



## Seventh Pastoral Visit to Southern Germany and Austria November 10-15, 2022 (Old Style)



**By the Grace** of our Lord and with the blessing of His Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinikos, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian made his seventh pastoral visit to Southern Germany and Austria, from the 10th to the 15th of November, 2022 (Old Style). He was accompanied by the Reverend Father Angelos Mourlas and a small group of travelling companions.

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**On Thursday**, November 11 (Old Style), the visitors went to the banks of the River Fulda in the town of the same name in Hesse, Germany, in order to venerate the Relics of St. Boniface († June 5, 754), the “Apostle of Germany.”

In 744, St. Boniface founded the Abbey of Fulda with the help of his disciple, St. Sturm († December 17), who served as its first Abbot. St. Sturm found an appropriate place for the monastery in the great forest of Buchonia, located at the center of the four regions evangelized by Saint Boniface: Frisia, Hesse, Thuringia, and Bavaria.

Every year, St. Boniface withdrew to the monastery for rest and refreshment, but also to instruct the Brotherhood in the monastic tradition. At the time of the Saint's martyrdom in Dokkum, in present day Holland, the





Brotherhood numbered some four hundred monks. The Saint's relics were then brought to the monastery in Fulda for burial.

The monastery immediately became a center of pilgrimage, and the town that quickly sprang up around

it became the administrative center of the region.

The Relics of the Saint are normally brought out for veneration only once a year, on his Feast Day († June 5), but the Holy Enlightener beheld the pious yearning of the pilgrims from Greece, and in a miraculous way they were given the opportunity to venerate portions of his Relics.



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**On Friday**, November 12 (Old Style), the visitors went to the Grünwald Castle, located south of Munich, on the Isar River.

It was here that the two brothers and co-governing Dukes, William IV and Ludwig X, organized the Grünwald Conference on February 10, 1522. At this Conference, they decided that Bavaria should continue to belong to the “old faith,” that is, Roman Catholicism.

This decision is understood today to be the beginning of the Counter-Reformation in Bavaria, the Habsburg lands, and the Empire, the effects of which would shape the history of Europe over the next centuries.

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**That afternoon**, Metropolitan Cyprian and Father Angelos visited the location where our faithful will begin, God willing, to hold Church services and Liturgies beginning in early 2023.

Over the years, Metropolitan Cyprian had repeatedly exhorted the faithful to pray and make active efforts to find a suitable place for a chapel in the Munich region, since our small community of Genuine Orthodox Christians there is growing, by the Grace of God.

Through the intercessions of the Enlighteners of Bavaria, Saints Emmeram, Rupert (Robert), Corbinian, and Boniface, a suitable place for the ecclesiastical needs of our flock was finally found in a spacious private building in a suburb of Munich. His Eminence gave instructions regarding the construction and arrangement of the chapel.



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**On Saturday,** November 13 (Old Style), the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in a temporary house chapel in Munich.

Metropolitan Cyprian, Father Angelos, and their travelling companions departed that afternoon for Salzburg, Austria, where they were welcomed by our beloved brother in Christ, Mr. Kyriakos Kyriakidis, the warden of the Chapel of St. Rupert in Köstendorf. That afternoon, Great Vespers was chanted in the Church.

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**On Sunday,** November 14 (Old Style), the commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas, Orthros and a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy were celebrated in the aforementioned chapel. In his homily, Metropolitan Cyprian spoke about the struggles of the Fathers of the Eighth and Ninth Œcumenical Synods, and in particular those of St. Photios the Great, St. Gregory Palamas, and St. Kallistos, Patriarch of Constantinople, who condemned the heresies of the West, and whose endeavors would be continued in the fifteenth century by St. Mark Evgenikos. Among other things, he said:

*The steadfast persistence of the Fathers in these matters is not excessive, since a Faith in which dogma, the truth of the Faith, is adulterated, ceases to be the Faith handed down to us by the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church. And since dogma is directly related to ethos, Christian life takes on a different form when heresy is introduced.*



*Thus it is we see Christian life according to the western model, amidst which you live, as an effort towards moral improvement, which is why it*

can be equated with other religions or philosophies that also encompass methods of moral improvement. These are able to turn someone into a moral person, but not to lead him to perfection, to deification. Christ, on the other hand, calls us to become gods by Grace.



**I**n the Old Testament there were Righteous Ones, but before the Incarnation there was no possibility of deification. Let us come to an awareness of the great gift that Christ gave us by His Incarnation, to what heights of glory He has raised our nature. Hence, let us not grieve Him; let us not allow sin to debase us, who by the Grace of our Lord are of “noble blood.”

**T**he Holy Fathers of the Œcumenical Synods preserved us from heresies, thereby guiding us in the true Life in Christ, which renders us dwelling places of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Let us preserve this gift; let us remain faithful to the teachings of the Holy Fathers and not have liturgical relations (confining ourselves to social ones) with the non-Orthodox environment around us.

**Y**et we should also take care that the purity of our Faith be expressed in our ethos; that is, Orthodoxy (correct belief) should be embodied in our Orthopraxy (correct observance of the Faith). To this end, we are called to cultivate profound humility, love towards all, purity of soul and body, and purity of heart. If, through our daily struggles, all of these things increase, we will become merciful and experience a mystical transfiguration, which will render us dwelling-places of the Holy Trinity....

**A**fter the Dismissal, Metropolitan Cyprian served a *Trisagion* at the grave of our departed brother in Christ Evangelos Dolka († 10.12.2021), located in the neighboring cemetery. He then held a Synaxis with the faithful at the home of Mr. Kyriakos





Kyriakidis, during which they discussed matters concerning our daily life as Christians, and also held a raffle to raise money for our Church's missionary work.

That afternoon, the visitors returned to Munich.

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**On Monday**, November 15 (Old Style), the pilgrims flew back to Greece with deep gratitude to our Lord for the promising course of the small flock in Bavaria and Austria. Metropolitan Cyprian expressed his pleasure at their progress, eagerness to learn, and dedication to True Orthodoxy, thanks to the self-sacrificing ministry of the Reverend Father Angelos.

May the Divine Founder of the Church, through the intercessions of the Holy Enlighteners Emmeram, Rupert, Corbinian, and Boniface ever strengthen and consolidate our small flock in Bavaria and Austria. Glory to God for all things!

