbone of our mission in Scandinavia (from 1985), we • liturgized at the Convent of St. Philothei (September 17 [Old Style]), and again at the Episcopal Residence with all of our clergy, with His Grace, Bishop Johannes present in his wheelchair (Sunday, September 19); • visited the immense Skogskyrkogården Cemetery in Stockholm, where we performed Memorial Services at the graves of several of our reposed Orthodox brethren (September 20); • held a very edifying parish Synaxis, in the form of a dialogue, with several heterodox friends also in attendance (September 19); • discussed at length with our Episcopal Representative, the Reverend Father Anders Åkerström, ways to promote and better organize our missionary presence in Sweden (with, *inter alia*, the refinement and addition of Church services, increased catechetical activities, and the foundation of a men's monastery dedicated to All the Saints of Scandinavia; very encouraging steps have already been made in this direction, and in 2017 we are expecting some major developments); and, finally, • we met with our faithful and others undergoing serious personal and family problems for confession and counsel (September 18 and 20).

The hospitality was *Hellenic*, with a distinctly *Eastern hue*, our inter-personal relations very cordial, the thirst for love and understanding great, the spirit of self-sacrifice spontaneous, our clergy diligent and prayerful (Father Anders, Father Stefanos, and Deacon Father Theochares), our monastics *bright* (Monk Kyprianos, Mother Magdalene, Sister Lydia),





the attendance of a multi-colored congregation (predominantly *light brown* this time) striking, the melodic sounds of divers languages (Swedish, Greek, Russian, Arabic, Romanian, Serbian, and English) pleasantly surpris-

ing, and the increasingly profound cultivation of a *Genuine Orthodox* conscience manifest, tangible, gratifying, and hope-bearing.

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With our gaze and heart fixed on January of 2017, when, God willing, we will once again visit beautiful Sweden, we *venerate* the All-Holy Cross of our Lord, by the power of Which we *magnify* the *Theotokos*, under whose radiant Protection, during the Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross, we were yet again vouchsafed to exercise our pastoral ministry in Sweden, with the blessing of our Holy Synod.

Glory to God! Holy Trinity, Glory to Thee!

September 21, 2016 (Old Style)

† Apodosis of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross

*† Metropolitan Cyprian
of Oropos and Phyle*

