

Feast Day Celebration in Pyrgos

An edifying and joyful gathering



ON THE SUNDAY before the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, the *Hesychasterion* of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, located in Pyrgos, Eleia, Western Greece, celebrates its Feast Day, following a decision to that effect by His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, who consecrated the *Hesychasterion's* Church on this day in 1989.

Archimandrite Gregory Hagiokyprianites, who is in charge of the *Hesychasterion*, has been fruitfully laboring here for nearly twenty-five years, such that today one marvels at the order, cleanliness, and overall tidiness of this sacred space.

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THIS YEAR, the *Hesychasterion's* Feast Day coincided with the great Feast of the Nativity of the *Theotokos*, September 8/21, 2008. Thus, for all of the devout worshipers this yearly gathering was a source of especial gladness and edification in Christ.

Apart from the local faithful and those from neighboring areas, a group of thirty pilgrims from Athens and a large group from Agrinion (under Archimandrite Athanasios, from the *Metochion* of All Saints) came to Pyrgos, as well as parishioners from the Church of



the Ascension in Patras (under Father Angelos Mourlas).

Among the pilgrims from Athens, led by His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President, were Hierodeacon Joseph and Subdeacon Antonios—brothers of the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Phyle, Attica—and five nuns from the Convent of the Holy Angels and the *Hesychnasterion* of the *Panagia Hodegetria*.

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THE FEAST DAY was celebrated with splendor and spiritual solemnity. The nuns from the Convent of the Holy Angels chanted truly angelically at Vespers, on the eve of the Feast, and again at Orthros and the Divine Liturgy.

Among the large number of faithful in attendance, who expressed their great joy at this spiritual gathering, there were many who communed of the Immaculate Mysteries.



Bishop Cyprian liturgized, assisted by Archimandrites Athanasios and Gregorios, Father Angelos, Hierodeacon Joseph, and Subdeacons Father Antonios, Soterios Gioules, Demetrios Giatrakos, and Apostolos Phykias.

At the end of Orthros, Bishop Cyprian had the especial blessing and joy of ordaining his brother according to the flesh, Soterios Gioules, a Reader and Subdeacon, with a view to ordaining him a Deacon and Priest in due time.



Before Holy Communion, His Grace spoke on the Gospel reading of the day and, in particular, on the marvelous passage (St. John 3:16-17), “*For God so loved the world....*” He then spoke on themes primarily relating to the Mother of God, based on the liturgical exclamation: “*Especially our All-Holy, Immaculate, Lady...*”



At the dismissal, Bishop Cyprian, with a few words for the occasion, offered Father Gregorios an exquisite Icon of the *Theotokos*. Small Icons were then distributed to all of the worshipers as a blessing.



During the splendid midday meal, which all attended, the clergy, nuns, and our lay brothers and sisters in Christ related soul-profitng stories and made edifying comments.

This mutual spiritual edification, “with one accord,” “with gladness and singleness of heart,” confirmed the great truth of Orthodox spirituality regarding the profound bond that exists between parishes and monasteries: A good parish supports the monastery, and a good monastery supports the parish.

To our God, the Giver of all good things, be glory and thanksgiving!

