
A MIRACLE OF THE HOLY ELDESS SAINT MYRTIDIOTISSA, THE ASCETIC OF KLEISSOURA († 1974)

A Testimonial About and Verification of Her Monastic Vocation and Monastic Name

Recently, there has been an observable and active movement towards the official Proclamation of the Sainthood of the holy ascetic Eldress Myrtidiótissa, known in the world as Sophía Chotokourí-dou [*interdum* “Chortokopídes” or “Chortokopídou], who was a native of Póntos and who struggled in asceticism at the Monastery of the Mother of God in Kleissoúra, in Western Macedonia (Greece), reposing on the Feast Day of St. George, April 23, 1974, according to the Church Calendar [i.e., Old Style].

These days, there is a feverish effort by the New Calendarist Metropolis of Kastoriá to hold her “*Hagiokatátaxis*” [the service for entering her name among the Church’s Saints—sometimes called, in English, the “Glorification” of a Saint, and wrongly called a “Canonization”], with the participation of ecumenist Patriarch Bartholomew.

In the relevant materials that are being circulated (articles, Icons, etc.), the Saint is constantly presented as a simple lay woman, Sophia, without acknowledging the monastic vocation of the holy ascetic Eldress, and with absolutely not a single reference to her monastic name, *viz.*, **Myrtidiotissa**.

This assuredly does nothing to commend these contemporary devotees of the holy Eldress and demonstrates the magnitude of their persistent impiety, since they dare posthumously to remove her Monastic Schema and to deny her monastic vocation. May God forgive them and may the holy Eldress call them to account for their impudence.

The holy Eldress Myrtidiotissa was licitly and canonically tonsured a nun, and we are obliged to underscore this emphatically, bearing in mind that the Monastic Schema is an indelible Gift of God’s Grace and cannot be taken away by anyone in any way!

The holy Eldress received the Great and Angelic Schema in October of 1971—her name being changed from Sophia to the **Nun**



Myrtidiotissa—from the hand of Archimandrite Father Cyprian (later the Old Calendarist Metropolitan of Óropos and Phylé), Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina in Phyle, Áttica (Athens), Greece. Serving as her sponsor was the now reposed nun, Eldress Maria Myrtidiotissa, Foundress and Abbess of the Holy Convent of the Annunciation of the *Theotókos*, in Oinoússes, on the island of Chíos.

A description of the miracles that took place during this richly blessed event is set forth in a book by His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, *Ἡ Γερόντισσα Μυρτιδιώτισσα, Ἡ Ἀσκήτρια τῆς Κλεισούρας, 1886-1974* (Φυλὴ Ἀττικῆς: 1998), pp. 153-159 [an English translation of His Eminence’s book, *Eldress Myrtidiotissa: The Ascetic Struggler of Klissoura (1886-1974)*, is available from the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, Etna, CA]. Indeed, the spiritual relationship of the holy Eldress with her biographer, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, was so warm and infrangible that St. Myrtidiotissa proclaimed that she held *in her heart, just after Christ, Father Cyprian*.

The following miracle, published here for the first time, in every way demonstrates and verifies that the holy Eldress was so **fully conscious of** and **responsive to** her monastic vocation and her monastic name, that she appointed that it be given to a child who was born after her departure to the Lord.

This indubitable incident, which is not the only of its kind, speaks for itself; it both honors the holy Eldress Myrtidiotissa and makes culpable those who fall to the unforgivable sin of denying God’s Gift of Grace.

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The pious Evthymía Nikolaïdou, a resident of Thessaloníke and a spiritual child of the then Archimandrite Father Cyprian, Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, in Phyle, regularly visited the holy Eldress Myrtidiotissa at the Monastery of the *Theotokos*, in Kleissoura, to speak with her.

During one visit, a few months before the repose of the ascetic Saint, the Eldress revealed to her the following:

“Now that you are returning to Thessalonike, you will find an engaged couple that is looking for a sponsor to stand witness at their wedding. Stand witness at their wedding and sponsor [as Godparent] the first child that they have, who will be a girl, and give the child my name: call her MYRTIDIOTISSA!”

In fact, when she returned, the woman met the couple, Nicholas Grámbas, fourth son of the veteran struggler for the Old Calendar, Antónios Grambas (†1996), and Theodora Klessiáres, daughter of Constantine Klessiáres, a resident of Kýmína (a suburb of Thessalonike). She proposed to them all that she was told by the holy Eldress, though she did not tell them anything about the gender and name of their first child, but only that she had made a promise to name their first child. They accepted this.

The wedding took place at the Old Calendarist Church of the Holy Apostles [in Kymina] in November of 1974, while the Eldress Myrtidiotissa had already reposed in the Lord about seven months before. And the Baptism of the couple’s first child, **which was indeed a girl**, also took place at the Church of the Holy Apostles, in 1976. To the insistent inquiries from the father, as to what name the child would be given, the Godmother answered: “Do not worry. The name that I will give to the child is one that you will like; it is a very lovely name.”

When the relatives heard the name MYRTIDIOTISSA [an unusual name in Greece], they were taken aback. In fact, one of the two grandmothers said (half in Greek and half in Bulgarian [in Greek Macedonia, Slavic dialects are often spoken as a second language]: “Σιὸ [τὶ] ὄνομα [ὄνομα] εἶναι [εἶναι] αὐτό, Μαρστανιώτισσα?!” (What kind of name is that—Matsaniótissa?!) But shortly this passed—with the help of the Godmother, to be sure, who explained to them in detail about the prophetic words of the holy Eldress Myrtidiotissa of Kleissoura and told them: “If you like, you can call her MYRTÓ [an ancient Greek name—Socrates’ second wife and one of the Amazons had this name—and a nickname for Myrtidiotissa], but when she communes and when she gets married, the Priest must use her correct name, MYRTIDIOTISSA.

Myrtidiotissa (Myrto) Grambas is married today and lives in Néa Málgara (a suburb of Thessalonike), and her parents, Nicholas and Theodora, are residents of Kymina and parishioners of the Church of the Holy Twelve Apostles. Her pious Godmother, Evthymia Nikolaïdou, reposed in the Lord around 1979-1980, when her Godchild was still very young.

May the Holy Eldress St. Myrtidiotissa intercede to God for all Orthodox, that we might always be true in the Faith and in Life and be worthy of Divine Blessedness!

• *Compiled and composed by Bishop Klémes of Gardíkion (June 12/25, 2012). Gratitude is owed to all of those who helped in the collection of particulars about this miracle and especially to Mr. Nicholas Polýchros for first recording them.*

• *Bracketed addenda or explanations are those of the translator. The first citation of a Greek word is provided with the proper syllable accented, so as to make the words easier for an English speaker. Except for certain place and proper names, transliteration is according to the classical style.*