

## The Repose and Funeral Service of the Reverend Mother Makrina, Abbess of the Holy Convent of St. Paraskeve, Acharnai (Athens)



**O**n Tuesday evening, August 7/20, 2013, the Reverend Mother Makrina, Abbess of the Convent of St. Paraskeve (Acharnai, Athens), fell asleep in the Lord, following a lengthy illness.

The funeral service was chanted on the afternoon of Wednesday, August 8/21, by His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, *Locum Tenens* of our Holy Metropolis and the convent's spiritual Father, and His Grace, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, together with members of our clergy. Also in prayerful attendance were nuns from the Convent of the Holy Angels, who provided the chanting, with their Abbess, the Reverend Mother Taxiarchia, nuns from other convents, and a large throng of faithful, among whom was the Mayor of Acharnai, Soterios Douros.



Both Bishops delivered orations, which were followed by the final kiss. The body was then carried to the convent cemetery, where, according to her wish, Mother Makrina was buried in the grave of the convent's previous Abbess, Mother Paraskeve. The orphaned Sisterhood then served a funeral meal.

**Mother Makrina**, in the world Maria Keramidas, was born in Piræus in 1933. When she

was seven years old she lost her father, who was slain while fighting for his fatherland on the Albanian front.

At the age of twenty-two, in 1955, she left her home to become a nun, out of great love for our Lord Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom of our souls, following a sign from an Icon of St. Paraskeve that she owned. She had been planning on entering the then flourishing Old Calendar Convent of the Dormition of the *Theotokos*, in Thrakomakedones (Eastern Attica), but she “mistakenly” took the wrong bus and ended up at the Convent of St. Paraskeve in Acharnai, which also followed the Old Calendar. Interpreting this as a sign that the Lord and her beloved St. Paraskeve were calling her to remain there, she did so!

She placed herself under obedience to the convent’s first Abbess, the Reverend Mother Christonymphe (†1973), who had worked and struggled together with the convent’s spiritual Father, Elder Hieronymos, for the foundation (1930) and further development of the convent.

Mother Makrina was tonsured to the Great Schema on the Feast of St. Paraskeve, July 26, 1962, by the newly Consecrated Bishop Geron-tios of Salamina, and received the name of St. Basil the Great’s older sister, herself a great monastic Saint.

From 1973 to 1996, Mother Makrina lived under obedience to the convent’s second Abbess, the Reverend Mother Paraskeve, who, before her repose, at a time of confusion in the Old Calendar movement, advised the Sisterhood to take refuge under the spiritual protection of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, whom they knew and whom they held in deepest respect.

After Mother Paraskeve’s repose, the remaining small Sisterhood did indeed join our ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and out of obedience to Metropolitan Cyprian, Mother Makrina consented to become the third Abbess of the historic and blessed Convent of St. Paraskeve. She was



enthroned by Metropolitan Cyprian on the Feast of the Life-Giving Spring, April 6, 1996 (Old Style), and thenceforth the spiritual bond between them was strong and deep.

Mother Makrina worked hard for the development of the convent, which, though beset by many trials, showed wide-ranging

progress. The Sisterhood grew in number and the buildings began to be renovated. This sacred place came to be a spiritual center of Orthodox witness, also lending invaluable practical assistance to our Metropolis' pastoral work.

Mother Makrina was straightforward and sincere, simple and unassuming. She was distinguished by her love, care, tact, discretion, and humility. She helped the Sisterhood in every way, transmitting all that was edifying and important, so as to ensure that it would tread a smooth course after her repose.

Beginning in 2010, her health took a decided turn for the worse: a diabetic, she suffered from severe cardiac and renal insufficiency. During the last three years of her life—and especially the final year—she bore her illnesses with fortitude, preparing herself for her journey into eternity.

Spiritually prepared, she breathed her last the day after the Feast of the Transfiguration, a few days before the Dormition of the *Theotokos*, shortly after the Feast Day of St. Paraskeve, and approximately three months after the repose of our Most Reverend Father, Metropolitan Cyprian. Her soul was accompanied on its journey by the prayers of all for the forgiveness of her sins and eternal repose in the tabernacles of the Righteous.

Eternal be the memory of Mother Makrina!

