

# Odoiporikon

## Orthodox Mission in the East

---

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE PATRIARCHAL FOUNDATION  
OF ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE FAR EAST

Issue #82 January – March 2023

---



The newly ordained Priest Fr. Johan Park with his family

## IN MEMORIAM FOR THE LATE METROPOLITAN SOTIRIOS OF PISIDIA, FORMERLY OF KOREA

On Sunday, January 22, 2023, a Spiritual Memorial was held in the Holy Church of St. Barbara in Argypoli-Athens in honor and memory of the late Metropolitan of Pisidia Sotirios, formerly of Korea.

The program included a greeting by the president of the Patriarchal Foundation of the Orthodox Mission in the Far East, Mr. Sotiris Despotis, professor at the School of Theology of the University of Athens, as well as a speech by His Eminence Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea and Exarch of Japan. There were also chants by the children's and adolescents choir of the Church of St. Barbara in Argypoli, followed by a closing greeting by the Metropolitan of New Smyrna Simeon. In the first part of his speech, the Metropolitan of Korea stressed the following:

«Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power» (Jude 25) we give to our Savior and Redeemer, who blessed us to celebrate today this Spiritual Memorial in honor and memory of the late enlightened Hierarchy and great missionary, Metropolitan of Pisidia, (from Korea), father of Sotirios Trambas.

On behalf of His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Mr. Bartholomew, we have the great honor and the special privilege of conveying to the eloquent audience His paternal wishes and blessings for health, long life and spiritual progress in the new year.

Last Friday, during our visit to the Holy Center of the Orthodox Church, in Constantinople, we heard our Holy Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew say: *“Whatever we say about the late Venerable Metropolitan Sotirios will always be too little!”*

The topic of our speech is: *“The saintly falling asleep in the Lord of a great Missionary”*, who was the Rector of the Orthodox Missionaries who were alive until now.

In advance, please allow us to make a very brief clarifying comment:

We used the term «missionary» in the title of this speech as «terminus technicus». This term is neither hagiographic nor patristic, but comes from the terminology of the heterodox. The late Metropolitan Sotirios never used this term for himself during his 47 years of ministry in Korea. He preferred the term *a servant of*

*Christ or a worker of the Gospel*. Characteristically, he used to say: *The apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians: «I am not worthy even to be called an apostle» (1 Cor. 15:9), how then shall I call myself a missionary? Funny things!*

A lot has already been written in Greece and abroad about the blessed Metropolitan Father Sotirios immediately after his falling asleep, and as time passes and the appreciation of his life and work settles in us, more will be written continuously. For this reason, tonight we will not refer to his life or his work. We have chosen to speak only about his saintly passing away in order to tell you *«that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we have looked and our hands have handled... we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us» (1 Jn. 1:1-3).*

The earthly end of every person is a trademark of his earthly life. While alive, everyone can pretend many different things until they reach their last hours, but at the time of death the inner man is revealed. At the time of death, everything becomes sublimely clear. Whoever has a constant memory of death in his life is not afraid of death. Repentance and a life in Christ secure his eternal end. We are reminded by the well-known biblical saying: *“With all your words remember the time you will die, and you will never sin” (Sophia Sirach 7:36).*

We were extremely blessed to have lived near such a man of God. That is why we are and will always be grateful to God for this great gift of His. We know that most of tonight's respected audience have met, more or less, Father Sotirios and have tasted the blessing of His presence in their lives. One of them, a quite famous person, when he was informed of His sleep wrote to us the following, which gave us the inspiration for the choice of the subject of tonight's Spiritual Memorial: *“I suppose that the departed left this world as calmly as he lived. I hope he didn't suffer too much in the end. I would be grateful if at some point you could describe to me his last days”.*

This is exactly what we decided to do tonight: to describe, as much as possible, the last days on earth of Father Sotirios. Not only because it is a common desire of many people, but also for the spiritual benefit of all of us.



The speaker referred to:

1. The chronicle of the illness of the blessed Metropolitan Sotirios,
2. His last wish, which was about preaching,
3. His last glimmer,
4. His communication with the world beyond,
5. His last twenty-four hours,
6. His saintly falling asleep,
7. The preparation of his holy remains,
8. His funeral Service and Procession, and
9. His burial.

The Metropolitan concluded his speech with the following:

My dear,

The Venerable Metropolitan Sotirios of blessed memory left this life with a great **pain** and a great joy. His great pain, as he published it in a well-known text of his, was the attitude of the Moscow Patriarchate towards the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Patriarchate of Alexandria and the fratricidal war in Ukraine. He often said with sighs: *But haven't our brothers, who rule the Moscow Patriarchate, after a thousand years of Orthodoxy, learn what Christ teaches us in the Gospel? Do they not understand how much the Devil delights in their wrongdoings? I pray that God will grant them repentance, so that they will finally cease to be part of the expansionist Russian policy!* And his great **joy** was when we informed him about the historical co-celebration of the Divine liturgy at the Fanar in Constantinople between our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop of Ahrida, Stefanos, which took place two days before his saintly falling asleep, on Pentecost Day, June 12, 2022. From the bed of pain where he was, he tried with his weakened hand to make the sign of the Cross and repeat many times: *"Glory to You, Lord, glory to You!"*

A few days after His Eminence's falling asleep, we visited our Ecumenical Patriarch in the Fanar to reverently report to Him the events of the Elder's final moments. His All Holiness, visibly moved, made the sign of the Cross and said: *"He was a Saint. May we have his blessing!"*

The speech ended with the following announcement - an open invitation to all:

Sacred duty and respect towards our spiritual father Sotirios of blessed memory force us to publish a book with his life and work. People, who knew him in his hometown of Arta, in Athens and elsewhere during the years of his studies, during his priestly ministry in the



**H.E. Metropolitan of New Smyrna Symeon, addressing the closing greeting at the event**

Holy Metropolis of Mithymna in Lesbos, in his beloved Kalloni, in the prefecture of Evros as a military chaplain, in the Archdiocese of Athens as Chancellor and Head of the Cathedral Church in Athens, in Korea and in other countries of the Far East and East Asia, but also in the Holy Metropolis of Pisidia, they most certainly remember incidents that have been engraved in their memory regarding his speeches, his advice, his behavior, his charity, their collaboration with him, his liturgical and pastoral ministry. Therefore, we invite everyone to submit their memories either in writing, in handwritten or electronic form, or orally on a tape recorder, video, and any other electronic media. One day we will all leave this earth and go to heaven. So, let us record what we know and what we lived with him, so that they will not be forgotten. Please contribute with your participation in the writing of the book, so that the life and work of a great holy missionary Hierarch, whose life is rarely found in Orthodoxy around the world, will remain alive for the next generations.

## The spread of the Orthodox Witness in the Pacific Islands

I have had the blessing to be associated with the Orthodox Mission in the Pacific, specifically Fiji, for the past nine years. My hometown of Adelaide (Australia) is thousands of kilometers away, but I have been graced with the opportunity to visit the mission a few times, and most recently stayed for over three weeks.

Every time I visit, I feel something attracting me to this spiritually engaging paradise. One starts to recognize that it is in fact what the local newly illumined Orthodox give back to those who serve them that makes one return repeatedly to the mission. The joy of the light of Christ beams from the child-like hearts of those who have embraced Christ back in the Pacific and this reignites the dimmed beacon of one's hearts. One might ask "who is being a missionary to whom?"

Below, I humbly attempt to provide observations about the mission, the challenges it faces, and some suggestions, all for the Orthodox Christian mission's success in the Pacific, and ultimately the Glory of God.

Firstly, for context, the developing Orthodox Mission in the Pacific Nations of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa operates under the Holy Metropolis of New Zealand. This work began in 2009 by the missionary Metropolitan of New Zealand Amphilochios Tsoukos. Continuing this very difficult role today is the current Metropolitan Myron of New Zealand who was elected by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 2018. Directly responsible for the management of the Orthodox

Missions in the Pacific is the Very Reverend Archimandrite Fr. Meletios Pantic, Abbot of the Holy Archangels Monastery, Levin (New Zealand). The Orthodox Church in the Pacific has grown significantly since its inception, and now has four churches, a monastery, an orphanage and five Orthodox Priests. From the five Priests, four are Fijian, with one being inactive due to ill-health.

COVID-19 had detrimental effects on the Orthodox Missions in the Pacific. Ultimately, for two and a half years, Metropolitan Myron, and Fr. Meletios could not visit the region, and served it from a distance. It also meant that:

- Volunteers could not go and assist,
- A decline in global financial assistance,
- Difficulty in maintaining the Mission and community under changing laws and expected behaviors.

Naturally though, Orthodox Missions exists to help people find salvation through the establishment of worship and community, and ultimately to draw more people into the Kingdom of Heaven. With this in mind, the missionary work in the Pacific continues nobly.

The epicenter of the Orthodox Missionary in the Pacific is in Fiji where the largest proportion of Orthodox converts live. In Saweni, on the main island of Viti Levu, Saint Tabithas' Orphanage is located. The Orphanage has been the focal point, and houses twenty children. The Orphanage is heavily assisted by the House Parents, Father Andronikos and Presvytera Julita. Father, Presvytera, and their four children, originate from South Africa, and were appointed to the mission in early December 2022. Father Andronikos also assists in looking after Holy Trinity Parish which is on the same site as the Orphanage. The Orphanage also has several careers, and a chef. Dr. Eleni Athinodorou, from Paradise for Kids Fiji Brisbane (Australia), is also currently at the Orphanage, and heads the educational component, and assisting wherever necessary.

The children at the Orphanage are given many opportunities to excel in all facets of their lives with a balanced approach. A few children are from a





social welfare program, these are orphans, and some of the children are from broken, or very poor families. The Orphanage provides for the children spiritually, and materially. Children are taken to school each day, and participate in common prayer, meals, outdoor and indoor activities. The welcomed addition of Dr. Athinodorou, has allowed for the tutoring program to flourish with programs such as educationally valuable Technology Time.

A major positive, to contrast the challenges of COVID-19, was the welcomed service to the mission by Michael and Meghan Jones and their children from Alaska. They have been serving in Fiji for the last year and have secured funding from their support base in the USA to assist the mission in the Kingdom of Tonga for one more year. Michael has assisted with project management and maintenance work for various projects whilst Meghan has assisted with the tutoring program, and with Sunday School at Holy Trinity, Saweni.

Another welcomed addition to the mission's building project has been Ioannis Panagiotopoulos from Germany who has project managed the building of the house parents' quarters, and the education headquarter which include a reception room (Archondariki) for guests. Ioannis responded to the plea from the Holy Metropolis through [orthodox-pacifika.org](http://orthodox-pacifika.org) after seeing His Eminence Myron's promotion of the Mission from Greek media.

Sunday Liturgy and services throughout the week at Holy Trinity are mainly attended by the children, staff, and a few locals. There is an effort to bring people to church on Sundays however many converts moved away or have been displaced because of COVID-19 which saw Church attendance dwindle.

Father George Pillay is a native Fijian priest and looks after the Dormition of the Theotokos Skete, Saweni, and Saint Paraskevi Church, Sabeto. He assists Father Andronikos with the Divine Services and the pastoral needs of the wider Orthodox Fijian Community. Together with Father Bartholomeos, another Fijian Orthodox priest, and his Presvytera Lydia, they have been serving the mission for over a decade and offer much support and strength to the overall operations.

In Labasa, the second largest island in Fiji, there is a small Orthodox community which worships in a small hut like church of Saints Athanasios and Nicholas. This Orthodox community was established by Father Barnabas Nair



who fell asleep in the Lord in 2022. The late Father Barnabas, together with Presvytera Maria, have done outstanding work drawing people in through their love for Christ and neighbor. Father Alexios, a spiritual child of Father Barnabas, was ordained to the Priesthood earlier this year and has taken over the Orthodox community in Labasa. He, together with Presvytera, are continuing the good work, and injecting more life with their youth and blessed thirst to grow the Parish. Father Alexios single handedly drives two and a half hours to bring parishioners to the Sunday Liturgy, serves the Liturgy, provides a meal, fellowship, and proceeds to take parishioners back to their hut-homes. I witnessed that Orthodoxy in Labasa is authentically Parish oriented with a focus on fellowship and support. It might be the poorest and less funded part of the Mission; however, it is rich in spiritual fruits. This region does need major building maintenance, especially to the construction and integrity of the church, facilities, and to the amenities. I also believe there is scope for the building of a bigger church and facilities to cater for their growing community.

The mission in Tonga and Samoa is in its infancy. There are a few families who have been baptized in Tonga and there is the Church of St. George which is incomplete. COVID-19 delayed the mission in Tonga, but the good news is that Father Bartholomeos, with Presvytera Lydia, will go there very soon to reinvigorate the mission and hopefully together with the assistance of Michael and Meghan Jones complete the building of the Church. In Samoa, there are few converts and no church building, although there are plans to eventually build the church of Saint John the Theologian. I pray that soon there will be this solution for Samoa.

Rev. Fr. Michael Psaromatis





## Ordination of a New Priest in the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea

On Sunday, January 1, 2023, during the Divine Liturgy of the Feasts of the Circumcision of the Lord and of St. Basil the Great, the Sacrament of the Ordination of Deacon Yohan Park to the Priesthood was celebrated in the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Seoul, by the Metropolitan of Korea and Exarch of Japan Ambrosios, with the participation of the Priests Fr. Antonios Woo, Fr. Romanos Kavchak and Fr. Antonios Lim as well as a huge number of faithful.

The Deacon to be ordained said, among other things, during his address:

*... As a deacon, I always had in mind the words of the Prayer that the Celebrant says in the Holy Altar secretly before the Great Entrance: "To serve You is great and awesome even for the heavenly powers". Based on what I experienced during my service as a Deacon and the experience I gained, I always had the desire to serve the Church with trust and fear of God. Nevertheless, at the moment that I am being ordained a Priest, I am very afraid and I wonder if I will be able to take good care of the flock of the Church as a Shepherd. I am timid, but I am here because of the unspeakable and immeasurable love*

*of the Lord and with the faith that the Lord will show His mercy to me and help me.*

*... As a priest, I will not simply rely on my knowledge, nor will I magnify my religious feelings with vague values and concepts, nor will I minister this sacred service according to my will and my abilities, but will proceed obediently to the Church with the grace and blessing of God and with obedience to my Bishop.*

*The apostle Paul told his disciple Timothy: "Keep the faith and a good conscience" (1 Tim. 1:19). Reflecting on the advice of the apostle Paul, I will always try to faithfully perform the ministry to God and people with love and humility as a servant of God. Also, I will never forget that the Stole (Epitrachelion) that the Priest wears around his neck is not his property and right, but a gift from God.*

*Lord, look upon me, Your sinful and unworthy servant, and cleanse my soul and heart from evil consciousness. Enable me by the power of Your Holy Spirit so that, vested with the grace of priesthood, I may stand before Your Holy Table and celebrate the mystery of Your holy and pure Body and Your precious Blood.*



*I will always remember with great gratitude the late Metropolitan Soterios, who inspired me to follow the path of the priesthood and supported me spiritually and materially along my path. I also sincerely thank Metropolitan Ambrosios for the understanding he showed to my many mistakes and shortcomings during my ministry in the Church during the last 9 years. I also thank all the Korean Priests for their love and support.*

*Many thanks go to my father who strengthens me with his prayers from Heaven, to my mother, and my brothers who have stood by me silently for so many years in difficult times.*

*In particular, I am very grateful to my beloved wife, Angela, and our daughter Irene, for their love, prayers, and patience, as well as to everyone who is participating today in this great event of my life.*

*I thank the Most Holy Theotokos, our Mother, our patron St. Nicholas and all the Saints who always helped me and shone the light of hope even when I was facing difficulties and crises.*

*Finally, I ask for forgiveness from everyone I may have knowingly or unknowingly hurt. Please forgive me and as I proceed to undertake this great and holy mission, I ask for your prayers that I may humbly draw near to God.*

*In his reply, the ordaining Metropolitan said, among other things, the following:*

*...Today, dear Deacon Yohan, you were led to the gates of the Holy Altar by two of your Priests brothers in the Lord, to receive the second degree of Priesthood, because Priesthood is a double ministry: Ministry of God and ministry of people. Your ministry must be philothei (loving God) and philanthropic. (loving man). Whatever you do, do it out of great love for God and for God's children. As a Priest of God, you must always consider whose minister you are and whom you serve. And at the same time don't forget, especially in difficult times, that God himself from today entrusts you with the sacred ministry of the salvation of*

*people, thanks Him Who sacrificed himself by shedding His Most Holy Blood.*

*In this double ministry, you will be accompanied by the prayers of all the clergy and faithful members of our Church in Korea, and especially of your pious mother and the members of your family. You will also be accompanied by the wishes of the late Metropolitan Soterios, your father Simeon, and all your Orthodox relatives who are in Heaven.*

*... May you always be blessed and may God deem you worthy to serve Him divinely until your last breath. Amen.*

After the end of the Divine Liturgy, a joint meal of love followed, during which everyone had the opportunity to express, in various ways, their feelings of joy, love, and respect for the newly ordained Father Yohan. During the meal, the Basilopita (St. Basil-pie) made from rice (Tteok) was also shared. Presbytera Theodoti Lee won the gold medal.

The new priest, Fr. Yohan Park, has studied Theology at the Theological School of the University of Thessaloniki and is married. As a Deacon, he served zealously for nine years at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Seoul. As a Priest, he will serve in the parish of St. Dionysios in the city of Ulsan. Worthy! Axios!



**Fr. Johan Park with his mother after his ordination**

# 19th Clergy - Lay Assembly of the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea (Sunday, January 29, 2023)

On Sunday, January 29, the 19th Clergy - Lay Assembly of the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea and Exarchate of Japan took place online. After the Spiritual and technical Report of 2022 and the presentation of the planned spiritual and technical projects for 2023, Metropolitan Ambrosios continued with the development of the main topic:

*“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2)*

## The definition of prayer

What is prayer? Numerous correct and opt things have been said to describe the definition of prayer. For example, that prayer is: *A dialogue with Heaven. Conversation of the weak man with the almighty God. Interpersonal communication with Christ. The oxygen of the soul, etc.*

Prayer is the unique *privilege* of man alone. Our philanthropic Heavenly Father gave the privilege of conversing with Him only to man. He gladly hears the prayer of His children and responds to our requests, provided that our requests will be «good and profitable for our souls.»

Prayer is the fastest means of communication. In our time, science has discovered many quick ways of electronic communication between people. God, however, many centuries ago, gave man the ultimate «*mobile phone*», whose battery never runs out. The ultimate *mobile phone* is prayer. Prayer is not a human invention. *It's a mystery*. It is a *gift* from God. Man can communicate with God whenever he wants. God never says, as we people often say in our telecommunications: «I can't talk to you now because I'm busy, or call me later because I'm talking to someone else now»! And not only that, but man can talk to God for as long as he wishes. God always hears him with unspeakable love and endless patience.

Prayer is the *secret source* from which the believer draws courage, consolation and strength, because its power is very great. Prayer works miracles, a fact that has been proven countless times in the lives of those who call on God with unwavering faith.

Prayer is also a *powerful 0* against the devil. The Lord assured us: «This kind (of demons) can come out by nothing except by prayer and fasting» (Mk. 9:29).

## Prayer is God-taught

It is characteristic that Christ Himself taught us prayer, when the disciples asked him to teach them how to pray (Lk. 11:1). That is why the God-taught Lord's Prayer, as the holy Fathers teach, is the perfect prayer, because it contains everything that man needs for his salvation.

The great importance of prayer is demonstrated by the fact that Christ Himself, during His earthly life, always prayed as a Man to His Heavenly Father «in private» (Mt. 14:23), alone (Lk. 9:18), even when the people were looking for Him (Mk. 1:37). After His Baptism and before He began His public ministry He stayed forty days in the desert praying. Every night, after His laborious ministry to the people during the day, He retired to lonely places to pray in private. But he also prayed in public, as e.g. in the Synagogue; before the performance of some miracle; on the Mount of Olives before His Holy Passion; on the Cross before He gave up His Spirit, etc. His High Priestly Prayer, important from a theological point of view, is also known, as John the Evangelist has saved it for us (17: 1-26).

Christ, therefore, did not only teach us how to pray in theory, but also He taught us with His prayerful example how and when to pray to our Heavenly Father.

## Following the prayerful example of Christ

The prayerful Example of Christ was followed by the holy Apostles, who were taught by Him how and when to pray. The evangelist Luke e.g. ends his gospel by writing that the Apostles «were always in the sanctuary praising and blessing God» (Lk. 24:53). Also very characteristic are the expressions with which the apostle Paul refers to the work of prayer: «without ceasing» (Rom. 1:9-10, 1 Thess. 5:17), «at all times» (Eph. 6:18), or «night and day» (1 Thess. 3:10). Even the first Christians, following the example of Christ and the Apostles, placed prayer in a central position in their lives. Indeed, some zealous Christians, from the very first years of the Church's life, wishing to dedicate themselves more to the work of prayer, took refuge in deserted places in imitation of Christ. Thus, the movement of Christian monasticism began, which over time became the backbone of the body of the Church.

Yet, not only the Christian Monks, but also all the Christians from the early Christian Church prayed privately and publicly. Thus, the Catacombs during the first three



## 기도는 영혼의 산소 (Prayer is the Oxygen of the Soul)

"항상 깨어있으면서 감사하는 마음으로 꾸준히 기도하십시오."(골로사이4:2)

"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."(Col. 4:2)



centuries, and the Temples later became places of prayer, but also the homes of Christians became «home churches». Christians devoted enough time each day to prayer to praise and thank their Creator for all His gifts, and to direct their requests for salvation to Christ the Savior.

This tradition was followed by all Christians throughout the centuries and this tradition was handed down to us in writing and orally by all the Holy Fathers and Teachers of our Church. God-inspired great theologians, poets, hymn writers and melodists, precisely because they were people of prayer, composed divinely inspired prayers and hymns. All these works of theirs constitute the great liturgical treasure of our Orthodox Church.

### Do we pray?

After what we have mentioned above, it is now time to ask ourselves seriously:

Do we pray? Do we daily feel the longing to converse with our Maker and Creator? Do we run like a thirsty deer to our parish church every Sunday and holiday to participate in the Divine Liturgy, which is the pre-eminent prayer of the Orthodox Church, and to receive God's grace through the Holy Mysteries? Do we praise and thank God for all that He gives us daily? Do we humbly ask God for His help for all our spiritual and material needs?

### The oxygen of the soul

Many a times, the daily work schedule and the demands of modern lifestyle do not leave free time, even for basic human needs. For this reason many Christians usually abandon the work of prayer. Yet, if we deeply understand that prayer is the oxygen of our soul, without which it is impossible for us to live, then we will find ways to communicate with God. Then we will make whatever sacrifice is necessary to obtain the necessary spiritual oxygen for our soul, just as we would for the physical oxygen for our body. Saint Paisios the Saint said: «Prayer is the oxygen of the soul, it is a need of the soul and should not be considered a chore.»

The most suitable prayer «in all times and places»

One such way of praying is to learn to pray the Jesus Prayer. This short prayer: «Lord, Jesus Christ, have

mercy on me», is a very important prayer. By this prayer, firstly, we confess that Christ is the true God, our true Messiah and Savior; and secondly, recognizing our sinfulness, we ask Christ with a humble attitude for His mercy for our salvation. We can repeat this prayer anytime and anywhere. That is, at any time and time of the day, and wherever we are: at home, in bed, on the street, in the market, in the countryside, etc. regardless of whatever we are doing: driving, walking, traveling, working, when resting, etc.

By repeating the name of Jesus Christ, «the name above all» (Phil. 2:9) our mind, our thoughts, our body, the space we are in, the people who are next to us, and everything we do will be sanctified. For example, «when the housewife says the Jesus Prayer, doing the housework, everything is sanctified. Not only the food makes, but also those who eat her food», said Saint Paisios of Mount Athos.

In order to keep the Prayer of Jesus in our mind and heart constantly, we need the help of God's grace. «To attract the divine grace requires love and longing. God's grace requires divine love. Love is sufficient to put us in the proper form for prayer. Christ alone will come and dwell in our soul, as long as he finds certain little things that please Him, such as good intention, humility and love. Without these we cannot say Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me», teaches Saint Porphyrios of Kausokalyvia.

### 2023: Year of more intense prayer

Let us begin, therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, during the new year that the goodness and charity of God has given us, to practice more the work of prayer and be sure that we will see a great change in our lives. Let us pray for the difficulties we face in our local Church, in our Ecumenical Patriarchate as well as in the worldwide Orthodox Church. Let's pray for the problems that are plaguing the whole world today, like being free from the COVID-19 pandemic, the prevalence of peace and reconciliation with North Korea, the end of the war in Ukraine and Syria, the overcoming of the global energy, climate and food crisis, etc. Let us all voluntarily enlist in the work of prayer. Thus, making 2023 a year of more intense prayer. Amen.



## The Equipment of the Church of Dormition of the Theotokos in Jeonju has been Completed

On Tuesday, January 3, 2023, the marble Holy Altar and the wood-carved (Polyeleos) Chandelier for the new Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos was transported by a container from Greece to the city of Jeonju.

The Priest of the church Fr. Hilarion Jeong with members of the parish, men and women and young people, was at the church early in the morning to receive the container. The Metropolitan, Fr. Johan Park, Gregory Park, Ignatios Lim, Raphael Lee, and Boris Lim traveled from Seoul early in the morning for the same purpose.

Everyone worked exemplary from morning until evening at 8:30 to complete the difficult task of placing the Holy Table on the Holy Altar and assembling and hanging the Chandelier. The result was wonderful and justified everyone's efforts and aspirations.

May the Lord, through the intercessions of the Virgin Mary, bless all those who contributed financially to the costs for the construction and transport from Greece to Korea of the Holy Table and the Chandelier. We extend our gratitude and our warmest thanks to everyone.

## The Sacrament of the Marriage of Christopher Jonker and Joey Gippeum Park

On Saturday, February 11, the Sacrament of marriage of Christopher Jonker and Joey Gippeum Park was celebrated at the Cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Seoul by Father Roman Kavchak and Father Antonios Lim Jong-hoon.

The groom is from California, USA and has been living in Korea since 2014. As a member of the Seoul Cathedral, he has served as an English teacher at the Cathedral camp. In the last three years (2019-2022), he studied Greek at the University of Thessaloniki and then studied Orthodox Theology (Master). The bride, after many years of catechism, received Holy Baptism and became a member of the Orthodox Church on December 24, 2022.

Fr. Antonios Lim, at the end of the Sacrament, addressed the newlyweds with paternal admonitions and conveyed the blessings and congratulations of Metropolitan Ambrosios.

In the Sacrament of Marriage the majority of the participants were young people. First, almost all the members of the Orthodox Youth called "Syndesmos" participated, as well as friends and acquaintances of the newlyweds. After the Sacrament, everyone gathered in the hall of the Missionary Center for a reception given by the newlyweds.

Dear Christopher and Zoe, we wish you to live many years and create a beautiful Orthodox Christian family filled with God's blessings!





## Divine Liturgy at the Gapyoung Monastery for Slavic Orthodox members

On Sunday, January 15, a group of about 40 members of our Orthodox Church in Korea of Slavic background visited our Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Lord in Gapyeong, along with Rev. Father Roman Kavchak and participated in the Divine Liturgy, after which a special memorial service was held at the Tomb of the late Metropolitan Sotirios.

A little later the Service of the Blessing of the Waters took place. The ceremony was held in the nearby river despite the falling snow.

Finally, before departing for Seoul, all the faithful worked to clean and tidy up the interior and exterior of the Monastery. In all, it was an unforgettable experience for everyone!



Fr. Roman Kavchak with Slavic-speaking believers at the river for the sanctification of the waters





## The Winter Camp of the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea

With the help of God the winter camp of the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea was held at the Camp facilities of St. Boris in Chuncheon from Friday 17/2 to Sunday 19/2.

A total of 30 persons, members of the Sunday School and the youth group called “Syndesmos”, participated from the parishes of Seoul, Incheon, Ulsan, and Jeonju. The general theme of the camp was: “Prayer: The Oxygen of the Soul”. Metropolitan Fr. Ambrosios and Fr. Yohan Park spoke on the main theme in several gatherings.

During the three days, the participants had the opportunity to participate in the morning and evening Services and the Sunday Divine Liturgy, which is the prayer par excellence of our Orthodox Church.

Also, the program included a walk of the participants in the forest, group games, learning hymns and songs, but also voluntary work for cooking and cleaning.

Warm thanks are expressed to everyone who organized this three-day camp and worked with much love and zeal for its implementation.





## Prayer for an end to the ongoing war in Ukraine and its victims

On Saturday, February 25, 2023, at the Cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Seoul, the Metropolitan of Korea and Exarch of Japan Ambrosios, assisted by the priests Fr. Roman Kavchak, Fr. Antonios Lim, and Fr. Anthony Westerman (Patriarchate of Antioch), a memorial service was held for the repose of the victims of this endless war in Ukraine, on the occasion of the one year anniversary since the beginning of the war. They also prayed for the wounded, the missing, the refugees, and their families, but also for the ending of the ongoing fratricidal war.

The Ukrainian Ambassador of Korea in Seoul, His Excellency Mr. Dmytro Ponomarenko, and Ukrainians living in Seoul, as well as Koreans, participated in the prayer.

Metropolitan Ambrosios in his short address, pointed out the following:

*The one-year dark anniversary of the start of the war against Ukraine is a shame for those who declared war and those who have not yet condemned it.*

*Our Ecumenical Patriarchate and all of us who belong to it have condemned this war from the first day, just like any other war, not with political or other kinds of criteria, but because war is contrary to the Gospel in which we believe. War is contrary to God's commandment: «You shall not kill». And everything that is contrary to God's command is a great sin. And “there is no greater*

*sin than wars”, as the great Russian theologian and contemporary Saint of our Church, Saint Sophrony of Essex said, because in war we shoot Christ in the face of each victim, who is an image of God.*

*We are, therefore, vehemently opposed to war because we are with Jesus Christ. We are not with NATO nor with Putin, but only with Jesus Christ and we obey only Him. And anyone who does not condemn the war, supports the crimes of war, by their silence or by their tolerance. The souls of those killed in the war, as well as the wounded, the orphans, the widows, and the refugees one day will judge all those who do not say a word against this great tragedy, that was born of Russia's war against Ukraine.*

*We pray, that the God of Peace, enlightens those who started the war, to repent, to understand the great sin they are committing, and to stop it immediately.*

*We also pray for the war's victims and their loved ones, from both sides, to find comfort in their great pain.*

*Finally, we pray that the Ukrainians who live far from their homeland in a peaceful environment, never forget to fight for Truth and for Justice to prevail in their country and around the world.*

*God bless you all and may we soon see the Dove of Peace return to Ukraine again.*







## The nine-month Memorial Service of the Late Metropolitan of Pisidia, Former of Korea, Soterios Trampas

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent, after the end of the Divine Liturgy in all the Parishes, as well as at the Holy Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Savior of the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea, the nine-month Memorial Service was held for the repose of the soul of the late Metropolitan of Pisidia, former of Korea, Soterios Trampas.

At the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Seoul, the Divine Liturgy and the Memorial Service were presided over by Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea, assisted by the Rev. Fr. Roman Kavchak and Fr. Antonios Lim.

Prior to the Memorial Service, the Metropolitan of Korea addressed the congregation with the following thoughts:

*My beloved Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,*

*The great contemporary Theologian and Saint of our Church, Saint Sophrony of Essex, writes: "To be a Christian is to believe in the resurrection of the dead." In other words, if a Christian does not believe in the resurrection of the dead, he is essentially not a Christian.*

*Moreover, because we believe in the resurrection of the dead, we do not mourn the departure of our spiritual Father, "like the rest who have no hope". We are sad, of course, and it is very difficult for us to get used to His absence, especially those older faithful who were blessed to live with Him for 47 whole years, but*

*because of our faith in the Resurrection, we strongly feel His presence among us.*

*Our spiritual Father, the late Metropolitan Soterios, a few days before His passing away, wanted to see everyone and say goodbye. Unfortunately, however, due to the pandemic, it was not possible for the faithful to visit Him in the hospital where he was being treated. So, after consultations with the hospital management, we came to the decision that only our priests and their presbyters should visit Him.*

*During their visit, they prayed together, He spoke words of love to them, occasionally He gave them advice, and He asked them for their forgiveness.*

*He did the same thing with the telephone communications He wished to have with His relatives and his collaborators in Greece. To every one He said: "I'm calling you to say goodbye. Thank you for what you did during my ministry in Greece, Korea, and Pisidia. Please forgive me for my mistakes. Love Christ and forgive one another."*

*Our spiritual Father left us this spiritual tradition and heritage:*

*To love Christ from the bottom of our hearts.*

*To love all people without discrimination.*

*To forgive everyone without exception.*

*If we try to follow His example, our lives will surely be filled with the Grace of God and the blessing of our late spiritual Father. Amen.*



# Odoiporikon

## Board of Directors

<b><u>President:</u></b>	Sotiris Despotis – Professor of Theology, University of Athens
<b><u>Vice President A:</u></b>	Loukas Karras – Lawyer
<b><u>Vice President B:</u></b>	George Demopoulos – Economist Businessman
<b><u>General Secretary:</u></b>	Vasileios Mpirtsas – NPDD Clerk
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	Panagiota Drogari – Retired Public Official
<b><u>Members:</u></b>	Demetrios Athanasiou – Theological School, University of Athens Paraskevas Koutsovitis – MD Nektarios Lavoutas – Retired of HPPC Emmanuel Moustakas – Theologian Leonidas Safarikas – Retired Businessman Alexandros Spyroglou – Theologian
<b><u>Audit Committee:</u></b>	Harikleia Roxane – Economist Maria Fytrou – Project Technician

## Orthodox Mission in the East

Quarterly newsletter  
of the Patriarchal Foundation  
of the Far East Mission

82 January – March 2023

### OWNER

Patriarchal Foundation of Orthodox Mission  
in the Far East

Gounaropoulou 3, 157-71 Zographou, Greece

Phone: +30 210 771 0732

e-mail: [patriarchidryma@gmail.com](mailto:patriarchidryma@gmail.com)

Internet Site: [www. Patriarchikoidryma.gr](http://www.Patriarchikoidryma.gr)

### PUBLISHER – CHIEF EDITOR

George Demopoulos

Filellinon 4 105 57 ATHENS - GREECE



The newly built Church of the Dormition of the  
Theotokos in Jeonju

## DONATION DEPOSITS

National Bank of Greece: Account Number: 040-296124-56

IBAN: GR6001100400000004029612456

Alpha Bank of Greece: Account Number: 473-002101-099272

IBAN: GR8901404730473002101099272

