

❖ METROPOLIS OF OROPOS AND FILI
✠ Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina

The Resplendent Patronal Feast of the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina

THIS YEAR'S Patronal Feast of the Monastery of the Holy Martyrs Cyprian and Justina in Fili, Attika, was celebrated for the first time, by the Grace of God, in the new Cathedral for public worship. This Cathedral is the fruit of many years of labor, for which reason it is marked by an extraordinary majesty and spiritual splendor.

• **On Sunday**, October 1, 2007 (Old Style), the day preceding the Feast, His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza, First Hierarch of our Sister Old Calendar Church of Bulgaria, was the principal celebrant at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. He delivered the homily in

Greek. Hierarchs of the Holy Synod in Resistance and of our Sister Old Calendar Church of Romania participated, as well as many Priests. This was truly a “small” forefeast!

• **That evening**, there took place the Blessing of the Waters and, later, Festal Great Vespers—at which a total of twelve Hierarchs officiated—, with a Lity, Blessing of the Loaves, and a homily by His Grace, Bishop Flavian of Ilfov, from Bucharest, Romania.



Creating a special feeling was the impeccable and impressive rendition, by the monastery's well-prepared and practiced Byzantine Choir, of the hymns dedicated to the Saints whose memory was being honored.

• **On Monday**, October 2, 2007 (Old Style), the principal Feast Day, His Eminence, Metropolitan Vlasie, First Hierarch of our Sister Old Calendar Church of Romania, was the principal celebrant at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. He also delivered the Festal Homily, since His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, our First Hierarch, was unable to attend on account of ill health. The latter conveyed a *Feast Day Message*, however, which was read on his behalf by a Father of our monastery, and which is published at the conclusion of this brief article.



Also taking part were the following Hierarchs: Their Graces, Bishops Demosten of Neamț, Teodosie of Brașov, and Flavian of Ilfov, from Romania; His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza, from Bulgaria; and the Hierarchs of our Holy Synod: His Eminence, Bishop Chrysostomos of Sydney and New South Wales; His Eminence, Bishop Michael of Nora, from Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy; His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni, from Pistoia, Italy; His Eminence, Bishop George of Alania, from South Ossetia, in the Caucasus; His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, and His Grace, Bishop Johannes of Makarioupolis, from Sweden.



Owing to various impediments on their journey from California, USA, His Eminence, Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna and His Grace, Bishop Auxentios of Photiki arrived only on the afternoon of the Feast Day.



Also taking part were clergy, monks, and nuns from Romania, Bulgaria, Sweden, Italy, Russia, and, of course, our own homeland, from which came representatives of nearly all of our parishes, communities, dependencies, and monasteries.

The municipal band of Ano Liosia played harmoniously and joyfully during the procession with the Holy Relics and the Icon of the Saints whose memory was being honored.



Among the dignitaries participating in the Feast Day were the following: Former government minister, Mr. Athanasios Xarchas; Deputy Minister of Development, Mr. Georgios Vlachos; Members of Parliament for Attika, Messrs. Apostolos Staurou, Athanasios Bouras, and Constantine Brettos; political representatives Mr. K. Katsikes, Ms. Trilike, and Ms. Ioannidou; the Prefect of Western Attika, Mr. Aristeides Arkoudaris; the Deputy Prefects, Mr. Angelos Lioses and Ms. Stavroula Demou; the Mayor of Fili, Mr. Demetrios Bouraimis, together with the Deputy Mayor, Mr. Stamatios Avramis; the President and Vice-President of the

City Council; the former Mayors of Ano Liosia and Aspropyrgos; prefectorial and municipal councilmen; the police commissioners of Agioi Anaryroi and Ano Liosia, as well as representatives of local public organizations.



• **The same** afternoon, after Vespers, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone officiated at the traditional memorial service for the repose of the souls of the departed founders, donors, and monastics of our monastery. Hieromonk Klemes Agiokyprianites delivered a brief homily for the occasion.

• **The** throng of faithful—from Athens, Attika, and other parts of Greece, as well as from various countries abroad—was very large for the entire duration of the festal services, and the blessing of the wonder-working Saints Cyprian and Justina was everywhere present and perceptible.

May our Saints help all of us, to the glory of God!



FESTAL MESSAGE

*by His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian
First Hierarchy of the Holy Synod in Resistance*

Your Eminence, Metropolitan Vlasie; Your Eminence, Bishop Photii;

Holy Hierarchs; Honorable Presbyters; Reverend Monks and Nuns; Esteemed Political Personages, Representatives of Parliament and Notables of the Local and Prefectural Administrative Bodies:

My beloved children in Christ,
Christian Faithful dearly loved in the Lord:

My joy, my joy in Christ, is so great, today, that it overshadows and dispels my sorrow!

- I feel the profoundest joy in the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Protectors of our Monastery, the glorious Martyrs Cyprian and Justina, for the first time since the establishment of their monastery here in historic Fili, in 1961, are at last being honored in this new and resplendent Church, which fittingly magnifies them.

- My sadness, consequently, is justifiable. The philanthropic Providence of God, who instructs us, albeit ever to our benefit, in sundry ways, did not so deem it that I might actively participate in today's joyful event.

- Nonetheless, I thank our Lord and God, as well as our Patron Saints, since—and I repeat myself—the light of joy puts sorrow to flight.

- Furthermore, the Life of Sts. Cyprian and Justina puts forth this essential message: gloom, distress, affliction, and trials, or bad in any form, even if they may seem temporarily to predominate and prevail, in the end are broken and dissolved as they are dashed against the **Eternal Rock of Truth**, upon Which is grounded the imperishable **Beacon of God's Grace**.

- Though the Sun, which illuminates, warms, and gives life to visions and hopes, is now and then hidden by the gloomy cloud of despondency; and though our Church, our homeland, and the world are assailed, and indeed sometimes forcefully, by what at first sight seem to be standstill tribulations, we should not be seized by despair.

- Our Orthodox Faith, indeed through Her Saints, constitutes the inexhaustible wellspring of **Creative Hope**; it is never pressed down fatalistically by these **Crosses**, but rather uses them as ladders of ascent, rising up as far as the **Resurrection**.

- In setting out on our resurrectional ascent and the dissolution of the cloud of gloom, that the hope-bearing Sun might once again shine forth,

- let us have as our **guide** the true Mistress of our homeland: the Most

Holy Theotokos; • let us as have as our **confederates** our true Brothers: the Saints of our Church; • let us be **profoundly aware** that each of us singly, and all of us together, are **responsible in common** for the local, circumferential, and worldwide turmoil of our planet; • that all of us, moreover, individually and collectively, **have need of repentance**, if we wish in fact to work creatively for the salvation of the world.

• With these humble reflections, which spawned in my heart, today, the antipodes of superabundant love and justifiable sorrow, I greet you and kiss you wholeheartedly, wishing you many years, creative in Christ and bearing hope for a better tomorrow.

Metropolitan of Oropos and Fili,
First Hierarch of the Holy Synod in Resistance

Fili, Attica
2/15 October 2007