

A Commemoration of Responsibility and of Pastoral Visions

**The Anniversary of the Consecration
of Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi**

On Monday, October 6, 2009 (Old Style), the commemoration of the Holy Apostle Thomas, His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod in Resistance, liturgized at the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Phyle, Attica, the headquarters of the Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle and of our Holy Synod. On this day and in this same Church, exactly two years ago, October 6, 2007, Bishop Cyprian was consecrated to the Episcopacy and simultaneously undertook his ministry as Acting President of the Holy Synod.

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Also taking part in the Divine Liturgy were His Eminence, Bishop Michael of Nora, two of the monastery's Hieromonks, three Priests, two of the monastery's Hierodeacons, and three Subdeacons, with many of our lay spiritual children and numerous monks and nuns in attendance.



His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni and Their Graces, Bishops Auxentios of Photike, Ambrose of Methone, and Klemes of Gardikion were in prayerful attendance in the Holy Altar.



Many of the faithful communed of the Immaculate Mysteries. Following the Divine Liturgy, heartfelt best wishes were exchanged in the monastery's large reception hall, in a warm atmosphere of Christian love and unity.

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During the Communion of the Clergy, Bishop Cyprian spoke about his *Pastoral Vision*, which he compared to a fresco constantly present before his eyes, consisting of three Icons: the **Good Shepherd**, the **Washing of the Feet**, and the **Holy Crucifixion of our Savior**. Everything implied in this fresco makes up the model of his ministry: • As an image of the Great Shepherd and Blameless Lamb, the Hierarch is called upon to bear the sheep tenderly on his shoulders; to “reassure” the sheep; not to judge it, but to heal it; to repent in its stead and on its behalf; and to sacrifice himself for its sake. • Moreover, the

Hierarch fundamentally overturns the model of power: Humbling himself to the utmost, he becomes a Minister and a servant on his knees, washing with tears of compassion the feet of those created in the image of God. • This reversal reaches the point of crucifixion: utter “weakness” and disesteem, by human standards, and extreme poverty, in accordance with the Gospels, in emulation of the One Who was greatly obedient and compassionate. This therapeutic regimen is a truly personal one, elevating the life of the Shepherd to an authentic theological life, since in the Church we are only able to theologize genuinely when we are on the Cross together with the One Who is Crucified Love.

To be sure, His Grace admitted, these goals, which continue to constitute “a Vision of Life” for him, are lofty and difficult to attain; they are truly “great things.” Such being the case, he tries to do “small things with a big heart.” He hopes that the many heartfelt “small things” will add up to something “great” and sublime, and lead to “higher things.” He had, and continues to have, as his aid the blessing of his Elder and Metropolitan, and also the Immaculate *Theotokos*, the Synaxis of whose Holy Icon, “O All-Hymned Mother,” we celebrate on this day (October 6). As the Divine Chrysostomos says, “through a woman issued evil things, but through a Woman spring higher things”; “through a woman [the Devil] prevailed, but through a Woman is he defeated.”



The Shepherd ought to remain in the light of the “presence of the Mother of God,” as he journeys towards the Unwaning Light of the King-

dom of Heaven, while chanting the radiant *Prosomoion*:

Rejoice, thou who art radiant as the sun, never-setting chariot
of the Sun, who didst shine forth the Sun that passeth comprehension;
rejoice, mind that gleameth with Divine illuminations, brilliance of
lightning that sheddeth rays upon the ends of the earth; thou dost truly
coruscate like gold, all-beautiful and all-blameless one,
who causeth the unwaning Light to shine upon the faithful.

(*Menaion*, March 7, Vespers)

Glory to God for all things!

