



Autumnal Pastoral Ministry in Sweden

September 16-23, 2021 (Old Style)



After the Feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian made his customary autumn visit to the Small Flock of our Church in Sweden, in his capacity as *Locum Tenens*, with the blessing of His Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinikos and of our Holy Synod.

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On Wednesday, September 16 (Old Style) His Eminence was received at the Cathedral Church of Sts. Constantine and Helen, in Vårberg, a suburb of Stockholm.

In his brief greeting to the clergy—the Reverend Father Anders Åkerström (Episcopal Representative), Father Stefanos Jaerpenberg, and Hierodeacon Father Theochares—and faithful assembled there, Metropolitan Cyprian expressed his joy at finding himself once more among our Small Flock in Sweden after an eighteen month absence, owing to the pandemic. He conveyed the blessings of our Hierarchs to the faithful and prayed that the following days of fellowship would be fruitful, under the protection and might of the Precious Cross and by the intercessions of the founders of our mission in Sweden: the ever-memorable Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle and Bishop Johannes of Makarioupolis.

After the service of the reception, everyone went to the grave of Bishop Johannes, located behind the Altar of the Church, where Metropolitan Cyprian performed a *Trisagion* for the repose of this beloved spiritual Father of our brothers and sisters in Sweden.



The clergy then informed His Eminence about the progress of the maintenance work on the Church, which has undergone extensive external and internal renovation, primarily through the personal and collective efforts of the clergy and faithful.



On Thursday, September 17 (Old Style), Metropolitan Cyprian made a pastoral visit to Norrköping, south of Stockholm, where he helped set up and arrange a private home chapel that will house the parish of St. Ignatios of Antioch. He heard confessions and gave spiritual counsel and new impetus for the future of the small community.

On Friday, September 18 (Old Style), Metropolitan Cyprian had meetings and confessions in Stockholm. That afternoon, there took place a very constructive clergy meeting, during which His Eminence gave instructions regarding the pastoral handling of the challenges arising from the pandemic. He thanked the clergy for all their undertakings and strengthened them in their good efforts on behalf of our Church's mission in Sweden. These meetings comforted and rekindled the zeal and hope of our clergy for the future of our Small Flock.

On Saturday, September 19 (Old Style), a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Convent of St. Philothei, in Villberga, with the participation of our clergy and a number of



the faithful. The Liturgy was celebrated in the Chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, which is open to all visitors. The sisters then offered everyone an *agape* meal, at the end of which a discussion took place regarding the significance of the precious Cross in our lives.

That afternoon Great Vespers was served at the Church of Sts. Constantine and Helen, followed by the Small Compline with the Salutations to the Theotokos and the Prayers before Holy Communion.

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On the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross, September 20 (Old Style), the Midnight Office, Orthros, and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy were celebrated in the morning. Metropolitan Cyprian presided, assisted by the parish clergy.

In his sermon on the Gospel reading of the day, Metropolitan Cyprian spoke about what life on the Cross entails. It is indeed extremely difficult for someone to follow Christ in these days of apostasy, and especially in a country like Sweden. We need to make great efforts in order not to be ensnared by the spirit of the world and to cleanse our hearts; we must engage in pious and good deeds, prayer—not for ourselves alone, but for the entire world—and participation in the Immaculate Mysteries, so that we might be led, by the Grace of God, to our personal resurrection.



• **We** would like to commend the parish's choir leader, Peter Magneli, for his prolific and excellent work in setting Swedish liturgical texts to Byzantine melodies. The scores are posted on a [website](#) so that anyone interested is able to use them.



At the parish *Synaxis* that evening, Metropolitan Cyprian spoke about the cultivation of an ecclesiastical mindset, as well as about the power of the Divine Eucharist and the Orthodox teaching regarding the transformation of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord. He also discussed the pre-conditions by which the faithful are vouchsafed to receive the Immaculate Mysteries, in particular those concerning love, forgiveness, repentance, and self-reproach.

The discussion was met with lively interest by our brothers and sisters, who expressed their gratitude for these opportunities to explore such matters in great depth.

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On Monday, September 21 (Old Style), the customary visit was made to the Orthodox section of the Skogskyrkogården cemetery, where Metropolitan Cyprian served *Trisagia* at the graves of the ever-memorable Mother Parthenia and other faithful.



That afternoon, he visited the home of a pious Syrian family for instruction in the faith.

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On Tuesday, September 22 (Old Style), Metropolitan Cyprian celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos in the university town of Uppsala. In his brief sermon, His Eminence emphasized the central place of the Divine Eucharist in our sanctification and deification, and thus the importance of preparing ourselves with zeal to become communicants of the Immaculate Mysteries as often as possible.



Father Anders and Presbytera Brigitta then invited everyone to their home for lunch with their usual warm hospitality. Using contemporary examples, Metropolitan Cyprian spoke about the great watchfulness and humility with which the clergy should

undertake their pastoral ministry, such that they always practice it not as their own personal endeavor, but rather as the work of God and for the glory of God.

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On Wednesday, September 23 (Old Style), Metropolitan Cyprian returned to his flock in Greece after this revitalizing pastoral visit, with thanksgiving to our Good Shepherd, Who bestowed His blessing on this ministry to our northern brethren.

