



The Patronal Feast of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Phyle, Athens October 2, 2018 (Old Style)



The radiant Patronal Feast of the Holy and glorious Martyrs Cyprian and Justina was endowed this year with an especial Paschal grace, as it coincided with the Eucharistic expression of official communion between our Holy Synod and the Genuine Orthodox Church of Bulgaria.

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On Sunday, October 1/14, the day before the Feast, throngs of pilgrims visited the monastery throughout the course of the day.

His Eminence, Metropolitan Photiy of Triaditza, First Hierarch of the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, presided that evening at Great Vespers. Officiating together with him were the Ruling Hierarch, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, whose Nameday it was; Their Eminences, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Attica and Boiotia and Metropolitan Ambrose of Philippi and Maroneia; Their Graces, Bishop Sofronie of Suceava, Bishop Glicherie of Iași, and Bishop Dionisie of Galați (from the True Orthodox Church of Romania); His Grace, Bishop Anthim of Bessarabia (from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad); Their Graces, Bishop Ambrose of Methone and Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, and His Eminence, Bishop Auxentios of Etna and Portland.





Also present and participating were the Abbot of the Monastery, Archimandrite Father Theodosios, a large number of Greek, Romanian, Russian, and Bulgarian clergy, and a multitude of monks, nuns, and pious faithful.

The monastery choir, augmented for the occasion by several other distinguished chanters, sang in a festive style.

Before the Dismissal, His Grace, Bishop Klemes delivered a festal address focusing primarily on our communion with the Old Calendar Church of Bulgaria, with which the monastery has always maintained bonds of love and truth, and this at a time when the so-called official Churches are undergoing deep division. Bishop Klemes also spoke about the beneficial Grace of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, reminding us of the weighty spiritual legacy bequeathed to us by our ever-memorable Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian of blessed memory, and the corresponding responsibility that we bear.



The Grace-filled Relics of the Saints being honored were brought from the monastery cloister to the area for visitors so that the faithful could venerate them throughout Vespers, and again the following day.

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On the morning of Monday, October 2/15, festal Matins was served, followed by a Divine Liturgy concelebrated by a multitude of Hierarchs.

The principal celebrant was His Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinikos, with the participation of all of the aforementioned Hierarchs, with the addition of Their Eminences, Metropolitan Gerontios of Piræus and Sala-



mis and Metropolitan Photios of Demetrias. Many Priests and four Hierodeacons also took part.

A large throng of faithful and many dignitaries filled the large Church and courtyard, praying with stillness and reverence.

Before Holy Communion, His Eminence, Metropolitan Pho-
tios read in Greek an inspiring *festal homily*, in which he expressed the great importance of the union of the local Genuine Orthodox Churches in our difficult days.

Metropolitan Photios of Demetrias read the Synodal Resolution (September 5/18, 2018) of our Church regarding our communion with the Genuine Orthodox Church of Bulgaria.

Many of the faithful communed of the Immaculate Mysteries.

After the Dismissal, Archbishop Kallinikos spoke a few words about the great significance of our union with the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria and its sanguine message, especially in view of the distressing prevailing circumstances worldwide. On behalf of the monastery, Bishop Klemes thanked the clergy and laypeople in attendance.

There followed the customary procession of the Holy Icon and a portion of the Holy Relics of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, along with the Blessing of the Loaves, which was celebrated in front of the Church.



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At the gathering that followed in the monastery's large reception hall, Metropolitan Photios of Triaditza presented Archbishop Kallinikos with a beautiful Icon of the *Panagia* of the Burning Bush. Brief festal salutations were expressed by Metropolitan

Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, Bishop Anthim of Bessarabia, and Bishop Glicherie of Iași, as well as by the Mayor of Phyle, Mr. Christos Pappous.

In the monastery cloister, the customary festal meal was served to the Hierarchs and clergy, as well as to the Mayor, his coworkers, and many of the male pilgrims, while mementos and refreshments were distributed to the rest of the pilgrims.



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We owe thanksgiving and glorification to the Divine Founder of the Church, the Giver of all good things, Who bestowed His Grace so abundantly on this great inter-Orthodox witness of love, confession, and unity, for the glory of His Name and of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, and also for the strengthening and gladdening of the faithful *pleroma* of Genuine Orthodox Christians.

What shall we render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto us?

