

**A Homily By His Eminence, the Most Reverend Photiy
First Hierarch of the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria**

Delivered at the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina
Phyle (Athens), Greece
October 2, 2018 (Old Style)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!
“This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

Your Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens and all Greece;
Most Reverend and Right Reverend Holy Hierarchs;
Venerable Fathers and Mothers;

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Glory to the Holy, Coëssential, Life-creating and Indivisible Trinity, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages!

Let us give thanks to the One Tri-Hypostatic God for today’s celebration: a celebration of our faith in Him and of our love for Him; a celebration of our unity in His Holy Church; a celebration in honor of the Patron Saints of this Holy Monastery, the holy, glorious, and right-victorious Martyrs Cyprian and Justina.

Let us rejoice and be glad on this day of threefold celebration.

The celebration of unity between the local Genuine Orthodox Churches of Greece and Bulgaria, the celebration of our love in Christ, was just crowned by the Concelebration of the Divine Eucharist together with our brothers from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Romania. This celebration is a gift that God has mercifully granted unto us. But this gift is also the fruit of the synergy (coöperation) of the Grace of God and our human will. Yes, leading up to this celebration we had difficulties and temptations; but the latter exercised our good will, bolstered our patience, and strengthened our mutual trust.

“Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other,” says the holy Psalmist (Psalm 84:11). Precisely therefrom springs forth the joy of today’s celebration: from the victory of truth and love. Love and truth, if I may so express it, are consubstantial and correlative. Love abides by means of truth, and truth abides by means of love. If we can speak of a language of love, that language is truth; and if we can speak of a language of truth, that language is love. Love is the life of truth, the heart of truth. In their indivisible unity, love of Christ and the truth of Christ are the heart and mind of the Church as a theanthropic organism.

Today mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other; from these arise the joy of our unity with our Savior and of the unity between us in Him, in His Holy Name. Blessed be our God, Who has made this day! Blessed be the Holy Martyrs Cyprian and Justina, who gathered us here today at their Holy Monastery! Amid the turbulent sea of this world, amid the chaos of divisions and snares, let us remain united in the truth of Christ and the love of Christ! May the witness of our four local Genuine Orthodox Churches be a living and efficacious witness to truth and love, which were revealed to us by Truth and Love incarnate, Christ, the Savior of the world!

To Kallinikos, the Most Blessed Archbishop of Athens and all Greece; to Agafangel, the Most Reverend Metropolitan and First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad; and to Vlasie, the Most Reverend Metropolitan and Archbishop of the Genuine Orthodox Church of Romania:

Many Years!